OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

FISCAL YEAR 2027 (FY27)

PRE-KINDERGARTEN ENHANCEMENT AND EXPANSION FUNDING

High-Quality Designation Application Release Date: March 20, 2026
12:00 p.m.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), Division of Early Learning, is soliciting applications for the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Program (PKEEP) high-quality designation, to be eligible to receive an allocation of PKEEP funding. OSSE will distribute funding to community-based organizations (CBOs)[1] pursuant to the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Amendment Act of 2008, (the "Act"), effective July 18, 2008 (D.C. Law 17-202; D.C. Official Code § 38-271.01 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (5-A DCMR Chapter 35). Receipt of a PKEEP high-quality designation makes a CBO eligible to receive PKEEP funding; however, funding is subject to availability and therefore not guaranteed.

The purpose of the PKEEP allocation is to distribute funding, per student, as appropriate, in an amount not to exceed the uniform per student funding formula ("UPSFF")[2] pursuant to section 2401 of the District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995, approved April 26, 1996 (110 Stat. 1321- 107; D.C Official Code § 38-1804.01), to CBOs providing pre-K education services[3] that meet the eligibility requirements and the high-quality standards set forth in section 201 of the Act (D.C. Code § 38-272.01) and its implementing regulations (5-A DCMR §§ 3500.3 and 3501). A supplemental allocation equivalent to the at-risk weight may be distributed for pre-K age students in foster care, who are homeless or receive TANF or SNAP funds pursuant to the Early Learning Equity in Funding Amendment Act of 2017, effective Aug 1, 2017 (D.C. Law 22-9; D.C. Official Code § 38-271.06)).

The awarding of PKEEP funding is contingent on FY27 funding. Should the amount appropriated to OSSE be insufficient to fund all high-quality pre-K programs that meet the eligibility requirements and the high-quality standards, OSSE shall distribute funds to each high-quality program that: (a) meets the eligibility requirements and the high-quality standards and (b) serves a student population where 35 percent or more of enrolled children are eligible for and receiving subsidized child care or Head Start funding. If funds are not sufficient to allocate funding to every high-quality program that meets those requirements, OSSE shall award funds to programs that meet the above requirements and serve a student population in a high need community. Should the amount appropriated to OSSE be insufficient to fund all high-quality pre-K programs that meet all

[1] "Community-based organization" or "CBO" means a Head Start or early childhood education program operated by a non-profit, for-profit or faith-based organization, or organization that participates in local or federally-funded early childhood programs, including the Child Care Subsidy Program.
[2] Rates will be final upon the legislative enactment of the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Support Act of 2023.
[3] "Pre-K education service" means the purposeful, well planned and developmentally appropriate practice and instruction provided by community-based organizations to pre-K age children.

of the above eligibility requirements and the high-quality standards, OSSE may distribute the funds through a competitive grant process.

This NOFA is to announce the release of the high-quality designation application. As noted below, in order to receive funding, each CBO must first receive a high-quality designation. While this application determines eligibility for funding, CBOs must complete a funding application within OSSE's electronic grants management system (EGMS) before accessing their award. Applicants can access EGMS here: https://grants.osse.dc.gov/.

Eligibility: To be eligible to receive PKEEP funding, a CBO providing pre-K education services shall:

1. Be currently licensed and maintain compliance pursuant to Chapter 1 of Title 5-A of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR 5-A, Chapter 1);
2. Submit a high-quality designation application on a form furnished by OSSE and receive designation from OSSE, which demonstrates that the CBO meets each of the following:
    1) Eligibility criteria pursuant to 5-A DCMR § 3500.3 (including designation as a Level II child care subsidy provider); and
    2) High-quality standards pursuant to 5-A DCMR § 3501.1; and
3. Attend the entire high-quality designation pre-application conference.

OSSE will host a mandatory PKEEP high-quality designation pre-application conference. Given the importance of the information that will be presented, no one will be allowed to join the session after the pre-application conference begins. Attendance will be taken at the beginning and end of the pre-application conference. Failure to attend the entire pre-application conference will result in a disqualification of the high-quality designation application.

Date	Time	Location
Wednesday March 18, 2026	11:30 -1:00 p.m.	Teams Registration Link

The PKEEP high-quality designation application will be posted on Friday, March 20, 2026 on OSSE's website: OSSE Website Link and is due on **Monday, May 4, 2026 4:00 p.m**.

For additional information regarding this NOFA, please contact:

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