

Collaboration in UPK Webinar Questions and Answers March 13, 2024

The following questions were submitted by attendees of Collaboration Best Practices Webinar, which took place on March 13, 2024, at 3:00 PM. The answers below were provided in response as of April 2024.

Q: If the Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) program provided by an eligible collaborating agency is overseen by the district and housed in a district building, does that collaborating agency still need to have a license to provide Prekindergarten services?

A: According to Social Services Law §390, a collaborating agency can operate in a district building without Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) licensing as long as the district assumes responsibility as the operator of the program. OCFS may request a letter from the district acknowledging this arrangement.

Q: How do we determine the per pupil rate?

A: The most accurate method of calculating a school district's per pupil rate for UPK funding is to use calculation methods shown in districts' UPK Grant Output Reports in the [State Aid Management System](#) (SAMS). Using this method to calculate a projected allocation payable for one full-day pupil will identify the per pupil rate.

Begin by dividing one pupil by the district's Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) students needed to access the maximum UPK allocation for that age group. That quotient, rounded to the nearest fifth decimal place, is the Maintenance of Effort (MoE) for serving one student. Then multiply the MoE by the maximum UPK allocation for that age group, rounding the product down to the nearest whole dollar in all cases. That product is the per pupil rate.

Example:

Sample District's UPK Allocation: \$702,000 to serve 130 eligible full-day four-year-old students

MoE for serving one student = $1 \div 130 = 0.00769$

Per Pupil Rate = $0.00769 \times \$702,000 = \$5,398$

As for Statewide Universal Full-Day Prekindergarten (SUFDPK) per pupil rates, that amount can vary depending on whether the district is using conversion slots or new full-day slots and whether the SUFDPK funded students are served by certified or uncertified teachers of record. Please refer to [New York State Education Law Section 3602-ee\(14\)\(a and b\)](#) for SUFDPK per pupil rate calculations.

School districts may contact OEL at oel@nysed.gov for assistance in calculating per pupil rates.

Q: Do you have a sample rubric for scoring an RFP?

A: No. The Office of Early Learning does not endorse or recommend any specific format for a scoring rubric for collaborative RFP proposals. However, the rubric should reflect what the district is seeking in its partnership with a collaborating

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agency that includes district need and program requirements. The Office of Early Learning recommends reaching out to neighboring districts for an example scoring rubric.

Q: In New York City, are public school buildings that have UPK required to fill out the RFP, as are the CBOs?

A: No, district buildings are not required to complete an RFP, as they receive their funding directly from The New York State Education Department's Office of Early Learning.

Q: Will the links to the classroom scoring system used by Whitney Point CSD be shared?

A: The two classroom scoring systems presented by the district were the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS). Links to the assessment tools mentioned during the webinar will not be provided. Since NYSED is not endorsing, districts can utilize the valid and reliable assessment tool of their choice to evaluate classroom environment and teacher-student interactions.

Q: When do they (teachers) have the ECERS training?

A: According to Whitney Point CSD, the ECERS training is taken online by their UPK teachers. The training is about five hours long and is completed during professional development days.

Q: Are Community-Based Organizations (CBO) in NYC, able to partner with a public school?

A: Yes, CBOs could be eligible to collaborate with a public school district within the New York City Department of Education. If the CBO contacts the school district in which it is located or even neighboring districts, the CBO can learn more about the requirements and qualifications needed to partner with that district to provide prekindergarten services.