

Early Start Columbus Grant Requirements



High-quality pre-kindergarten providers will provide effective instructional strategies and family support to ensure kindergarten readiness. Providers are responsible for recruitment, enrollment, administration, recordkeeping, invoicing and reporting, as well as compliance with all federal, state and local regulations. Providers will offer early childhood education, parent support and linkages to health, social and nutritional services as required by Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards. These standards will be utilized and monitored through Step Up To Quality (SUTQ), Ohio's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. Information regarding these program standards and information on SUTQ can be found at www.earlychildhoodohio.org.

Provider Requirements

- A. The Provider must be one of the following:
 1. An existing early childhood education entitlement grantee licensed by the Ohio Department of Education in accordance with Section 3301 of the Ohio Revised Code (must provide license at time of application);
 2. An Ohio Department of Education licensed preschool or chartered nonpublic school, in accordance with Section 3301 of the Ohio Revised Code (must provide license at time of application); or,
 3. An entity operating a childcare program licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, in accordance with Section 5104 of the Ohio Revised Code (must provide license at time of application).
- B. The Provider must be an operator of program(s) that have 3-, 4- or 5-star ratings by July 1, 2019, through Ohio's SUTQ Tiered Quality Rating System, a National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited provider or a Local Education Agency (LEA).
 1. If the program is highly rated in SUTQ, the program shall comply with the program standard requirements and maintain a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating for the entire grant award period and must attest to meeting all of the following requirements to be considered for funding:
 - i. Provide a minimum of 25 hours of instruction per week (5 hours of instruction per day) for a school year (or have a department-approved waiver for an alternative schedule) which is equivalent to approximately 850 hours/170 days exclusive of before and after care, recesses and breakfast/lunch periods;
 - ii. Meet teacher qualification requirements prescribed by Section 3301.311 of the Ohio Revised Code (50 percent of Early Childhood Education teachers with a BA and 50 percent with an AA in Early Childhood Education or a related degree)
 - iii. Require teachers and assistant teachers, except teachers enrolled and working to obtain a degree pursuant to Section 3301.311 of the Ohio Revised Code, to attend a minimum of 20 hours every two years of professional development as prescribed by the Ohio Department of Education;
 2. If the site's SUTQ rating falls below the threshold for participation, the provider will be given remediation time to address compliance issues. If measures are not in place that satisfy the SUTQ rating system, the provider may not be eligible for future funding and may be asked to return grant amounts that have been paid by the City.
- C. The Provider must adhere to all provider and program requirements of the Ohio Department of Education's Early Childhood Education (ECE) grant and/or the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC) program.
- D. The Provider must be located within the geographical boundaries of the City of Columbus.
- E. The Provider must offer prekindergarten services for a full day (5 hours of instruction per day, exclusive of before and after care, recesses and breakfast/lunch periods) and school year (approximately 850 hours/170 days) based on the Columbus Board of Education's adopted school calendar, in accordance with section 3313.48 of the Ohio Revised Code.

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- F.** The Provider must offer ongoing professional development opportunities (at least 10 hours/year for all teachers).
- G.** The Provider must work with families to make sure that they understand their child's early learning goals, education and development screening procedures and results, as well as complimentary services necessary to achieve school readiness. This includes vision, hearing, health screenings and referrals as well as at least one support service.
- H.** The Provider must be willing to allow a third-party assessment of Early Start Columbus children through the OSU Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy ready4success initiative and authorize the release of the data to the City (ready4success Parent Release for Child Information, Early Reading and Early Math Screenings). It is the responsibility of the contracting provider to complete the following:
 - 1. Identify a designated contact and lead person for all communications regarding child screenings, data entry and participation in operational meetings regarding child data.
 - 2. Secure parent permission for the child to be screened in early literacy (Get Ready to Read!) and math (Preschool Early Numeracy-Brief Measure) by a third party.
 - 3. Provide parents with information about the screening instruments and reasons for screenings.
 - 4. Work with the Screening Administrator to identify a time and location for screenings.
 - 5. Sign an agreement for CeeHiVE data entry.
 - 6. Complete up to 9 hours of training for CeeHiVE (data entry, reports and scoring process for the Kindergarten Transition Summary as pre- and post-measures of child progress).
 - 7. Respond to notices and/or attend required meetings as needed for CeeHiVE and/or screening administration.
- I.** As part of the provider's involvement in Early Start, we may request that the provider participates in ongoing research activities designed to help us learn more about early education activities and priorities in the Columbus area. This research activity is done in collaboration with the Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy at The Ohio State University.
- J.** The Provider must implement and complete in CeeHiVE the Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Summary to introduce each child and family to enhance promotion and smooth transition for each child and family into the kindergarten setting.
- K.** The Provider must submit an external audit performed by a third party, independent certified public accountant. If such an audit has not been performed within a year of the time of application, the provider must acquire an audit within six months of the effective date of the contract. The provider must submit to the City a copy of this audit.
- L.** The Provider may not subcontract the care or education of an Early Start Columbus student.
- M.** The Provider must offer family engagement activities. Meaningful family engagement in children's early learning supports school readiness and later academic success. Parental involvement is a critical element of high-quality early childhood education.
 - 1. Provide a family engagement component that may include, but is not limited to, family consultation, parenting skills training, home visits and opportunities for parents/family members to volunteer in the program component. These services may be provided through a collaborative effort with other local agencies serving children and families.
 - 2. Conduct parent/teacher or family/teacher conferences regarding each Early Start Columbus child.
- N.** The Provider must register with the City of Columbus as a vendor.
- O.** Minority, Women and Veteran Business Enterprises should become certified with the City of Columbus through the Mayor's Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI). Go to: <https://www.columbus.gov/odi/>

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Student Eligibility

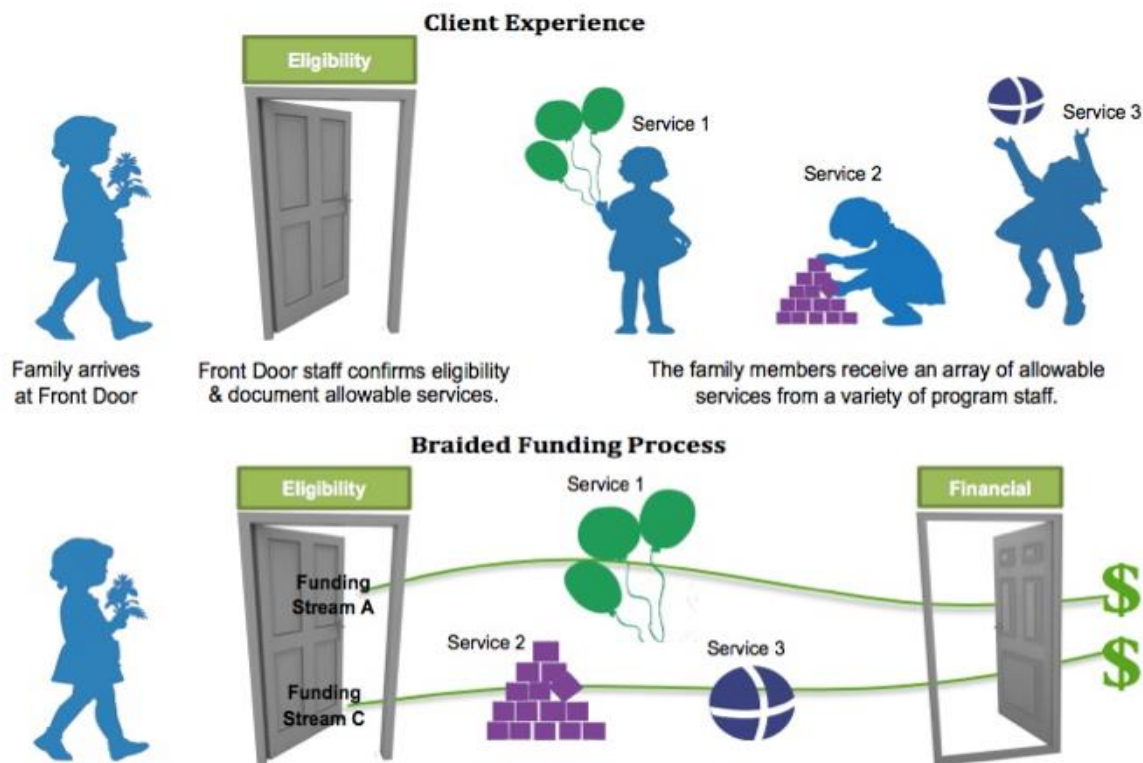
In order for the provider to receive Early Start Columbus funding, eligible families and students must meet the following criteria:

- Child must be 4 years old by September 30, 2019, except those with an Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Child must reside within the boundaries of the Columbus City School District.
- Child's family income must fall within 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- Families must complete the Early Start Columbus Income Verification Form if the child is not eligible for Publicly Funded Childcare nor the State's Early Childhood Education grant.

Funding

The City of Columbus Department of Education will use a braided approach to award funding for the expansion of high-quality pre-kindergarten education for the 2019-2020 school year. Accounting for each stream of income (Publicly Funded Child Care Program, Early Childhood Education grant, Early Start Columbus grant) is maintained by both the funding source and the agency charged with administering the funds. These coordinated funds are joined into a comprehensive service package. Investing in braided funding for high-quality pre-kindergarten programs can result in a more inclusive setting for all.

Providers should apply for and, if awarded, accept the Ohio Department of Education's Early Childhood Education (ECE) grant. Similarly, providers should accept Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC). ECE and PFCC funds must be braided and applied to the account of every eligible student enrolled at the center before any City funds may be granted for that child. *Early Start Columbus funds should be considered last-dollar grants.* The reimbursement rates for 2019-2020 that include all braided funding sources are listed in the charts that follow.



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Payment Procedures

Payment for prekindergarten services will be made by the City of Columbus Department of Education based on the enrollment of eligible students.

- A.** Providers must maintain all fiscal records and have strong fiscal controls and policies that are subject to review at any time by the City of Columbus Department of Education.
- B.** The Provider must submit an Early Start Columbus Income Verification Form for each student enrolled in funding Category F (ESC city funding only).
- C.** The Provider must enter student attendance in CeeHiVE. These reports will be used to determine aggregate grant amounts for children and provider payments.
- D.** Upon receipt of invoices and required reporting, providers will be paid in 4 installments, with an initial payment issued within 30 days of the execution of the contract.
 - 1.** Payments are determined by category of funding, SUTQ star rating and number of children served.
 - 2.** Payments are contingent upon compliance with the Ohio Department of Education's Early Learning and Development Standards and compliance with SUTQ.
 - 3.** Payments are contingent upon appropriation and availability of funds in the City of Columbus Budget and approval of Columbus City Council.