



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Memorandum

To: Child Development Facility Owners, Center Directors and Home Providers
Participating in Capital Quality

From: Sara Mead
Assistant Superintendent of Early Learning
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Date: March 2022

Re: Capital Quality Classroom Assessment Scoring System Pre-K (CLASS Pre-K) and
Environment Rating Scales (ERS) Data Collection in Program Year 2021-22

Background

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) Division of Early Learning (DEL) collects observation data from child development facilities participating in Capital Quality each program year. DEL temporarily canceled observations during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and has resumed observation data collection in the 2021-22 program year. DEL has begun collecting CLASS Pre-K data for the 2021-22 program year and is currently procuring a vendor to collect ERS data, including Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (ITERS-3) data and Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (FCCERS-3) data, for the 2021-22 program year.

Capital Quality Observation Updates

DEL will **not** use observation data collected in the 2021-22 program year to calculate Capital Quality ratings and assign Capital Quality designations that impact tiered subsidy reimbursement rates in fiscal year 2023 (FY23, from Oct. 1, 2022 through Sept. 30, 2023). Additional information on how observation data collected in the 2021-22 program year may be used is provided on page 2.

All child development facilities participating in Capital Quality will maintain their **current** Capital Quality designations in FY23. All current Capital Quality designations are based on Capital Quality ratings calculated using observation data collected before the COVID-19 pandemic.

DEL will continue to implement the hold harmless policy according to the original timeline. Consistent with policy actions for Pilot, Group Two and Group Three, the hold harmless policy for Group Four will end in fall 2022 following the original timeline (Table 1). This also means that after Sept. 30, 2022 there will no longer be a hold harmless policy in effect for any Capital Quality participants.

Table 1. Hold Harmless Policy

Action	Pilot and Group Two	Group Three	Group Four	Group Five
Capital Quality designation determined.	Fall 2019			Not Applicable (N/A)
Tiered reimbursement changes only if a facility's designation is higher.	Fall 2019			N/A
Hold harmless policy ends; tiered subsidy reimbursement rates align to facility's designation whether higher or lower.	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	N/A
Note: Child development facilities in Group Five entered into a Provider Agreement for Subsidized Child Care Services with OSSE or voluntarily elected to participate in Capital Quality on or after Oct. 1, 2018 on a rolling basis.				

For more information on Capital Quality ratings and designations, Capital Quality groups and the hold harmless policy, refer to the [Capital Quality technical guide](#).

Classroom Assessment Scoring System Pre-K (CLASS Pre-K) Data Collected in Program Year 2021-22

DEL has begun collecting CLASS Pre-K data for the 2021-22 program year. CLASS Pre-K observations will continue as scheduled in program year 2021-22. All child development facilities from which CLASS Pre-K data are collected will receive program-level and classroom-level CLASS Pre-K score reports.

- Program-level CLASS Pre-K scores will **not** be used to calculate Capital Quality ratings and assign Capital Quality designations that impact tiered subsidy reimbursement rates in FY23.
- Child development facility owners and center directors may use the program-level CLASS Pre-K scores and other information in the program-level and classroom-level CLASS Pre-K reports for continuous improvement and professional development purposes.
- CLASS Pre-K data will be used to inform the annual Pre-K report for the 2021-22 program year.
- DEL will analyze aggregated CLASS Pre-K data collected in the 2021-22 program year to identify system-level trends in the quality of observed interactions overall and across CLASS Pre-K domains, to enhance stakeholders' understanding of how changes in pre-K programs due to the pandemic may have affected (or not) children's experiences, as well as to inform professional development offerings and quality improvement strategies.
- CLASS Pre-K data collected in 2021-22 will not be used to update program ratings or tiered reimbursement rates in future years.

ERS Data Collected in Program Year 2021-22

DEL is currently procuring a vendor to collect ERS data, including Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, ITERS-3 data and FCCERS-3 data, for the 2021-22 program year. If a contract is awarded, DEL will begin collecting ERS data for the 2021-22 program year; however, if a contract is not awarded, DEL will cancel ERS observations for the 2021-22 program year. If DEL begins collecting ERS data for the 2021-22

program year, all child development facilities from which ERS data are collected will receive a program-level ERS score report.

- Program-level ERS scores will **not** be used to calculate Capital Quality ratings and assign Capital Quality designations that impact tiered subsidy reimbursement rates in FY23.
- Child development facility owners, center directors and home providers may use the program-level ERS scores and other information in the program-level ERS score report for continuous improvement and professional development purposes.

Subsidy Rates Alignment

Child development facilities will continue to receive the subsidy reimbursement rate aligned to their Capital Quality designation in FY22 from Oct. 1, 2021 through Sept. 30, 2022 that is displayed on their profile on [My Child Care DC](#). Additionally, the Capital Quality technical guide was updated in fall 2021 to allow programs with a Preliminary rating, that had one year of valid observation data, to receive a formal Capital Quality rating. Programs that received a Capital Quality rating with one year of valid observation data, will continue to maintain that rating until two years of valid observation data is collected.

Next Steps

Validated, reliable observation measures are an important tool in the District's efforts to ensure that all children, birth to 5, have access to high-quality early learning experiences that support their development and learning. Beyond simply measuring quality, CLASS Pre-K and ERS provide common language for early educators, program leaders and coaches to talk about and work together to improve quality. Exploring the constructs, interactions and indicators that these tools measure can also help early educators build capacity to deliver high-quality learning experiences. DEL encourages all child development facilities that participate in Capital Quality to continue to engage in professional development related to CLASS Pre-K and ERS and to use these tools and data in your programs to support quality improvement.

In addition, Capital Quality programs should plan to take the following next steps:

- Continue to schedule your CLASS Pre-K observations;
- Continue to work with your quality facilitator on CLASS Pre-K, ITERS-3 and/or FCCERS-3 observation tools; and
- Contact CapitalQuality@dc.gov with any questions.

DEL appreciates your participation in Capital Quality and your ongoing commitment to providing early care and education for children in the District of Columbia.