

**East Hartford School Readiness Council**  
**Policies and Guidelines**  
**Accreditation/Approval System page 1 of 3**  
**Reference (B-05/GP 09-05/GP 09-06)**

The C.G.S. section 10-16p, section 5 requires that programs receiving funds for School Readiness spaces must be accredited by a standard established by the Commissioner of Education. The East Hartford School Readiness (EHSR) Council has adopted the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation as the acceptable accreditation standard for all EHSR Programs.

Programs must submit to the EHSR Administrator evidence that they will achieve NAEYC Accreditation by the third anniversary of funding as determined by the original start date for funding established as the first day children attended the EHSR program and recorded and maintained by the CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC). The program must implement a written timeline for the Self-Study process, provide program staff and families with an orientation of the accreditation process it will be undertaking, provide documentation of the Self Study activities completed including completion date, data gathered, identified issues, and steps to resolve identified issues. The program must also submit to the EHSR Administrator the date the program will submit materials and request the validation visit.

**Program Requirements**

- initiate the NAEYC accreditation process at the beginning of the EHSR contract period by submitting an enrollment form to NAEYC
- share correspondence, documentation of progress toward NAEYC Accreditation and scheduled dates of submissions and visits with the EHSR Administrator and the CT OEC to ensure the status of the programs
- develop a schedule for the NAEYC Accreditation process and secure necessary technical assistance
- remain on schedule to achieve NAEYC Accreditation or notify the EHSR Administrator that an extension is requested
- submit the necessary NAEYC documents required to become a NAEYC applicant at least 15 months before the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the program's date in which they began serving School Readiness children
- meet all NAEYC candidacy requirements and submit the completed Program Self-Assessment Report at least 4 months before the third anniversary of the program's EHSR contract
- notify the EHSR Administrator of the dates for the NAEYC visitation window
- notify the EHSR Administrator NAEYC Accreditation decision and provide the Commission Decision Report and certificate to the EHSR Administrator

**Programs with NAEYC Accreditation**

- EHSR programs with NAEYC Accreditation will adhere to all NAEYC policies and requirements, including self-reporting and 72-Hour Notification, and provide a copy of the reports at the time the report is submitted to NAEYC to the CT OEC Program Manager and the EHSR Administrator where applicable regarding accreditation
- EHSR programs will provide NAEYC reports, within 72 hours of receipt from NAEYC – documentation of the results of any NAEYC on-site visits including random unannounced or verification visits to the CT OEC Program Manager and the EHSR Administrator where applicable, NAEYC Accreditation Decision Reports, and NAEYC Annual Reports with confirmation of acceptance by NAEYC, via upload to The Registry

### **Programs requesting a NAEYC Accreditation Extension**

- programs requesting extensions must notify the CT OEC and the EHSR Administrator of the extension need
- the extension request must include detailed information regarding the rationale for the request, specific time-lines addressing the current accreditation process, and the proposed extension term with rationale
- the CT OEC will review the extension request to determine the next steps; if an extension is approved the extension rational will include a specific time period that the program will adhere; the EHSR program will develop and follow a program improvement action plan and timeline for completion of the NAEYC Accreditation process and will participate in the *Alternate Interim Quality Assurance Process* (below)
- within 1 year of the Extension approval implementation process, the CT OEC will determine whether the EHSR program makes sufficient progress toward achieving Accreditation or if the EHSR program is negligent in addressing areas of concern; the CT OEC may reallocate funding to another School Readiness program or site (see *Removal of State Funds*)
- EHSR programs seeking NAEYC Accreditation renewal are not eligible for an extension

### **Alternative Interim Quality Assurance Process**

In order to provide quality improvement monitoring of new EHSR programs that are not NAEYC Accredited, these programs must participate in Alternative Interim Quality Assurance which includes –

- EHSR program on-site monitoring conducted by the CT OEC staff;
- Implementation of a CT OEC identified assessment toll (e.g. ITERS, ECERS, PAS, etc.) by a CT OEC approved, reliable rater at the EHSR program's expense;
- Develop a written program improvement action plan with reasonable and appropriate timeframes, which may be submitted and/or revised over time, detailing the process(es) the EHSR program will undertake to address program improvement issues identified through data and assessments such as site visits, monitoring tools, NAEYC tools, and reports in order to achieve NAEYC Accreditation;

### **Programs Loss of NAEYC Accreditation**

If a NAEYC Accredited EHSR program experiences a loss of accreditation through deferral, denial, revocation, or inability to complete the renewal process according to the NAEYC timeline for renewal, the following process will be followed -

- provide to the EHSR Administrator a copy communication received from NAEYC including the *Accreditation Decision Report*, within 72 hours of receipt from NAEYC
- submit to the EHSR Administrator and the CT OEC, within 1 month, a detailed program improvement action plan that addresses the issues identified by NAEYC, the persons responsible, and the strategies that will be used to ensure adherence to the timelines established by NAEYC for re-submission of materials
- EHSR programs with a loss of NAEYC Accreditation must immediately arrange a meeting with the CT OEC and the EHSR Administrator to discuss the circumstances for the loss of NAEYC Accreditation
- The CT OEC will review the detailed action plan and strategies to determine the next steps; if an extension is granted, a specific time period will be approved and the EHSR program will develop and follow an action plan and timeline for completion of the NAEYC Accreditation process; if an extension is not requested or granted, referral is made to *Removal of State Funds* (below)

### **Removal of Program State Funds**

If an EHSR program does not achieve or maintain its NAEYC Accreditation according to legislative requirements (Public Act 14-39 amended subsection (b)), or if the EHSR program does not complete the improvement action plan within 1 year of notification by NAEYC that their Accreditation is lost, the CT OEC will address this according to these steps –

1. The EHSR program will notify the EHSR Administrator and the CT OEC immediately
2. The EHSR program will notify the appropriate CT OEC manager in writing signed by the Mayor/Chief Elected Official and Superintendent
3. The CT OEC Program Manager will notify the EHSR program that no new children may be enrolled in the program and identify the last date that the state funds will be available to support the EHSR program
4. The EHSR Administrator will work collaboratively with the EHSR Council and the EHSR program to communicate, in writing, to families that –
  - The EHSR program is unable to continue as a School Readiness program because it did not achieve or maintain NAEYC Accreditation and give the families the following options:
    - a. Continue with the same EHSR subsidy in the same type of School Readiness space at another EHSR program;
    - b. Remain at the de-funded EHSR program and pay the program fee; or
    - c. Be directed to 211 Child Care to explore other child care availability
5. The EHSR Administrator will explore available program options in the community in order to transfer the spaces in a timely fashion
6. The EHSR Administrator will work to transfer the spaces to another EHSR funded program no later than the end of the current EHSR grant period
7. The EHSR Administrator will propose sites for space reallocation to the CT OEC for approval
8. Upon CT OEC approval, the EHSR Council will transfer de-funded EHSR spaces to selected programs

EHSR programs that experience a removal of state funding and subsequently achieve NAEYC Accreditation may be considered for funding in a future grant cycle.