

## Performance Profiles Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How do I find my site's Performance Profile?

Both early childhood Performance Profiles and K-12 school performance scores are reported through Louisiana's interactive online tool, the Louisiana School and Center Finder. This is found at [www.LouisianaSchools.com](http://www.LouisianaSchools.com).

The early childhood Performance Profile is found on the "Academic Performance" tab shown below for all early childhood sites. More information on the components of the Performance Profiles can be found in the [Performance Profile Key \(linked here\)](#) and information on interpreting this data can be found in the [Performance Profile Guide \(linked here\)](#).



### 2. What are Performance Profiles?

Performance Profiles measure the quality of publicly-funded early childhood sites serving at-risk children ages birth-five for each academic year. These profiles are required by Act 3 (2012), and include a rating at the top (Excellent, High Proficient, Proficient, Approaching Proficient, Unsatisfactory) and a set of informational metrics at the bottom. These profiles are shared with families to help them make informed choices for their children and support providers to improve the quality of early childhood care and education.

### 3. Who receives Performance Profiles?

All publicly-funded sites, including Head Starts and Early Head Starts, public pre-K, nonpublic pre-K (NSECD), and child care centers, that were open on October 1 and February 1 receive a Performance Profile for that school year. Each community network, which includes all of the publicly-funded sites within a geographic region or parish, will also receive a Performance Profile.

**4. Which child care centers receive Performance Profiles?**

Child care centers that are licensed as Type III centers, which means that they are able to take public funding to serve children, are required to participate in the unified rating system and receive a profile. Publicly-funded child care centers that were open on October 1 and February 1 receive a Performance Profile for that school year.

**5. What is CLASS®?**

The *CLASSroom Assessment Scoring System* or CLASS® is a research-based system of 8-10 measures that assesses children’s experiences and interactions within the classroom through observations. Observers must participate in an initial two-day intensive training and pass an annual reliability test in order to be certified CLASS® observers. During an observation, a certified CLASS® observer goes into a classroom and observes the teacher-child interactions within the classroom for four 20-minute cycles, for a total of 80 minutes of observation. Between each observation cycle, the observer will use their notes and manual to score the cycle on the 8-10 measures. Every cycle receives a set of scores, and the four sets of scores are averaged together to create the final observation scores.

<b>Expectation for the Classroom:</b>	<b>PreK Domains</b>	<b>Toddler Domains</b>	<b>Infant Domain</b>
<i>Warm, positive environment with trusting relationships</i>	<b>Emotional Support</b>	<b>Emotional &amp; Behavioral Support</b>	<b>Responsive Caregiving</b>
<i>Daily routines are organized and disruptions are minimal</i>	<b>Classroom Organization</b>		
<i>Children learn concepts and connect ideas through dialogue and play</i>	<b>Instructional Support</b>	<b>Engaged Support for Learning</b>	

The 8-10 measures that comprise the CLASS® tool are referred to as dimensions, and they are organized within 2-3 domains:

PreK Domain:	Measures (Dimensions)
<b>Emotional Support</b>	Positive Climate
	Negative Climate
	Teacher Sensitivity
	Regard for Student Perspectives
<b>Classroom Organization</b>	Behavior Management
	Productivity
	Instructional Learning Formats
<b>Instructional Support</b>	Concept Development
	Quality of Feedback
	Language Modeling

Toddler Domain:	Measures (Dimensions)
<b>Emotional and Behavioral Support</b>	Positive Climate
	Negative Climate
	Teacher Sensitivity
	Regard for Child Perspectives
	Behavior Guidance
<b>Engaged Support for Learning</b>	Facilitation of Learning and Development
	Quality of Feedback
	Language Modeling

Infant Domain	Measures (Dimensions)
<b>Responsive Caregiving</b>	Relational Climate
	Teacher Sensitivity
	Facilitated Exploration
	Early Language Support

**6. Which classrooms should be observed using the CLASS® tool?**

All programs that accept public funding, including type III centers with no publicly-funded children currently enrolled, should be observed. This includes all pre-K and toddler classrooms at type III child care centers, all classrooms at Head Start and Early Head Start centers, and pre-K classrooms at schools that receive public funding (e.g. 8-g, LA4, NSECD, etc.).

**7. Which CLASS® tool should be used in mixed-age classrooms?**

In mixed-age kindergarten/pre-K classrooms, the pre-K tool should be used if the classroom is a majority pre-K or if the classroom receives early childhood funding.

In mixed-age pre-K/toddler classrooms, the pre-K tool should be used if the classroom is a majority or at least half pre-K.

In mixed-age toddler/infant classrooms, the toddler tool should be used if the classroom is a majority or at least half toddler. The infant tool should only be used if the classroom is a majority infant.

A classroom that is a mix of infant, toddler, and pre-K children shall be observed using the tool appropriate for the majority of the class. If there is a no clear majority among the three age groups, the toddler tool shall be used.

**8. How is the overall rating for each site calculated?**

Every classroom in a publicly-funded site is required to be observed by local community networks twice, once in the fall and once in the spring. These local observations are audited through a contract with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Picard Center to conduct independent third party observations. Both local and third party observations are used to generate Performance Ratings.

Sites and lead agencies are required to count infant, pre-K, and toddler classrooms in publicly-funded sites and enter them into the Department's CLASS® system in October. In February, pre-K and toddler classrooms are counted again, and the list of classrooms is updated for the spring. Every pre-K and toddler classroom that is open in the fall or the spring is required to be observed by the community network.

Third party observers audited local observations by observing at least one infant, one toddler, and one pre-K classroom in each site, and at least 50% of the classrooms in each site. If third party observation domain scores differed by more than 1 point from local observations for comparable classrooms, third party scores replaced local scores for that domain.

The overall rating for each site is calculated by averaging all of the dimension scores for all of these observations together. Dimension scores are first calculated by using the four cycles of raw scores to create an average dimension score. The dimension scores from every domain and

---

every observation count equally in the overall rating. Domain scores are never averaged together to create an overall rating.

**Example:** ABC site has two classrooms, one pre-K and one toddler. Each classroom was observed twice by local observers, once in the fall and once in the spring. 2 pre-K observations and 2 toddler observations are included in this rating. Each pre-K observation has 9 dimension scores (excluding negative climate) which equals 18 pre-K dimension scores. Each toddler observation has 7 dimension scores (excluding negative climate), which equals 14 dimensions. There are 32 total dimensions that are averaged together for the overall site rating.

**Note:** For information about how third party scores are included in the rating, please look at **Question 9**.

#### 9. How is the rating for each individual domain calculated?

The rating for each domain is calculated by averaging all of the dimension scores together for that domain. Dimension scores are first calculated by using the four cycles of raw observation scores to create one average dimension score for each observation. Each dimension score from every observation counts equally in the individual domain rating. Individual domain ratings are separate from the overall rating, and are never averaged together to calculate the overall rating.

**Example:** XYZ site has two pre-K classrooms. Each pre-K Classroom was observed twice, once in the fall and once in the spring, for a total of four observations. For the Emotional Support domain, there are three dimension scores (excluding negative climate) for each of the four observations, which equals 12 dimension scores. These 12 dimension scores are averaged together for the Emotional Support domain rating.

**Note:** For information about how third party scores are included in the rating, please look at **Question 9**.

#### 10. Why is the negative climate dimension not included?

The negative climate dimension is not included in either overall ratings or the individual domain ratings for either pre-K or toddler domains. This helps to ensure that no domain is over-weighted in the calculations. By excluding negative climate, the Emotional Support and the Emotional and Behavioral Support domains are more equally weighted with the other pre-K and toddler domains.

The CLASS® tool was developed by Dr. Bob Pianta and Dr. Bridget Hamre, both professors and researchers at the University of Virginia (UVA), Curry School of Education.

The formula to determine Louisiana's early childhood education programs' CLASS® ratings, which does not include the Negative Climate dimension score, was developed in consultation with Dr. Pianta and Dr. Hamre as well as other researchers at UVA, Curry School of Education.

## 11. How are third party scores included?

Third party observations may be included in the rating in four different ways.

- A) Third party observations are compared to local observations for the same classroom within the same semester (fall or spring). If the third party observation differs by more than 1 point to the comparable local observation, then the local observation dimension scores within that domain are replaced by the third party observation dimension scores.

**Example:** A local observation was done in a pre-K classroom in October. A third party observation was done in the same pre-K classroom in November. Since those observations occurred in the same classroom in the same semester (fall), they are compared. The local observation (4.79) was 1.25 points higher in Classroom Observation than the third party score (3.54). For that classroom's fall observation score, the local observation scores are used for the dimensions in Emotional Support and Instructional Support, but the third party observation scores are used for the dimensions in Classroom Organization.

- B) If a classroom was not observed by a local observer for a semester, but was observed by the third party in that semester, then the third party score is used for that classroom for that semester.

**Example:** ABC site has three toddler classrooms, but only two of them were observed by a local observer in the fall. A third party observation was done in the third classroom in the fall. That third party score is used for the fall observation score for the third classroom.

- C) If a classroom was not observed by a local observer for a semester, and was also not observed by the third party, then the average of third party scores for that age type (pre-K/toddler) is used for that classroom for that semester.

**Example:** XYZ site has three toddler classrooms, but only two of them were observed by a local observer in the fall. The site received two third party observations over the year in toddler classrooms (one in the fall and one in the spring). The average of those two third party toddler observations is used for the fall observation for the third classroom.

- D) If observation results conducted by community networks are consistently different by more than one point from third party observations, the Department may replace all of the community network's observation results for a site or observer with third party results.

**Example:** A local observer conducts 6 pre-K observations, 4 of which are checked by third party. All 12 pre-K domains that were checked by third party observers differed by more than 1.00 point from the third party score, resulting in a 100% observer replacement rate. The Department may remove all 18 of her domain scores from the sites at which she observed.

**12. How is the community network Measures of Classroom Quality rating calculated?**

The community network “Measures of Classroom Quality” rating includes all of the dimension scores used for the individual site ratings, and all of the dimension scores for any observations conducted in the network for sites that did not receive a rating. These dimension scores are averaged together to make a community network rating. The Department has published a [calculator](#) for sites and community networks to use CLASS® observation data to estimate a Performance Scores and Ratings.

**13. For Measures of Classroom Quality, what are the score ranges associated with each rating?**

Community Network Measure of Classroom Quality (CLASS® Scores)					
<b>Range</b>	6.00-7.00	5.25-5.99	4.50 -5.24	3.00 -4.49	1.00-2.99
<b>Rating</b>	Excellent	High Proficient	Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory

**14. How is the community network access rating calculated?**

The community network access rating is based on the percent of the estimated at-risk four-year-old cohort able to access a publicly-funded early childhood seat. This includes Head Start, NSECD, LA 4, other school pre-K programs, and the Child Care Assistance Program. The percent of at-risk four-year-olds served is based on the October 1 child count for each community network that counts all of the publicly-funded children enrolled for that school year. The estimated at-risk four-year-old cohort is based on the number of at-risk kindergarteners. The percent of at-risk kindergarteners compared to the entire kindergarten cohort for a community is used to calculate the percent of at-risk children at each age-level preceding kindergarten, including the at-risk four-year-old cohort.

**Example:** *Geaux Network has 100 kindergarteners, 85 of whom are considered at-risk (185% Federal Poverty Line). Their network’s at-risk percentage is 85%, and the Department estimates that there are about 85 at-risk four-year-olds that could be served in the community. Geaux Network is serving 80 at-risk four-year-olds, so their access rating is 80 at-risk four-year-olds served / 85 at-risk K cohort = 94% at-risk cohort served, or High Proficient.*

Community Network Access Rating					
<b>Range</b>	95-100%	85-94.99%	75-84.99%	65-74.99%	0-64.99%
<b>Rating</b>	Excellent	High Proficient	Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Unsatisfactory

---

**15. What are the consequences for Unsatisfactory sites?**

If a site receives an Unsatisfactory rating for two years in any three-year period, that site may lose its academic approval and access to public funding. This is true for all site types, including Type III child care, Head Start, and school based pre-K programs.

**16. What support exists for low performing sites?**

Sites with an overall CLASS® score below 3.75 are required to participate in the Early Childhood Site Improvement Planning process led by the Department. This formal improvement planning process involves working with the Department to complete a needs assessment and develop a plan for site improvement. The plan must involve regular monitoring of implementation and reporting information as requested by the department.

**17. How are high performing sites recognized?**

There are several incentives for sites to improve their performance as measured by the Performance Profiles. For all program types, there are three Early Childhood Honor Rolls that recognize excellence and improvement statewide.

- The Excellence Honor Roll recognizes all Excellent sites with no Unsatisfactory scores at any domain;
- The Birth to Three Honor Roll recognizes sites with high performance for the state's youngest learners;
- The Top Gains Honor Roll recognizes sites with more than 1 point of growth from the practice year to this year.

**18. What is the relationship between Performance Profiles and the School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC)?**

For Type III early learning centers, there is an additional incentive provided through the School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC). The Star Rating system for School Readiness Tax Credits and bonus payments has been revised to be aligned with CLASS® Performance ratings per the following table.

Provider Tax Credits reward centers based on their quality rating and the number of Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) or foster care children that are served. Centers become eligible if they participate in the statewide unified rating system, and their benefits increase with the number of at-risk children they serve.

CLASS® Score Range	CLASS® Performance ratings	Star Rating for Tax Credit and Bonus Payments	Tax Credit per Eligible Child
6.00-7.00	Excellent	5 Stars	\$1,500
5.25 -5.99	High Proficient	4 Stars	\$1,200
4.50-5.24	Proficient	3 Stars	\$1,000
3.75 -4.49	Approaching Proficient	2 Stars	\$750
3.00-3.74	Approaching Proficient	1 Star	\$0
1.00-2.99	Unsatisfactory	0 Stars	\$0

In addition to School Readiness Tax Credits, star ratings also provide centers the opportunity to benefit from CCAP bonus payments. The state provides tiered bonus payments at the end of each calendar quarter to eligible licensed Type III centers. These bonus payments are based on the number of children attending the center through the Child Care Assistance Program or are in foster care, and the star rating for that center. The payment is equal to a percentage of all payments from the Department for services provided during the quarter.

Quarter	Months	Payment Month
First	January, February, March	May
Second	April, May, June	August
Third	July, August, September	November
Fourth	October, November, December	February

Please note: The last bonus payment is based on the previous star rating and will be paid in February of the following year. The first payment is based on the new stars earned for the current year and will be paid in May.

The percentage of CCAP payments for each quarterly bonus payment are based on the center’s star rating. These percentages for each year, January through December, are shown below, with the bonus for 2 Star centers being phased out over time to encourage improvements in quality:

Star Rating	Quarterly Unified Bonus Received for each Eligible Child in 2018	Quarterly Unified Bonus Received for each Eligible Child in 2019	Quarterly Unified Bonus Received for each Eligible Child in 2020	Quarterly Unified Bonus Received for each Eligible Child in 2021 and beyond
5 Star	23%	23%	23%	23%
4 Star	16.5%	16.5%	16.5%	16.5%
3 Star	11%	11%	11%	11%
2 Star	6%	4%	2%	0%
1 Star	0%	0%	0%	0%

More information about the School Readiness Tax Credit can be found [here](#).

### 19. What are the Use of Best Practices for sites and networks?

The Best Practices are the non-rated informational metrics included on the performance profile. At the site level, these metrics include:

- **Assessment:** assigns up to three stars based on whether teachers are evaluating children’s growth and development using *GOLD*<sup>®</sup>
- **Children per Teacher:** assigns up to three stars for the quality of the teacher: child ratio
- **Curriculum Quality:** assigns up to three stars based on the quality of curriculum used
- **Teacher Degrees & Certification:** shows the highest level of education teachers have completed and the percent of teachers that have an approved teacher certification

At the network level, these metrics also include:

- **Equitable Access:** shows how many of the community’s at-risk 4-year-old children the network serves
- **Teacher Support:** shows how satisfied teachers in the community are with professional development available to improve interactions and instructions; the levels are Somewhat, Mostly, and Very
- **Family Satisfaction:** shows how satisfied families in the community are with the application process and with their program; the levels are Somewhat, Mostly, and Very
- **Birth to 3 Access:** shows how many of the community’s at-risk birth to 3 year olds the network serves with public funding

The information for each of these measures is self-reported by providers, verified by lead agency staff during the data certification process, and does not have any impact on the overall rating for the site or network.

**20. How is the information for ratings collected and reported to the state?**

For the ratings, CLASS® scores are entered into the Department’s Early Childhood CLASS® System by local and third party observers. Scores are available to sites and networks through reports generated by the system and exports provided by the Department.

**21. How is the data for site and network Use of Best Practices informational metrics collected and reported to the state?**

For the informational metrics that are reported on the “Use of Best Practices” section on the Performance Profiles, most of the information is self-reported by providers, teachers, and parents through multiple reporting tools, including *GOLD*®, the October 1 child counts, and surveys distributed by the Department and in partnership with Louisiana State University. The informational metric data are verified by lead agency staff through data certification annually.

**22. What is the process for collecting information from teachers and families through surveys?**

To better understand teacher satisfaction, the Department releases an online survey to individual teachers through their *GOLD*® account, and provides the link to lead agencies to circulate to teachers as well. This survey asks questions about support from the network related to assessment, observations, and professional development.

To understand the perspectives of families, the Department partners with United Way and Louisiana State University to design and release a survey that asked questions about their satisfaction with both the enrollment process and the programs their children attended. A paper version of the survey was released to a sample of individual sites within each community network, and was mailed directly back to LSU to process and compile. An online version of the survey was also released to lead agencies and sites.

**23. How were these ratings and informational metrics verified by lead agencies and sites?**

For the ratings, community networks and sites have the following opportunities to verify and correct the information for ratings and informational metrics:

- Spring CLASS® Error Correction Period (Ongoing)
- CLASS® Observation Appeals Period (Fall-Spring Annually)
- Early Childhood Data Certification Process (Summer Annually)

These are opportunities for sites and networks to work with the Department to ensure all information is correctly reported, and request corrections or appeals for information as needed. These opportunities take place over the course of the school year, and culminate in a

---

month-long data certification process in August. In addition to these formal opportunities, throughout the year, sites and networks are reminded of opportunities to report, verify, and correct information through the [Early Childhood newsletter](#).

**24. How can I change something on the profile?**

Data Certification precedes the release of Performance Profiles, and after Performance Profiles are released via School and Center Finder, they cannot be changed.

**25. How are infant classrooms being included in Performance Profiles?**

In accordance with Bulletin 140, Infant CLASS® is being phased into the Early Childhood Accountability System, and Infant CLASS® observations will be fully incorporated into the 2020-2021 Performance Profile ratings, released in the fall of 2021.

**26. What resources are available to help families understand early childhood Performance Profiles?**

Performance Profiles are published on [the Louisiana School & Center Finder](#) and the Department has released the following resources to assist families in understanding Performance Profiles:

- [Site Performance Profile Key](#) and [Guide](#)
- [Network Performance Profile Key](#) and [Guide](#)
- [Early Childhood Performance Profile Video](#)

**27. What are my next steps as a provider?**

Performance Profiles are published on [the Louisiana School & Center Finder](#) and the Department has released the following resources to assist families in understanding Performance Profiles:

1. Use the [Five Tips for Sites](#) as a guide
2. Reference the [Guide to Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessments, and Professional Development](#)
3. Consider hosting a parent night, using the Department's customizable [Parent Night Presentation](#)