

Pre-Kindergarten: Frequently Asked Questions for *EarlyLearn NYC* Parents

Dear *EarlyLearn NYC* parent:

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is pleased to provide you with information regarding New York City's pre-kindergarten program and Mayor de Blasio's goal to provide pre-kindergarten for all four year olds in New York City.

ACS' *EarlyLearn NYC* programs will continue to provide pre-kindergarten for all eligible and enrolled four-year-olds. As your child is currently enrolled in an *EarlyLearn NYC* program and was born in 2010, she or he may enroll in pre-kindergarten for the upcoming 2014-2015 school year. Below you will find Frequently Asked Questions about how the City's pre-kindergarten plan will enhance the services your child(ren) is currently receiving at their *EarlyLearn NYC* program, including information about programming, teacher qualifications and parent fees.

If you have any further questions about pre-kindergarten, please contact your *EarlyLearn NYC* program.

Pre-K & *EarlyLearn NYC* – Enrollment & Quality

1. What is New York City's pre-kindergarten (pre-k) program?

Pre-k education is the most important investment we can make in our children, as the early years of a child's development are crucial to their ability to learn, their educational achievement, and their opportunities for success. New York City's pre-k program provides part-time or full-time services to four year old children. Those born in 2010 are eligible for pre-k services for the 2014-2015 school year.

Pre-k services are funded by the State Education Department through New York City's Department of Education. Community-based organizations that provide pre-k include *EarlyLearn NYC* programs, licensed or registered day care providers, Head Start programs, nursery schools, preschool education providers, non-public schools, libraries and museums. *EarlyLearn NYC* programs will provide a full-day of quality early care and education, including pre-k, as well as services for younger children.

2. *My child is currently enrolled in an EarlyLearn program and was born in 2010. Will they receive pre-k services in the 2014 – 2015 school year?*

Yes, if you choose to keep them in the *EarlyLearn NYC* Program. In the 2014-2015 school year, ACS will continue to administer pre-k services within the *EarlyLearn NYC* program. So long as you continue to remain eligible for child care services, your child may remain with your current *EarlyLearn NYC* program. ACS' *EarlyLearn NYC* programs will continue to serve children for 8 to 10 hours per day, year round, for all eligible children, including four-year-olds.

3. If my child is enrolled in an EarlyLearn NYC program for pre-k services, which of the hours are pre-k and which of the hours are EarlyLearn hours? Is there a difference?

There are no specified pre-k hours within *EarlyLearn NYC*. *EarlyLearn NYC* is an early care and education program that uses multiple sources of funding, including pre-k funding. The quality of the service is for the entire *EarlyLearn NYC* day and not just the hours of the pre-k funded portion of the day.

4. Where will pre-k services be provided?

The City's pre-k services are provided in *EarlyLearn NYC* programs, DOE public schools, non-public schools, libraries, museums, and other organizations. As your child is currently enrolled in an *EarlyLearn NYC* program, if he or she was born in 2010, your child will automatically be a part of the city's pre-k program as long as you continue to remain eligible for child care services and choose to keep your child in the *EarlyLearn NYC* Program.

You may also contact the NYC Child Care Resource & Referral consortium at 1 888 469-5999 for more information on child care options."

5. My child is currently enrolled with an EarlyLearn NYC Family Child Care (FCC) Network provider. Will he or she receive pre-k services in the 2014 – 2015 school year? How will my child transition to an EarlyLearn center-based pre-k program?

Children born in 2010 who currently receive services through an *EarlyLearn NYC* Family Child Care (FCC) Network **provider home** have the option to transition to an *EarlyLearn NYC* **center-based program** by early September to receive the City's pre-k services.

ACS and your FCC Network's staff will work with you to identify a center-based program, if you are interested. Your FCC Network will be inviting you to a meeting to provide more help and discuss plans for transitions. We also encourage you to directly contact *EarlyLearn NYC* center-based programs in your community. To locate an *EarlyLearn NYC* program near you:

- Call: 311
- Text: EARLYLEARN to 877-877
- Browse: www.nyc.gov and search *EarlyLearn NYC*
- Visit: your local HRA Job Center and asked to be placed in an *EarlyLearn NYC* program
- You may also contact the NYC Child Care Resource & Referral consortium at 1 888 469-5999 for more information on child care options

We have encouraged all *EarlyLearn NYC* centers to prioritize enrollment for families who choose to transition from *EarlyLearn NYC* FCC programs through July 31, 2014.

6. Are the teachers in the EarlyLearn NYC pre-k classrooms qualified?

Yes. All pre-k teachers must either hold state certification for teaching pre-k, or be on a study plan for obtaining certification within three years. *EarlyLearn NYC* center programs follow the health and safety regulations set by NYC's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for all early education programs; this requires that all teachers have specific clearances and prove a clean bill of health.

7. Will anything change at my child's EarlyLearn NYC program in the next school year due to pre-k programming being provided to more children?

For the coming 2014-2015 school year, the curriculum and hours of services currently provided to your child in an *EarlyLearn NYC* program will not change. There will be enhancements to pre-k programming to increase our support to four-year-olds in the following ways:

- Strengthening the quality of programs through the addition of equipment and furniture, and
- Some child care subsidy-eligible families may see an adjustment to their parent fee. Please see questions 10 and 11 below for additional fee information.

8. What if I no longer meet the EarlyLearn program's eligibility criteria for the program my child is currently enrolled?

If your family no longer meets the program's eligibility criteria:

- The program where your child is currently enrolled will refer you to another *EarlyLearn NYC* center operating a different program model (i.e. Child care centers may refer families to *EarlyLearn NYC* Head Start or "dual eligible" centers – families not meeting child care eligibility criteria may be eligible for Head Start services and vice versa) **OR**
- You can go to the DOE website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/> for other non-*EarlyLearn NYC* pre-k programs, whether in a public school or in another non-*EarlyLearn NYC* community based early childhood centers (CBECCs).

9. I have been offered a seat in a public school pre-K and I have a younger child in an EarlyLearn NYC program. Can my younger child remain in the EarlyLearn NYC program?

Yes, as long as you continue to meet the eligibility criteria to receive subsidized child care or Head Start services, your younger child may continue to receive care through *EarlyLearn NYC* programs. You may enroll your pre-k child and your younger children in the program(s) of your choice.

10. I have a child who is eligible for special education services; will I have the same access to these services in an EarlyLearn NYC program as I would in a DOE public school?

Yes, your child will have access to the same services regardless of where the pre-k is located. Below are the different scenarios and potential placements for your child:

- If a child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) recommends Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) services and/or related services, the child can receive these services in an *EarlyLearn NYC* program;
- If a child’s IEP recommends a full-day or half-day special class or special class in an integrated setting, the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) will find an appropriate class for the child in an appropriate pre-k program.

Parent Fees

11. I currently pay a fee (family share) for child care services in an EarlyLearn NYC program. What changes can I expect in my weekly parent fee amount if I have a child who is eligible for pre-k services?

The City’s pre-k is a free program. You will not be charged fees for pre-k services. Please note that any time that your child spends in the *EarlyLearn NYC* program is considered to be subsidized child care services for which the parent fee requirements apply, so any four year old in pre-k services at an *EarlyLearn NYC* program is a part-time recipient of subsidized services. Child care parent fees are based on family size and income. You will be charged a fee for any non-pre-k children in your family receiving child care services and for any hours of care beyond the pre-k program for your four-year old child.

If the only child you have in subsidized child care who is receiving full time services is pre-k eligible, your fee will be adjusted to part-time during the school year (September-June) and then readjusted to full time during the summer months (July and August).

If any child in your family is receiving full-time subsidized child care services, then you will continue to be charged a full-time fee, and the program serving your youngest child in full-time care would collect the fee, as always.

If all of your children are receiving part-time subsidized child care services, the part-time fee will continue to be assigned to the youngest child and be collected by that program.

Head Start families as well as those families that are in receipt of Cash Assistance will continue to not pay fees for services.

12. How will child care parent fee changes be communicated?

If you are eligible for a fee adjustment, a revised notice will be sent to your listed address as well as to your *EarlyLearn* program.