

# The Comprehensive Evaluation Strategy for the Seattle Preschool Program

---

DEMONSTRATION PHASE: 2015-2018



City of Seattle

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING

# Contents

---

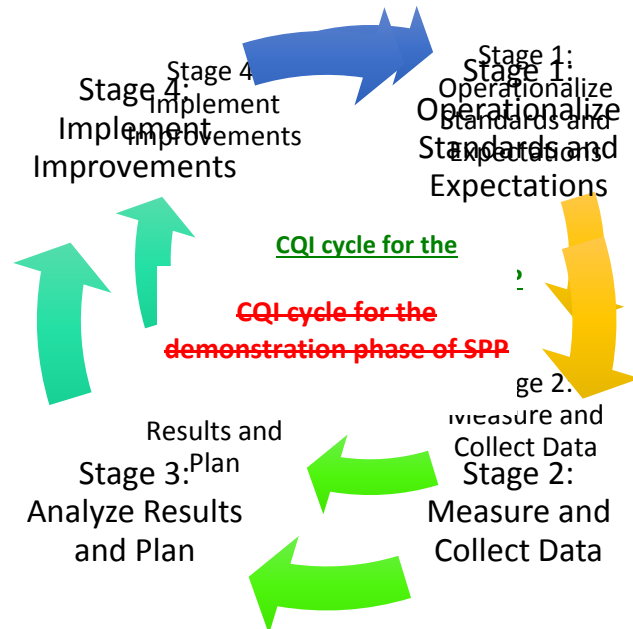
Executive Summary.....	4
Continuous Quality Improvement .....	4
The Five Tiers of Evaluation .....	4
What will we know at the end of the Demonstration Phase? .....	5
Introduction .....	7
CQI Stage One: Operationalize Standards and Expectations.....	10
Evaluation Tiers 1–3 .....	11
Evaluation Tier 4.....	14
Evaluation Tier 5.....	14
CQI Stage Two: Measure and Collect Data .....	16
Existing Data Sources .....	16
Washington State Department of Early Learning Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT).....	16
PRISM .....	17
Classroom Observation Tools.....	17
The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS).....	17
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS).....	18
Child Assessment Tools .....	19
Teacher-Administered.....	19
Independent Assessor-Administered .....	20
DEEL and Evaluator Created Tools .....	22
Participating Families Survey or Interview .....	22
Teacher Surveys/Interviews and Center Director Surveys/Interviews .....	23
DEEL Coach and Education Specialist Focus Groups .....	23
Site-Level Assessment Rubric .....	23
CQI Stage Three: Analyze and Plan .....	25
DEEL Analyses.....	26
Tier 1: Evaluation of SPP compliance with approved quality standards and processes .....	26
Contracted Evaluator Analysis .....	26

Tier 2: Evaluation of SPP processes that support quality improvement and organizational change .	26
Tier 3: Evaluation of SPP impacts on child outcomes and classroom quality .....	27
Reports and Timing .....	30
CQI Stage Four: Implement Improvements .....	31
Strategy for Implementing Improvements .....	31
Program Improvements through Coaching and Technical Assistance .....	31
Peer Learning and Improvement Network.....	31
Leadership Team at DEEL .....	31
Levy Oversight Committee and Community Stakeholders .....	31
Communications .....	32
<i>Return to CQI Stage One: Operationalize Standards and Expectations.....</i>	<i>33</i>
Projected Four-Year Evaluation Budget.....	34
Budget for Tier 1 Evaluation: Evaluation of SPP compliance with approved quality standards and processes.....	34
Budget for Tiers 2 and 3 Evaluation: Process and Impact Evaluations .....	34
Explanation of budget categories: Evaluation of SPP processes that support quality improvement and organizational change .....	35
Explanation of budget categories: Evaluation of SPP impacts on child outcomes and classroom quality.....	35
Budget for Tier 4 Evaluation: Evaluation of City’s administration, oversight, scale-up, and implementation of SPP .....	36
Budget for Tier 5: Evaluation of the SPP Family Child Care Pilot Program .....	36
Attachment 1: Contracted Evaluation Team for 2015–16.....	38
Attachment 2: Glossary.....	39

## Executive Summary

### Continuous Quality Improvement

SPP evaluation activities are intended to inform practice in classrooms, at sites, and at the City as well as report on programmatic quality and progress. The City will apply a Continuous Quality Improvement (“CQI”) framework to all aspects of the Seattle Preschool Program evaluation. In the CQI model, data are collected, results are analyzed, and improvements are made cyclically. Evaluation is continuous and responsive. SPP evaluation activities are intended to inform practice in classrooms, at sites, and at the City as well as report on programmatic quality and progress. Analysis is iterative and informs improvements happening at every level. CQI allows DEEL to strike a balance between adhering to a consistent evaluation strategy and adjusting to emerging needs and changes as SPP expands, evolves, and improves.



Using a CQI framework also demands that the SPP evaluation strategy be utilization-focused. In other words, data analyses are meant to inform specific audiences not only *if* the program is effective, but *how* it is effective or ineffective and what can be done to improve it.

### The Five Tiers of Evaluation

Evaluations will be conducted through a partnership between DEEL and contracted evaluators. Each partner will have roles and responsibilities related to: the creation or selection of evaluation tools; the collection, analysis, and reporting of data; and the identification of course corrections as needed throughout the SPP Demonstration Phase. The four-year evaluation process has been divided into five tiers.

Three tiers of evaluation using the CQI framework will begin in Year 1 (SY 2015–16):

- Tier 1: Evaluation of SPP compliance with approved quality standards and processes
- Tier 2: Evaluation of SPP processes that support quality improvement and organizational change
- Tier 3: Evaluation of SPP impacts on child outcomes and classroom quality

At the end of Year 1 (SY 2015-16), a fourth tier of evaluation will begin:

- Tier 4: Evaluation of City’s administration, oversight, scale-up, and implementation of SPP

For Tier 4, an initial report will be produced at the end of Year 2 (SY 2016–17), and an update will be produced at the end of Year 3 (SY 2017–18).

The Family Child Care (FCC) pilot evaluation is the fifth and final tier of evaluation:

- Tier 5: Evaluation of the SPP Family Child Care Pilot Program

A Family Child Care (“FCC”) Pilot Program will begin no later than Year 3 (SY 2017–18) to assess whether family child care providers that meet SPP eligibility criteria [established under Ordinance 124509](#) can produce comparable results to SPP center-based providers. Timing for the FCC pilot will be finalized in spring 2016 and the evaluation of the pilot will begin concurrent with its implementation. Details of the plan for the development and evaluation of the FCC pilot are provided in the section on [Evaluation Tier 5](#).

**Table: Timeline for Evaluation Tiers**

Evaluation Tier		SY 2015-16	SY 2016-17	SY 2017-18	SY 2018-19
Tier 1	Design <sup>1</sup>	X			
	Execution	X	X	X	X
	Report	X	X	X	X
Tier 2	Design	X			
	Execution	X	X	X	X
	Report	X	X	X	X
Tier 3	Design	X			
	Execution	X	X	X	X
	Report	X	X	X	X
Tier 4	Design		X		
	Execution		X	X	
	Report		X	X	
Tier 5 <sup>2</sup>	Design	X			
	Execution		<del>X</del> <sup>3</sup>	<u>X</u>	
	Report		<del>X</del>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

## What will we know at the end of the Demonstration Phase?

By 2018, the City will know:

- If SPP has been rolled-out in accordance with its Implementation Plan.
- How ~~best to support~~ SPP providers [have been supported to](#) improve quality.

<sup>1</sup> Design refers to the initial design of the evaluation, not ~~on-going~~[ongoing](#) course corrections as identified through the CQI process.

<sup>2</sup> After Year 2 (SY 2016-17) the FCC evaluation will be incorporated into Tiers 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> [The FCC pilot will begin on a small scale in 2016 if this is deemed feasible by the City.](#)

August 3, 2015

Version ~~1~~#2

- How children who ~~participate~~participated in SPP ~~are performing~~performed compared to non-participants.
- How City processes ~~can best support~~supported SPP and the community.
- ~~How to incorporate high-quality FCCs into SPP.~~FCC pilot structure and timeline for results.

## Introduction

---

On November 4, 2014, Seattle voters approved a four-year, \$58 million property tax levy to provide “accessible high-quality preschool services for Seattle children designed to improve their readiness for school and to support their subsequent academic achievement.”<sup>4</sup> Approved by Seattle voters, the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) Levy proceeds will be used to achieve the following outcomes city-wide:

- Children will be ready for school.
- All students will achieve developmentally-appropriate pre-academic skills.
- All students will develop both socially and emotionally.
- The readiness gap will be eliminated for SPP participants.

As reflected by Ordinances 124509 and 124749, Mayor Edward B. Murray, and the Seattle City Council recognize that decades of research have shown that high-quality preschool programs, like the Seattle Preschool Program, can produce meaningful improvements in children’s kindergarten readiness and create a foundation for success in school and life. Thus, with support from Seattle’s early learning community and national experts, the City of Seattle designed the Seattle Preschool Program, which is scheduled to begin supporting the delivery of preschool services to 3- and 4-year olds in September 2015.

The City of Seattle’s Department of Education and Early Learning (“DEEL”), with support from an external evaluation team led by Third Section Intelligence (“3SI”),<sup>5</sup> presents this Comprehensive Evaluation Strategy for the Seattle Preschool Program (“SPP”), as required by Resolution 31527, to outline how the standards and operations of SPP will be assessed during the four-year demonstration phase, which span school years (“SY”) 2015–19. Section 3 of ~~the Seattle City Council’s~~ [Resolution 31527](#) states:

The Mayor shall submit a **Comprehensive Evaluation Strategy** (“Evaluation Strategy”) to the City Council for review and **approval by ordinance** no later than June 1, 2015 ~~August 3, 2015~~.<sup>6</sup> The Evaluation Strategy for the program shall be designed with independent evaluation experts. The Evaluation Strategy will use both process and impact evaluations, as well as on-going continuous quality improvement controls. The Evaluation Strategy shall address what, when, and how evaluations will be carried out and identify dates for submitting completed evaluations to the City Council. The Evaluation Strategy will also identify the key evaluation questions to be answered for each type of evaluation undertaken. In addition to outlining the types of process and impact evaluations that will be undertaken to gauge preschool and provider quality and

---

<sup>4</sup> City of Seattle Proposition 1B, preamble

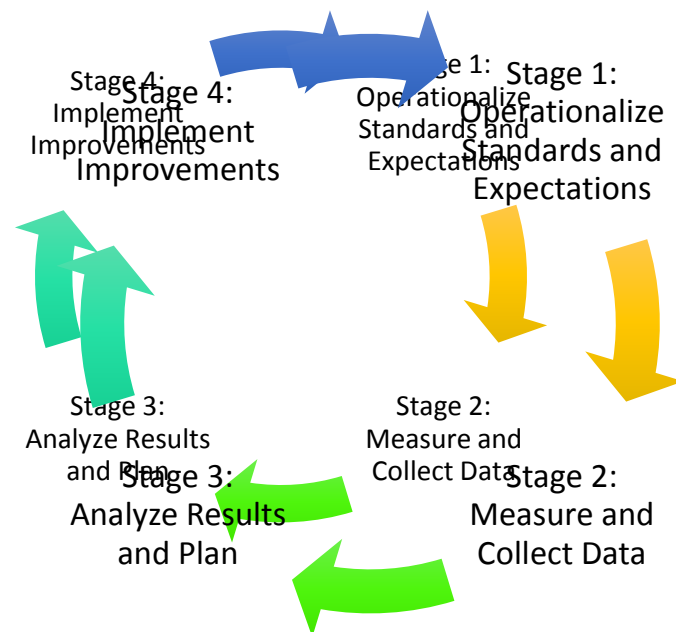
<sup>5</sup> See Attachment #1 for full list of contributors.

<sup>6</sup> An extension to this deadline to August 3, 2015 has been approved by the Seattle City Council’s President, Tim Burgess.

child impacts, the Evaluation Strategy shall include a process evaluation specifically designed to assess the City’s administration, oversight, scale up, and implementation of its Seattle Preschool Program beginning no later than the end of Year 1 of program implementation with an initial report due at the end of Year 2 and an update due at the end of Year 3. All evaluations shall be conducted by independent, external evaluation expert(s). Ideally, the Evaluation Strategy will identify on-going research partnerships with institutions with noted expertise in early learning and evaluation.

To meet these requirements, the City will apply a Continuous Quality Improvement (“CQI”) framework to all aspects of the evaluation.

In the CQI model, data are collected, results are analyzed, and improvements are made cyclically.<sup>7</sup> Evaluation is continuous. A key benefit of the CQI evaluation approach is that it is responsive. SPP



evaluation activities are intended to inform practice in classrooms, at sites, and at the City as well as report on programmatic quality and progress. Analysis is iterative and informs improvements happening at every level. As such, CQI allows DEEL to strike a balance between adhering to a consistent evaluation strategy and adjusting to emerging needs and changes as SPP expands, evolves, and improves.

Using a CQI framework also demands that the SPP evaluation strategy be utilization-focused. In other words, data analyses are meant to inform specific audiences not only

if the program is effective, but *how* it is effective or ineffective and what can be done to improve it.

**Figure 1 CQI cycle for the demonstration phase of SPP**  
Figure 1 CQI cycle for the demonstration phase of SPP

DEEL will launch SPP in the 2015–16 school year and expand it rapidly over the next three years. Table 1 shows estimated targets for number of classrooms and children served (note that these are estimates and not fixed targets).

<sup>7</sup> As required by Section 7.A of Ordinance 124509, the Levy Oversight Committee will provide advice on proposed course corrections, program modifications, and program elimination.



Table 1: Estimated targets for SPP classrooms and children served

Implementation Year	School Year	Targeted Number of Classrooms	Estimated Number of Children Served <del>Per Year</del>
<b>Year 1</b>	2015–16	14 classrooms	280 children
<b>Year 2</b>	2016–17	39 classrooms	780 children
<b>Year 3</b>	2017–18	70 classrooms	1,400 children
<b>Year 4</b>	2018–19	100 classrooms	2,000 children

SPP’s four-year demonstration phase serves three purposes. The first is to ascertain proof of concept. In other words, can SPP demonstrate that the program has been implemented with fidelity in Seattle’s cultural context using a mixed-delivery approach,<sup>8</sup> and does it have the capacity to produce positive outcomes for Seattle’s children? The second purpose is to build capacity and infrastructure in the Seattle area to support quality improvement. Specifically, in the demonstration phase, the City of Seattle’s Department of Education and Early Learning will:

- Design a process through which community preschool providers can access funding to improve, expand, and renovate facilities to provide additional classroom space for SPP.
- Work with local community colleges to ~~ensure~~make higher education programs ~~are~~ accessible and responsive to the needs of the early learning workforce.
- Work with the Seattle School District and State partners to align systems and leverage resources in a non-duplicative manner.
- Work with community partners to create a site-level assessment rubric that accurately evaluates providers’ progress toward SPP’s quality standards and identifies areas where support is needed.
- Support providers in achieving SPP’s high-~~standards~~ through coaching and professional development.
- Identify practical approaches for supporting preschool provider agencies in meeting requirements and braiding funding from multiple sources (such as the State and federal government) to provide high-quality preschool services.

The third purpose of the SPP demonstration phase is to create processes and norms that support continuous quality improvement (CQI) through evaluation. This document, *The Comprehensive Evaluation Strategy for the Seattle Preschool Program*, provides information about how DEEL and contracted evaluators will regularly assess and report on progress toward achieving programmatic goals.

More information about the goals and processes of SPP can be found in [The Seattle Preschool Program Plan](#), which is a compilation of all documents, legislation, policies, and procedures for the program, including how feedback received from community engagement efforts were incorporated into the Plan.

<sup>8</sup> Mixed delivery is a preschool service delivery model wherein classrooms may be managed by either the public schools or community-based providers.

## CQI Stage One: Operationalize Standards and Expectations

---

Evaluations will be conducted through a partnership between DEEL and contracted evaluators. Each partner will have roles and responsibilities related to: the creation or selection of evaluation tools; the collection, analysis, and reporting of data; and the identification of course corrections as needed throughout the SPP Demonstration Phase. The four-year evaluation process has been divided into five tiers. Table 2 shows the timeline for each of the evaluation tiers.

Three tiers of evaluation using the CQI framework will begin in Year 1 (SY 2015–16):

- Tier 1: Evaluation of SPP compliance with approved quality standards and processes
- Tier 2: Evaluation of SPP processes that support quality improvement and organizational change
- Tier 3: Evaluation of SPP impacts on child outcomes and classroom quality

At the end of Year 1 (SY 2015-16), a fourth tier of evaluation will begin:

- Tier 4: Evaluation of City’s administration, oversight, scale-up, and implementation of SPP

For Tier 4, an initial report will be produced at the end of Year 2 (SY 2016–17), and an update will be produced at the end of Year 3 (SY 2017–18).

The Family Child Care (FCC) pilot evaluation is the fifth and final tier of evaluation:

- Tier 5: Evaluation of the SPP Family Child Care Pilot Program

A Family Child Care (“FCC”) Pilot Program will begin no later than Year 3 (SY 2017–18) to assess whether family child care providers that meet SPP eligibility criteria can produce comparable results to SPP center-based providers. Timing for the FCC pilot will be finalized in spring 2016 and the evaluation of the pilot will begin concurrent with its implementation. Details of the plan for the development and evaluation of the FCC pilot are provided in the section on [Evaluation Tier 5](#).

**Table 2: Timeline for Evaluation Tiers**

Evaluation Tier		SY 2015-16	SY 2016-17	SY 2017-18	SY 2018-19
Tier 1	Design <sup>9</sup>	X			
	Execution	X	X	X	X
	Report	X	X	X	X
Tier 2	Design	X			
	Execution	X	X	X	X
	Report	X	X	X	X
Tier 3	Design	X			
	Execution	X	X	X	X
	Report	X	X	X	X
Tier 4	Design		X		
	Execution		X	X	
	Report		X	X	
Tier 5 <sup>10</sup>	Design	X			
	Execution		X	X	
	Report		X	X	X

### Evaluation Tiers 1–3

Year 1 of SPP (SY 2015–16) will focus on the development and refinement of SPP programs and processes and Evaluation Tiers 1–3. Table 3 describes the types of questions that will be explored under each evaluation tier, the team responsible for data collection (DEEL, contracted evaluators, or a combination of both), and the sources of data or the tools that will be used to collect data.

These data sources and data collection tools are described in more detail in “[CQI Stage Two: Measure and Collect Data](#).” [Though specific tools are named in this Strategy, DEEL has the authority to use updated versions of these tools or substitute the named tools for similar tools if needed.](#)

<sup>9</sup> Design refers to the initial design of the evaluation, not ~~on-going~~ongoing course corrections as identified through the CQI process.

<sup>10</sup> After Year 2 (SY 2016-17) the FCC evaluation will be incorporated into Tiers 1-3.

**Table 3: Summary of Research Questions, Evaluation Tiers, and Responsibilities**

Research Question	Evaluation Tier(s) <sup>11</sup>	Data Source(s) or Collection Tool(s)	
		DEEL Team	Evaluation Team
Questions about the Quality of City Processes			
Are SPP classrooms located in neighborhoods that align with SPP contracting priorities?	1	Provider Contract	
Are classrooms meeting quality thresholds?	1	CLASS, <sup>12</sup> ECERS <sup>13</sup>	
Are sites operating programming 6 hours/day, 180 days/year?	1	Site-Level Assessment Rubric, Observation	
Are sites sustaining SPP-approved class sizes and adult/child ratios?	1	Site-Level Assessment Rubric, Observation	
Is professional development aligned with SPP design standards, processes, and principles?	2		Director, Coach, Teacher Interviews/Surveys
What are teacher qualification levels in relation to SPP education and certification requirements? Are they on track to meet requirements by Year 4?	1, 2	Provider Staffing Report	MERIT; Tool: Director Survey/Interviews
Is DEEL supporting sites in meeting the needs of children from special populations?	1, 2	Site-Level Assessment Rubric	Director, Teacher, Family Interviews/Surveys
Is DEEL supporting sites to understand and meet requirements?	1, 2	Site-Level Assessment Rubric	Director and Coach Interviews
How do SPP participants compare to the demographics of children in the surrounding neighborhood and in Seattle more generally?	1, 3	OSPI, <sup>14</sup> Seattle Public Schools (SPS), Census	Family Interview/Survey
Questions about Provider/Center Quality			
Are sites culturally responsive to the populations they serve?	1	Site-Level Assessment Rubric, Observation	Family Interviews/Surveys
Have classrooms implemented approved curricula?	1, 2	Site-Level Assessment Rubric	Director Interviews/Surveys
Are administrative and instructional staff completing appropriate professional development?	1, 2	Site-Level Assessment Rubric	MERIT

<sup>11</sup> Some questions will be addressed in multiple tiers by both DEEL and contracted evaluators.

<sup>12</sup> The Classrooms Assessment Scoring System ("CLASS"). For more information on CLASS, see [CQI Stage Two](#).

<sup>13</sup> The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale

<sup>14</sup> Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction ("OSPI")

Research Question	Evaluation Tier(s) <sup>11</sup>	Data Source(s) or Collection Tool(s)	
		DEEL Team	Evaluation Team
What are teacher compensation levels?	1, 2	Provider Staffing Report	Director Interviews/Surveys, Teacher Survey
How do supports for Dual Language Learners vary between providers? How do various approaches affect quality?	1, 2, 3	Site-Level Assessment Rubric	Director, Teacher, Family Interviews/Surveys; Child Assessments
Are site staff engaging appropriately with coaches and DEEL staff in continuous improvement?	2		Director, Coach, Teacher Interviews/Surveys
How are center directors supporting teachers and children to succeed?	2		Director, Coach, Teacher Interviews/Surveys
<b>Questions about Classroom Quality</b>			
Have classrooms implemented approved curricula with fidelity?	1, 2	Program Quality Assessment (PQA)	Site-Level Assessment Rubric
Are teaching practices aligned with the Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines? <sup>15</sup>	2		Teaching Strategies GOLD® (TS GOLD®); Tool: CLASS
How are teachers developing the skills and knowledge to provide high-quality instruction?	2		MERIT; Teacher Interviews/Surveys
How are teachers practicing data driven instruction with the use of formative assessment?	2		TS GOLD®; Director, Coach, Teacher Interviews/Surveys
How are center directors and coaches using classroom observation data to support teachers?	2		Director, Coach, Teacher Interviews/Surveys
How is classroom quality being affected by SPP participation?	2, 3		CLASS, ECERS
<b>Questions about Child Engagement and Outcomes</b>			
What classroom activities do children engage in and are they interested and actively participating?	2, 3		ECERS
How do SPP child attendance rates compare to national averages?	2, 3	Provider Reports to DEEL	Provider Reports to DEEL
How does participation in SPP affect the	3		CLASS, ECERS

<sup>15</sup> For more information on the Washington State early Learning and Development Guidelines, see: <http://www.del.wa.gov/development/guidelines/>

Research Question	Evaluation Tier(s) <sup>11</sup>	Data Source(s) or Collection Tool(s)	
		DEEL Team	Evaluation Team
quality of children’s experiences year to year?			
How does quality vary within SPP across children and providers?	3		CLASS, ECERS
What are the trends related to child outcomes over time and between classrooms?	3		Child Assessments

In addition to the research questions listed above, the mid-year and annual DEEL reports will provide updates on the statuses of the system-building efforts listed in the introduction.

### Evaluation Tier 4

As stated in Resolution 31527, an independent evaluator will begin assessment of the City’s administration (Tier 4) of SPP in 2016. The evaluator will leverage data available from Years 1 and 2 (SYs 2015-17) evaluations and reports to assess City progress toward creating a sustainable infrastructure for supporting SPP. These Year 1 and 2 data will also be used by the City to make improvements to its processes and administration as data become available. Additionally, the City expects that after the evaluator is engaged, updates from the evaluator will contribute to ‘course corrections’ even before the evaluation report is disseminated. The evaluator will conduct outreach to determine how provider agencies, teachers, families, and early learning stakeholders view the City’s administration of SPP including, but not limited to:

- The provider identification process
- The enrollment process
- Community outreach
- Stakeholder engagement
- Use of the City’s Racial Equity Toolkit and responsiveness to recommendations<sup>16</sup>

### Evaluation Tier 5

The SPP Action Plan states “After initial program start-up the City will develop a Family Child Care (FCC) Pilot program to assess whether, and how, partnerships with FCC providers can be implemented to achieve the same quality standards attained by center- and school-based providers, in a cost-effective manner.”

<sup>16</sup> The Toolkit was used by DEEL with the support of City and community representatives in the development of this Strategy to review the plans for the family survey, child assessments, developing the FCC pilot, and supporting workforce development.

The evaluation of the Family Child Care Pilot Program (Tier 5) will be developed to assess whether family child care (FCC) providers that meet SPP eligibility criteria can produce comparable results to SPP center-based providers. Contracted evaluators will design the FCC Pilot Evaluation in 2015–16 for implementation no later than Year 3 (SY 2017-18). Contracted evaluators will engage in the following development activities beginning in fall 2015 and culminating in spring 2016:

1. Review FCC models across the nation delivering high-quality programming—especially those that are integrated into city-funded pre-kindergarten (“Pre-K”) programs—to ~~ensure the FCC Pilot Evaluation captures~~capture lessons learned. This research will include what works and what does not work, and create a basis for the construction of the pilot.
2. Engage and interview personnel from local organizations, identified by DEEL, that represent diverse perspectives on FCCs, such as Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the union that represents FCC providers; Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD), which is one of nine regional educational agencies created by the Washington legislature and provides support services for early learning and kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (K-12) providers; Child Care Resources, a nonprofit organization supporting early learning providers; and key leaders from the FCC provider community. These interviews will surface critical issues for the FCC community that need to be addressed in the FCC Pilot and Evaluation design.
3. The City will appoint community representatives to an FCC Pilot Advisory Committee. Advisory Committee members will be asked to provide meaningful feedback to DEEL and the contracted evaluation team on the design of the FCC pilot and evaluation, communicate the needs of the FCC community based on their knowledge and experience, and help create buy-in amongst FCC providers who are likely to participate in the FCC Pilot. The City will strive to appoint Advisory Committee members who represent the diversity of race, language, and culture in Seattle’s FCC community. The Advisory Committee will:
  - Meet three times in Year 1 (SY 2015–16) of SPP to agree on the structure of the FCC Evaluation Pilot before the contracted evaluators submit the FCC Evaluation Pilot plan in 2016.
  - Receive incentives for their time and participation in the form of compensation or professional development credits.
  - Include leaders from dual-language learning and immigrant communities. Interpretation and childcare will also be provided.

Evaluation of the FCC Pilot will be incorporated into the overall comprehensive evaluation of SPP. ~~Thus, DEEL and the contracted evaluators will need to ensure that measurement instruments can be effectively adapted to the FCC setting. The FCC Pilot Advisory Committee will advise on these adaptations.~~FCC Pilot Advisory Committee recommendations will be shared with DEEL as the plan for the pilot and the evaluation of the pilot are developed. A final plan for implementation of the pilot, including criteria for evaluation and a timeline will be presented to the Levy Oversight Committee for review in 2016.

## CQI Stage Two: Measure and Collect Data

This section describes the data sources, data collection tools, and data collection methods mentioned in Table 3.

### Existing Data Sources

In 2010, the Washington State Legislature passed Senate Bill 6759, which required the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (“OSPI”), with assistance and support from the Washington State Department of Early Learning (“DEL”), to convene a technical working group to develop a comprehensive plan for a voluntary program of early learning. The plan that resulted, *Washington Preschool Program: Increasing Access and Outcomes for Children (2011)*, prompted elected officials in Seattle to explore the possibility of a program that would provide voluntary, universal preschool in Seattle.<sup>17</sup> Since then, the State of Washington has developed an infrastructure for supporting and improving quality in early learning programs across the state. DEEL staff has worked with representatives from DEL to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) to maximize quality and access to high-quality preschool through coordinated efforts that reinforce and build on each other, and to maximize resources and avoid duplication between City- and State-managed resources.<sup>18</sup> Throughout the Demonstration Phase of SPP, DEEL will continue to work with DEL staff to:

- ~~Ensure~~Use programmatic resources ~~for implementing SPP are used~~ efficiently and effectively in areas of joint concern.
- Align practices, responsibilities, and timelines.
- Address data sharing, academic expectations, curriculum alignment, and professional development.
- ~~Ensure that~~Connect families ~~are connected~~ with available information and resources.

In relation to data sharing, DEEL and DEL will share information as is permissible and mutually beneficial. DEEL will access data from MERIT and PRISM (described below) through DEL.

### *Washington State Department of Early Learning Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT)*

MERIT contains teacher-level records that provide information about professional development hours, educational attainment and credentialing, teacher demographic data, and employment. Data from MERIT will be used for two separate purposes:

- To track progress each year toward degree and credential requirements.
- To track professional development hours and, when available, the training content.

<sup>17</sup> For more information, access the plan at:

[http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/research/docs/PreschoolWorkgroupFinalReport\\_11012011.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/research/docs/PreschoolWorkgroupFinalReport_11012011.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> The full text the MOU is included in the Appendix of the Seattle Preschool Program Plan.



### *PRISM*

The PRISM data warehouse, managed by WA DEL, tracks data for all the standards associated with Early Achievers (“EA”), Washington’s Quality Rating and Improvement System. It is built from the WELS system. WELS was designed for early childhood school administration agencies to track the quality of child care centers.

The evaluation team will collect EA ratings for SPP sites, including CLASS and ECERS data, from PRISM. This will provide a baseline to measure improvement over time as SPP classrooms fully implement program standards. PRISM includes item-level scores which will allow evaluators to observe specific elements of quality and analyze patterns in quality within and across providers.

### *Classroom Observation Tools*

Standardized classroom observation tools provide frameworks for assessing classroom quality. These tools help identify the strengths of the teacher’s approach to instruction, and areas in which more support or training would be beneficial. Research shows that high-quality classroom environments and practices produce comparatively more benefits for children than low-quality environments and practices.

#### *The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)*

CLASS PreK is an assessment tool used to rate classroom practices in preschool by measuring the interactions between children and adults. It is one of the assessments that contribute to a provider agency’s Early Achievers rating. CLASS is widely used in Pre-K classrooms as it describes multiple dimensions of teaching that are linked to student achievement and development, and it has been validated in over 2,000 classrooms. The teaching practices assessed are broadly grouped into three domains: instructional supports, emotional support, and classroom organization.

CLASS uses a 7-point rating scale. A score of 1 or 2 indicates low range quality; a score of 6 or 7 indicates high quality.<sup>19</sup> Each dimension and domain is assigned a score during each 20-minute observation period. Observers watch for 20 minutes and then record their observations in cycles. They also record the number of children and adults in the classroom during each 20-minute cycle.

CLASS-certified observers spend two days in training. They must pass a test confirming their reliability on the tool before using it in the field, and be recertified at regular intervals to confirm reliability.

Descriptions of the CLASS dimensions are provided in Table 4.

---

<sup>19</sup> The inverse is true for the “Negative Climate” dimension.

**Table 4. Preschool CLASS Dimension Descriptions**

Domain	Dimension	Attributes Measured
<b>Emotional Support</b>	Positive Climate	The emotional connection between teachers and children and among children; the warmth, respect, and enjoyment communicated by verbal and nonverbal interactions.
	Negative Climate	The overall level of expressed negativity in the classroom. The frequency, quality, and intensity of teacher and peer negativity are key to this dimension.
	Teacher Sensitivity	Teacher's awareness of and responsiveness to children's academic and emotional needs.
	Regard for Student Perspectives	The degree to which the teacher's interactions with children and classroom activities place an emphasis on children's interests, motivations, and points-of-view and encourage student responsibility and autonomy.
<b>Classroom Organization</b>	Behavior Management	The teacher's ability to provide clear behavior expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior.
	Productivity	How well the teacher manages instructional time and routines and provides activities for children so that they have the opportunity to be involved in learning activities.
	Instructional Learning Formats	The ways in which teachers maximize children's interests, engagement, and abilities to learn from lessons and activities.
<b>Instructional Support</b>	Concept Development	The teacher's use of instructional discussions and activities to promote children's higher-order thinking skills and cognition; the teacher's focus on understanding rather than on rote instruction.
	Quality of Feedback	The degree to which the teacher provides feedback that expands learning and understanding and encourages continued participation.
	Language Modeling	The effectiveness and amount of teacher's use of language-stimulation and language-facilitation techniques.

#### *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)*

The ECERS tool measures classroom environmental quality on a 7-point scale, indicating a range of quality from inadequate (1) to excellent (7). ECERS-R (Revised) is currently used to assess quality in the State's Early Achievers program. The ECERS-3 (an update from ECERS-R) provides more insights into the content of *what* is taught in preschool—rather than simply *how* it is taught—than previous versions. The ECERS-3 groups 35 items into six subscales: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language-Reasoning, Learning Activities, Interaction, and Program Structure. Like CLASS, ECERS assessors are trained and certified reliable on the tool before using it in the field.

Each subscale is assigned a score during each 20-minute observation period (observers watch for 20 minutes and then record for 20 minutes in cycles). Descriptions of each ECERS-3 dimension are provided in Table 5.

**Table 5: ECERS-3 Subscale Descriptions**

Subscale	Attributes Measured
<b>Space and Furnishings</b>	Indoor and outdoor space, room arrangement, organization, display, furnishings, and equipment.
<b>Personal Care Routines</b>	Daily routines like greeting and departure, meals, naptime, and toileting as well as health and safety practices.
<b>Language-Reasoning</b>	Classroom's formal and informal communication, language, and reasoning opportunities.
<b>Learning Activities</b>	Learning opportunities in each of the areas of the classroom including fine motor, art, music/movement, blocks, sand/water, dramatic play, nature/science, math/number, use of video/computer, and diversity.
<b>Interactions</b>	Supervision of children, discipline, staff-child interactions, and interactions among children.
<b>Program Structure</b>	Classroom operations and schedule, including groupings, transitions, and flexibility.

## Child Assessment Tools

SPP will use two types of nationally-utilized, norm-referenced child assessments: teacher-administered and independent assessor-administered.

### *Teacher-Administered*

The teacher-administered tools are Teaching Strategies GOLD® ("TS GOLD®") and an approved assessment for screening children for developmental and behavioral concerns.

The TS GOLD® assessment is completed three times per year as the teacher interacts with children on a daily basis and observes their skills relative to six areas of development and learning: social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and math (see Table 6). Teachers use the results to measure child progress towards kindergarten readiness and to tailor instruction to children's identified areas of strength and need. An adaptation of TS GOLD® is used in Washington State with children in kindergarten. It is known as the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills ("WaKIDS"). Provider agencies that have contracted with the City to provide preschool services have been using TS GOLD® since 2011.

**Table 6: TS GOLD® Child Assessment Description**

Areas of Development and Learning	Objectives
<b>Social–Emotional</b>	1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors 2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships 3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
<b>Physical</b>	4. Demonstrates traveling skills 5. Demonstrates balancing skills 6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills 7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
<b>Language</b>	8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language 9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs 10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
<b>Cognitive</b>	11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning 12. Remembers and connects experiences 13. Uses classification skills 14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
<b>Literacy</b>	15. Demonstrates phonological awareness 16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet 17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses 18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts 19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills
<b>Mathematics</b>	20. Uses number concepts and operations 21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes 22. Compares and measures 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

SPP sites will be required to screen all children for developmental and behavioral concerns ~~within 90 days of the start of the school year~~.<sup>20</sup> If not previously trained, SPP instructional staff will be trained to use the following tools:

- Early Screening Inventory (ESI) or Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ)
- Ages & Stages Questionnaires®: Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE)

### *Independent Assessor-Administered*

The tools administered by the independent assessors consist of interactive activities, completed individually with children. These activities measure the child’s development as related to literacy, numeracy, and executive function. The group of assessments takes approximately 20–25 minutes per child and will be administered as part of pre-tests (fall) and post-tests (spring).

<sup>20</sup> The contracted evaluator’s report recommends using the Child Behavioral Checklist (“CBCL”). Since the SPP Implementation Plan names the ESI or the ASQ as the screening tools to be used in SPP, one of these tools will be used in lieu of the CBCL.

Assessors are selected on the basis of experience with children and knowledge of early childhood development. When possible, assessment personnel will be selected to match the culture, ~~race~~, and languages of children being assessed. Assessors are trained to support children as they encounter difficult questions, to be sensitive to children's body language, and are required to provide breaks or stop assessments when needed. Before meeting with individual children, assessors will distribute informed consent/assent forms to all parents and legal guardians in multiple languages as needed. Informed consents include information on the study and its goals, what participation implies for the families, risks and benefits, duration, incentives if these are part of the study, freedom to withdraw, explicit assurance of participant's confidentiality/anonymity in investigator's reports of findings and information on contact persons. Consent forms require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before they are used in the field. A field collection team will partner with SPP in efforts to communicate with families. While obtaining informed consent presents the possibility of selection bias, the procedures proposed by the contracted evaluators to minimize it.<sup>21</sup>

The assessments recommended by the evaluators have been used nationally with children from diverse linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. They are valid and reliable measures of child development, however, most early childhood assessments are only available in English and Spanish and cannot be translated into other languages and normed by the City of Seattle nor its consultants.<sup>22</sup> If the child's home language is Spanish, he or she will be assessed using both languages. If the child's home language is neither Spanish nor English, these data will be analyzed with that lens. Whenever possible, assessors will speak the language of the child being assessed so that directions can be given in his or her primary language.

#### **Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test IV (PPVT-IV)**

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test IV and its Spanish counterpart the *Test de Vocabulario e Imágenes Peabody* will assess language development. The PPVT-IV measures receptive vocabulary and is considered a broad assessment of what the child understands in his or her language. Assessors present to a child a set of four images, from which the child picks the image they think represents the word they hear. The measure is considered valid and reliable.<sup>23</sup> The PPVT IV is the most frequently administered literacy assessment and has been normed in both Spanish and English on large numbers of children.

#### **Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement, 3rd Edition**

The Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement, 3rd Edition and its Spanish counterpart the *Bateria Psico-Educativa Revisada de Woodcock-Muñoz (WM-R)* will assess children's development of mathematical

---

<sup>21</sup> Specifically, sampling a small number of children from each SPP classroom minimizes the possibility of selection bias based on requiring consent.

<sup>22</sup> This is an expensive process that takes years.

<sup>23</sup> Reliability refers to the degree to which a measure is consistent. A measure is said to have a high reliability if it produces similar results under consistent conditions. Validity refers to the accuracy of an assessment -- whether or not it measures what it is supposed to measure.

and literacy skills development. These measures have been used in numerous large-scale preschool studies and are consistently reliable and valid.<sup>24</sup>

### Assessments of Executive Function

Assessors will use at least three of the following tools to measure children's executive function:

- **Peg Tapping Task:** Measures cognitive inhibitory control. It has shown high predictive validity on the Vanderbilt study and great performance.<sup>25</sup> Available in English and Spanish.
- **Dimensional Change Card Sort:** Measures attention shifting. Available in English and Spanish.
- **Head Toes Knees Shoulders:** Measures inhibitory control and attention. The Head Toes Knees Shoulder task has been widely used and is also a consistent predictor of emergent mathematics, vocabulary, and literacy in preschool children. Available in English and Spanish.
- **Task Orientation Questionnaire:** Measures compliance and attention. The scale shows predictive validity of cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes and executive function measures and has been validated in the United States. Available in English and Spanish.<sup>26</sup>

### DEEL and Evaluator Created Tools

Since SPP was developed for the Seattle context, many programmatic elements cannot be measured by pre-existing tools. To capture relevant information that will inform the development of the program as it expands, DEEL and the contracted evaluators will create a series of surveys, interviews, and rubrics.

#### *Participating Families Survey or Interview*

In order to gather contextual information on the child's out-of-school environment, the contracted evaluators will develop and administer a family survey/interview. The instrument will be adapted from a family survey currently used by the University of Washington's Center for Childcare Quality and Early Learning as part of Early Achievers in Washington State. The survey will be optional. In most cases, surveys will be used (translated, when applicable) but if a family member prefers have the questions presented to them verbally, a program representative, such as DEEL's Human Services Coordinator, will be available.

All survey/interview responses will be kept confidential and used to improve the quality of families' and children's SPP experience. The family survey will use questions that have been included in representative national studies.

---

<sup>24</sup> Early, et al., 2007; Wong, Cook, Barnett, & Jung, 2008.

<sup>25</sup> Lipsey, M., Nesbitt, K., Farran, D., Dong, N., Fuhs, M., & Wilson, S. (2014, May 1). Learning-Related Cognitive Self-Regulation Measures for Prekindergarten Children with Predictive Validity for Academic Achievement (Working Paper). Retrieved June 10, 2015, from <https://my.vanderbilt.edu/cogselfregulation/files/2012/11/Self-Reg-summary-paper-5-7-141.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> Smith-Donald, R., Raver, C. C., Hayes, T., & Richardson, B. (2007). Preliminary construct and concurrent validity of the Preschool Self-regulation Assessment (PSRA) for field-based research. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 22(2), 173-187.

This will allow valid comparisons to families in national datasets. The following types of information will be requested:

- Family perceptions of early education, child care programs, and school attendance.
- Family perspectives on the benefits and challenges of SPP including impacts on their child's learning and development.
- Learning and other activities in the home.
- Information about other types of care and education the child may receive outside the home.
- Basic child and family demographics

#### *Teacher Surveys/Interviews and Center Director Surveys/Interviews*

The evaluation team will conduct teacher surveys or interviews in Year 2 (SY 2016–17). In Year 1 (SY 2015–16), the contracted evaluators will conduct in-depth interviews with a sample of teachers and all center directors to inform the content and format of the surveys/interviews in subsequent years.

Surveys will be used to measure and understand the implementation and integration of SPP program standards and whether and how standards support child learning and adult-child interactions. Surveys are intended to supplement and provide context for classroom observations and child assessments. The teacher and center director surveys will ask questions such as:

- How are teachers using data to inform instruction?
- To what extent is DEEL providing teachers with technical assistance and other supports necessary for the teacher to be successful?
- How are center directors spending time and resources?
- To what extent do DEEL program policies and requirements support program implementation and improvement?
- Is DEEL providing center directors with the resources necessary to successfully implement the SPP?

#### *DEEL Coach and Education Specialist Focus Groups*

Coach and education specialist focus groups will be used to measure and understand their roles in the implementation of SPP program standards with center directors and teachers. In the first year of the SPP, the evaluation team will hold informal discussions about progress, provider technical assistance needs, and DEEL capabilities and resources. Beginning in 2016–17, as the program expands, the evaluation team will facilitate focus groups with DEEL Coaches and Education Specialists. The evaluation team will partner closely with DEEL in SPP's first year to create a moderator guide for focus groups. Data from focus groups will be used to measure the effectiveness of coaching and technical assistance in helping providers incorporate SPP program standards and improve quality.

#### *Site-Level Assessment Rubric*

DEEL will work with SPP providers to develop a rubric to collect data about the implementation of the SPP standards. This rubric will be adapted from a combination of current practice and examples from

other programs. In particular, the Site-Level Assessment rubric will be used to assess the extent to which providers are implementing program standards related to:

- Curriculum implementation and training
- Integration of Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines
- Culturally relevant, anti-bias instruction
- Use of data to inform practice
- Class size and adult/child ratio
- Program hours
- Family engagement
- Meeting the needs of special populations<sup>27</sup>
- Integration of Dual Language Learners ([DLL](#))

Data from the rubric will give the DEEL team continuous feedback on how to improve service delivery.

---

<sup>27</sup> As defined in the [Seattle Preschool Program Plan](#).



## CQI Stage Three: Analyze and Plan

---

*CQI Stage Three* is the point in the CQI cycle when evaluators use statistics and other methods to generate results that can be used to inform decision-making. For the SPP Evaluation, results from the analyses will help DEEL and providers identify opportunities for improvement, and allow DEEL, the Seattle Mayor's Office, the City Council, and the SPP Levy Oversight Committee track SPP's progress toward achieving its goals. ~~DEEL and the evaluation team will ensure that analyses are utilization-focused. In other words, all~~ All analyses will be used by the program team, SPP providers, and other stakeholders.

Since the primary ~~goals~~goal of SPP is to eliminate the kindergarten readiness gap and prepare children for school, all analyses will report the program's progress in achieving these goals. In Seattle today, economic and racial disparities persist in third-grade reading levels, fourth-grade math levels, and high school graduation rates. On average, children from low-income families and children of color have fewer opportunities to become appropriately prepared for the social and academic challenges of the kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade ("K-12") system than do their peers. A readiness ~~gap~~gap exists from the time children enter school. ~~In Seattle, it is our~~ the goal ~~to ensure~~of SPP that every child in Seattle has the opportunity and support to be ready for kindergarten and to thrive in school and life.

Supported by the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative ("RSJI"), which has a "long-term goal to change the underlying system that creates race-based disparities in our community and to achieve racial equity,"<sup>28</sup> and representatives of the Seattle early learning community, DEEL has anchored the SPP Implementation and Program Plans in how each standard contributes to racial equity and social justice.<sup>29,30</sup> All reports generated through this evaluation will include data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, household income, and home language when available. DEEL will report progress no less than twice per year to the SPP Levy Oversight Committee in the Mid-Year and Annual Reports. These reports, along with those produced by contracted evaluators, will provide bottom-line analyses about whether and how SPP moves the needle on social, emotional, pre-academic indicators, and race-based disproportionalities in kindergarten readiness.

This section provides an overview of the analyses anticipated for Evaluation Tiers 1-3. The analyses of Tier 4 by an external evaluator who will be contracted in spring 2016. The analyses of Tier 5 will be informed by the FCC Pilot Evaluation Plan, due in spring 2015.

---

<sup>28</sup> The City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative: <http://www.seattle.gov/rsji/>

<sup>29</sup> Seattle Preschool Program Plan:  
[http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/SPP\\_ProgramPlan2015-16\\_Final.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/SPP_ProgramPlan2015-16_Final.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> SPP Implementation Plan:  
[http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/SPPImplementationPlan\\_April1\\_PostCommittee.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OFE/AboutTheLevy/EarlyLearning/SPPImplementationPlan_April1_PostCommittee.pdf)

## DEEL Analyses

### *Tier 1: Evaluation of SPP compliance with approved quality standards and processes*

DEEL will analyze Tier 1 evaluation data to determine the degree to which SPP complies with its approved quality standards and processes. These data and reports will determine if SPP is on track to meet the benchmarks of high-quality programs as described in the program standards and, if not, the types of course corrections that decision-makers should consider. In addition to DEEL SPP Levy Mid-Year and Annual Reports, DEEL will conduct analyses at different intervals depending on frequency of data collection. For example, program hours are unlikely to change during the school year and therefore can be assessed once a year. Conversely, the way teachers implement new curriculum may improve over the course of the school year and should be analyzed quarterly. DEEL will validate results of continuous self-evaluations at each SPP site until their program targets are met.

### Contracted Evaluator Analysis

#### *Tier 2: Evaluation of SPP processes that support quality improvement and organizational change*

The process evaluation, which will assess the implementation of the SPP design, provides a basis for determining how successfully providers and SPP overall are in adhering to program standards. If the program model is not working as intended, process evaluation provides a way to identify implementation challenges. Process evaluation for the SPP will focus on activities that directly relate to adult-child interactions, such as the use of assessments to inform classroom instruction, the provision of supports for SPP teachers as they improve practice, and the degree to which children are interested and engaged in classroom activities.

Under the SPP plan, the number of classrooms will grow from approximately 14 classrooms in 2015–16 to a target of 100 classrooms in 2018–19. The evaluation will provide an annual snapshot of each cohort of providers as they progress. In Year 1, contracted evaluators will analyze the 2015–16 cohort of providers with a focus on quality improvement, fidelity of curriculum implementation, progress toward teacher credentials, and other process evaluation indicators to establish an independent baseline. The evaluation team will compare all future analyses of the 2015–16 cohort to their baseline. In Year 2, SPP will add a larger cohort, with new classrooms, centers, and teachers supported by a growing set of Coaches and staff at DEEL and the evaluation team will conduct an analysis to establish an independent baseline for the 2016–17 cohort. The evaluation team will continue to establish independent baselines for each subsequent cohort.

#### *Expected Targets for the Demonstration Phase*

First Year of a Classroom's Participation in SPP:

- Minimum thresholds for CLASS and ECERS are obtained.
- Approved curriculum has been implemented and teachers trained on the curriculum.
- Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines are understood and implemented by teachers.
- The educational attainment of all teachers has been reported.

- Center directors and teachers are using data and DEEL Coach and Education Specialist support to improve their practices.
- Coaches are using information from the evaluation and the Site-Level Assessment rubric to guide their coaching.

#### Second Year of a Classroom's Participation in SPP:

- CLASS and ECERS scores have improved beyond minimum thresholds.
- Teachers are making progress toward implementing the curriculum with fidelity.
- Child TS GOLD® scores are increasing in the areas that are aligned with Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines.
- Teachers are progressing towards program standards.
- Center directors are using data and DEEL Coach and Education Specialist support to improve center quality.
- Coaches are using information from their own classroom observations to inform their work with teachers.
- Teachers are using newly obtained knowledge to improve their practices.

#### Third Year of a Classroom's Participation in SPP:

- CLASS and ECERS scores are forecasted, given current trends, to meet quality thresholds.
- Teachers are implementing the curriculum with fidelity.
- Child TS GOLD® scores are increasing in the areas where there are program standards; gaps identified in the second year have been mitigated.
- The number of teachers with or working towards a BA or Early Childhood Education (ECE) credential is increasing; given trends, teachers are forecasted to meet professional development requirements.
- Center directors are improving their use of data and DEEL support to center improve quality.
- Coaches are refining their own classroom observations to inform their work with teachers.
- Teachers are refining their use of newly obtained information to improve their practices.

#### *Tier 3: Evaluation of SPP impacts on child outcomes and classroom quality*

The purpose of the SPP evaluator's analysis in Tier 3 is to determine the changes in child outcomes that can be attributed to SPP. The evaluation team will assess growth for children enrolled in SPP, compare this growth across years, and compare children's gains in the program to gains for similar children who do not attend SPP. This section describes the SPP impact evaluation analysis and alternatives for comparing learning and development for children enrolled in SPP to children not enrolled.

The evaluation team will conduct the impact analysis using a combination of three components:

**Pre-Post Design:** A pre-post comparison assesses growth for children in SPP by measuring learning development at the beginning and end of each year. This is the simplest and easiest way to measure

program impact. The major limitation of this approach is that all young children will progress—even those that do not attend preschool. Gains in child outcomes are caused by many things, including the combined effects of the child’s biological development, home and neighborhood, as well as attending SPP. The evaluation team will isolate the gains associated with SPP by comparing growth across years and across classrooms that have participated in SPP for different lengths of time. In addition, the Evaluation Team will use measures that have been used in evaluations of other preschool programs so that gains in SPP can be compared to gains elsewhere.

**Randomized Control Trial (RTC) Design:** A comparison group is critical to assessing SPP’s impact on child learning and development. Ideally, the comparison group would be virtually identical to the group enrolled in SPP. If the number of children and families who apply to enter SPP classrooms substantially exceeds the number who can be served, applicants will enter a randomized selection process in accordance with SPP placement priorities. Children who are not chosen will be placed on a waitlist. This approach creates a randomized trial—the “gold standard” design for evaluation. The best known preschool studies have used this approach. It also creates a strong foundation for follow-up evaluation to assess lasting gains for children in kindergarten and later school years, and the greatest confidence for answering well-defined questions about “what works.” It also provides the most precise estimates for any sample size; this is important because SPP begins as a relatively small program.

**Relational Data Management System (“RDMS”):** All data and measures will be consolidated into a RDMS. An RDMS provides the ability to use tables for data storage while maintaining and enforcing certain data relationships. These data will be used to contextualize classroom and child assessments to inform course corrections.

The combination of these three design approaches will permit the evaluation team to assess growth for children in the program, compare this growth across years, and compare children’s gains in the program to gains for similar children who do not attend.

Table 7 illustrates the impact evaluation design. Each row represents a different cohort of SPP centers/classrooms. Each column reflects a new academic year. The cells represent the number of children in each year by cohort. For the first year (2015–16), the evaluation team will collect data only for the first set of classrooms. By 2018–19, the evaluation team will be able to look at children’s overall gains and also compare gains between classrooms that have been in the program one, two, and three years. The evaluation team will also be able to compare growth in the first cohort of classrooms across all four years of participation. Note that the evaluation team will begin analyzing the data in Year 1 as a baseline measure.

The results of the impact evaluation will be shared at varying degrees of specificity, at DEEL’s discretion, with center directors and teachers, policymakers, and the community. The evaluation team will provide analyses of student level performance to DEEL as described in this section. Student level performance improvements will depend on DEEL’s progress toward solidifying infrastructure, implementing

processes, and scaling the program. The effectiveness of SPP as a program as a whole should not be judged until infrastructure and processes are established.

**Table 7: Number of Children Assessed in Demonstration Phase Using Pre-Post, RTC Design**

	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19
<b>Number of children sampled from each SPP classroom</b>	<i>All</i>	<i>8 children</i>	<i>4 children</i>	<i>4 children</i>
<b>Classrooms beginning SPP in 2015–16</b>	280	112	56	56
<b>Classrooms beginning SPP in 2016–17</b>		200	100	100
<b>Classrooms beginning SPP in 2017–18</b>			160	160
<b>Classrooms beginning SPP in 2018–19</b>				84
<b>Total SPP Children Assessed</b>	280	312	316	400
<b>Total Control Group Children Assessed<sup>31</sup></b>		<b>112</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>316</b>

If SPP waitlists are very small or nonexistent, the evaluation team has three alternatives for creating a comparison group. The best alternative is to obtain a demographically comparable sample of children in preschool and child care settings that are not yet part of SPP. The second best alternative is to use a regression discontinuity design (“RDD”). The RDD approach compares children who have just finished the SPP preschool to children who are just entering the SPP. This approach effectively controls for age by sampling children with birthdays just before and after the cutoff date for entering preschool. For example, the evaluation team would select children with July and August birthdays just finishing SPP and children with September and October birthdays just entering SPP. This design takes advantage of the basic randomness of birthdate relative to the school entry cutoff age, because it is a matter of luck whether a child’s birthdate falls just before or after the cutoff. Because an RDD requires a larger sample size, the evaluation team recommends postponing this approach until fall 2018. Note that RDD does not provide a basis for a longitudinal follow-up of impacts after children start kindergarten. Therefore, the evaluation team would use an RDD along with another approach that provides SPP and comparison groups for longer-term evaluation.

If none of the these approaches are feasible, the remaining alternative is to construct a comparison group from a national data set. This could be done using the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B). However, this design is the least satisfactory of the alternatives because the comparison group may not be sufficiently similar.

<sup>31</sup> The control group begins in the second year of a classroom’s SPP contract. Classroom that began in 2015 will not participate in the randomized control trial (“RCT”) design.

## Reports and Timing

The reports in Table 8 will be available cyclically for the Levy Oversight Committee. The Evaluator Final Report as well as the DEEL SPP Levy Annual Report will be made readily available to the public.

**Table 8: Annual Reports and Descriptions**

Report	Content	Month
<b>Evaluator Status Update #1</b>	Short memo submitted by evaluators to DEEL.	November
<b>Evaluator: Impact Status Update and Process Mid-Year Report #1</b>	Descriptive statistics and analyses on professional development, curriculum implementation, and child assessments to date.	February
<b>The DEEL SPP Levy Mid-Year Report</b>	Mid-year indicators of progress for the first half of the current school year.	April
<b>Evaluator: Impact Status Update and Process Mid-Year Report #2</b>	Descriptive statistics and analyses on classroom environments, quality, and child assessments to date.	May
<b>Evaluator Final Report</b>	Descriptive statistics, analyses, conclusions and recommended course corrections (if applicable) for all research questions, including cumulative progress.	August
<b>The DEEL SPP Levy Annual Report</b>	An annual report of Levy outcomes and indicators for the <i>previous</i> school year.	January

## CQI Stage Four: Implement Improvements

---

### Strategy for Implementing Improvements

The SPP includes four strategies for identifying and implementing improvements:

- Coaching that addresses improvements at the provider and classroom levels.
- A working group (the Peer Learning and Improvement Network) comprised of providers and DEEL staff to address improvements at the provider and programmatic levels.
- A DEEL Leadership Team to address improvements at the programmatic level.
- A Levy Oversight Committee to review results and make recommendations for course corrections and program modification or elimination.

#### *Program Improvements through Coaching and Technical Assistance*

DEEL Coaches and Education Specialists (DEEL staff who monitor child care providers) have expertise in early childhood education and will work directly with providers—specifically center directors and teachers. Coaches will work with center directors to assess, analyze, identify, and implement improvements frequently throughout the school year. They will also, in partnership with providers, develop Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) for providers and classrooms that are based on analyses of self-evaluation results. Each QIP will outline specific recommendations to advance the learning environment and classroom practice. DEEL Coaches will use the QIPs to help center directors and teachers implement improvements and track their progress.

#### *Peer Learning and Improvement Network*

DEEL will convene a working group composed of participating center directors and other key stakeholders. Called the Peer Learning and Improvement Network (Peer Network), it will be a forum for providers to share information, learn from each other, discuss the areas they need to improve, and brainstorm strategies for implementing improvements. The Peer Network will also advise DEEL on strategies for making improvements at the programmatic level.

#### *Leadership Team at DEEL*

DEEL will analyze and use findings from the self- and third-party evaluations to identify and implement program improvements. The group responsible for this will be an internal SPP Leadership Team comprised of the DEEL Director, the Early Learning Division Director, and the leads for the division's Policy and Planning, Quality Improvement, Operations, Communications, and Data units. Meetings will be held regularly. The SPP Leadership Team will identify and implement programmatic improvements, and plan and implement stakeholder engagement and communication based on evaluation results.

#### *Levy Oversight Committee and Community Stakeholders*

The City has established a Preschool Levy Oversight Body—an expansion of the Families and Education Levy Oversight Committee—to make recommendations on the design and funding of SPP and to monitor the program's progress in meeting its outcomes and goals.

## Communications

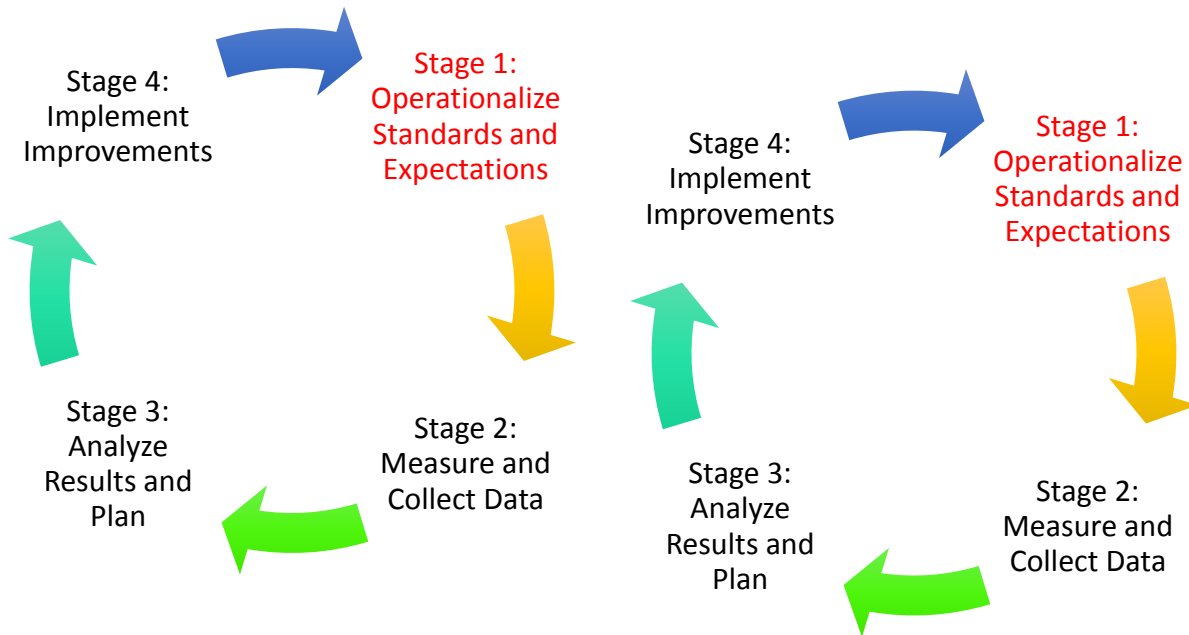
The DEEL Early Learning Leadership Team will communicate evaluation results and improvements to stakeholders as follows:

- Coaches and Education Specialists – to inform how they are working with teachers and providers.
- Individual providers – to identify and implement improvements.
- The Seattle Mayor’s office, Councilmembers, Levy Oversight Committee, and other City leadership – to inform their decision-making.
- Key partners such as the Department of Early Learning (DEL) and Seattle Public Schools (SPS).
- The early learning community and the public.

The contracted evaluators will support the DEEL Early Learning Leadership Team’s efforts to communicate results by making evaluation team members available, when requested, to present and discuss findings to key stakeholders.



## Return to CQI Stage One: Operationalize Standards and Expectations



Once improvements have been implemented, the Continuous Quality Improvement ~~(CQI)~~ begins again with the operationalization of standards and expectations and the identification of assessment methods.

The City will engage in CQI and work with community partners to achieve the goals of SPP:

- Children will be ready for school.
- All students will achieve developmentally-appropriate pre-academic skills.
- All students will develop both socially and emotionally.
- The readiness gap will be eliminated for SPP participants.

**Figure 2 CQI cycle for the demonstration phase of SPP**

By continually collecting data, assessing progress, and implementing improvements, DEEL will—in partnership with community members and independent evaluation consultants, and equipped with the humility to be transparent about what ~~we do~~ DEEL does not yet know—create the high-quality, city-wide preschool program envisioned by Mayor Edward Murray as the Seattle Preschool Program.

## Projected Four-Year Evaluation Budget

### Budget for Tier 1 Evaluation: Evaluation of SPP compliance with approved quality standards and processes

DEEL staff will conduct the Tier 1 evaluation; funding for staff is already included in the SPP Administration budget.

### Budget for Tiers 2 and 3 Evaluation: Process and Impact Evaluations

The contracted evaluation team developed budget estimates for Tiers 2 and 3 based on the time and materials needed to accomplish the elements described in this Strategy. Table 9 presents the components of the evaluation budget for Tiers 2 and 3.

**Table 9: Four-year budget for Evaluation Tiers 2 and 3**

Component	SY 2015-16	SY 2016-17	SY 2017-18	SY 2018-19	Total
Evaluation Strategy	\$148,726	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$148,726
<u>Process Evaluation</u>					
System Evaluation	\$51,000	\$51,000	\$51,000	\$0	\$153,000
Curriculum Implementation	\$20,000	\$23,000	\$14,000	\$0	\$57,000
Professional Development	\$29,000	\$31,000	\$37,000	\$0	\$97,000
Classroom Environments	\$49,000	\$66,000	\$64,000	\$33,040	\$212,040
Program Standards	\$27,000	\$31,000	\$37,000	\$38,000	\$133,000
Program Management	\$38,403	\$38,300	\$53,500	\$30,926	\$161,129
Subtotal	\$214,403	\$240,300	\$256,500	\$101,966	\$813,169
Contingency (7%)	\$15,753	\$19,253	\$21,053	\$0	\$56,059
<b>Total Process Evaluation</b>	<b>\$230,156</b>	<b>\$259,553</b>	<b>\$277,553</b>	<b>\$101,966</b>	<b>\$869,228</b>
<u>Impact Evaluation</u>					
Analysis & Management	\$63,729	\$130,657	\$134,017	\$138,404	\$466,807
Observations & Assessments	\$47,459	\$115,613	\$138,650	\$162,151	\$463,873
Travel	\$2,860	\$4,554	\$5,585	\$6,640	\$19,639
Supplies/Other	\$2,642	\$23,503	\$24,933	\$26,062	\$77,141
<b>Total Impact Evaluation</b>	<b>\$116,691</b>	<b>\$274,327</b>	<b>\$303,185</b>	<b>\$333,258</b>	<b>\$1,027,460</b>
Subtotal External Evaluation	\$495,573	\$533,880	\$580,738	\$435,223	\$2,045,414
Carry-Forward	\$174,334	(\$97,214)	(\$120,759)	\$43,639	\$0
<b>Total External Evaluation</b>	<b>\$669,906</b>	<b>\$436,666</b>	<b>\$459,979</b>	<b>\$478,863</b>	<b>\$2,045,414</b>

*Explanation of budget categories: Evaluation of SPP processes that support quality improvement and organizational change*

- **System Evaluation:** Costs to design director, teacher, and coach surveys, administer the surveys, and report results.
- **Classroom Environments:** Costs to analyze data, including CLASS and ECERS, to determine progress toward program standards, and to identify performance gaps and make projections of future data trends based on current results.
- **Curriculum Implementation:** Costs associated with creating a checklist identifying the curriculum intended for each classroom, whether it has been purchased, and whether teacher and director training on the curriculum has occurred; analyses of curriculum choice as related to outcomes.
- **Professional Development:** Costs related to importing, cleaning, analyzing, and reporting data from DEL's Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT).
- **Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines:** Costs for assessing the alignment of Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines with student learning through TS GOLD® scores.
- **Program management:** Contracted evaluator's costs to manage, coordinate, and administer all evaluation activities, including limited funds for:
  - Participating in presentations of evaluation results to City of Seattle executives and other key stakeholders such as community-based organizations, Seattle Public Schools, and DEL.
  - Customized data-driven targeted analyses.
  - Evaluation team time to provide raw data transfers to DEEL.
  - Providing DEEL with the flexibility to request customized analytics. This line item will be allocated on a time and materials basis until funds in this task are exhausted.
- **Contingency:** Approximately 7% of the process evaluation budget.

*Explanation of budget categories: Evaluation of SPP impacts on child outcomes and classroom quality*

- **Analysis and Management:** Costs for the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) to design, analyze, report, and manage the impact evaluation.
- **Observations and Assessments:** Costs to support classroom observations (CLASS and ECERS) and child assessments. Activities include providing training for assessors, coordinating and carrying-out data collection, reliability checks and quality control, and data cleaning and entry.
- **Travel:** Costs for a principal investigator from NIEER to travel to Seattle from New Jersey at least one time per year.
- **Supplies:** Costs for Picture Peabody Vocabulary Test IV, Woodcock-Johnson test books and score sheets, CLASS score sheets, ECERS manuals, and other relevant supplies for observers and assessors.

## Budget for Tier 4 Evaluation: Evaluation of City's administration, oversight, scale-up, and implementation of SPP

Tier 4 will be designed to assess the City's administration, oversight, scale-up, and implementation of SPP. This assessment will begin no later than the end of program implementation Year 1, with an initial report due at the end of Year 2, and an update due at the end of Year 3. This budget (see Table 10) will be refined when an evaluator is identified.

**Table 10: Four-Year Budget for Evaluation Tier 4**

Component	SY 2015–16	SY 2016–17	SY 2017–18	<del>SY 2016–17</del> SY 2018–19	Total
<b>Tier 4</b>	\$20,000	\$60,000	\$40,000	---	\$120,000

## Budget for Tier 5: Evaluation of the SPP Family Child Care Pilot Program

The adopted FCC Pilot Evaluation budget (see Table 11), set by the Seattle Preschool Program Action Plan, is \$175,000. The evaluation team divided this budget into two components: 1) development and 2) evaluation.

**Table 11: Four Year Budget for FCC Pilot Evaluation**

Component	SY 2015–16	<del>SY 2015–16</del> SY 2016–17	<del>SY 2016–17</del> SY 2017–18	<del>SY 2017–18</del> SY 2018–19	Total
<b>Development</b>	\$65,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$65,000</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$0	\$0	<b>\$110,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$175,000</b>

The Pilot Evaluation budget estimates costs for the following activities:

- **Development:**
  - *Limited Landscape Memo.* A memo summarizing FCC models nationwide in public preschools, Head Start and Early Head Start.
  - *Stakeholder Engagement Presentation.* A high-level presentation to inform and engage the FCC Advisory Committee.
  - *FCC Pilot Evaluation Design Advisory Committee Meetings.* A series of three meetings to:
    - Vet design principles
    - Clarify key questions to be addressed by the FCC Pilot Evaluation
    - Focus on results of literature review regarding models
    - Confirm structure of SPP and timeline of roll-out during 4-year phase-in
    - Present and discuss the evaluation plan, including instruments to be used, FCC-compatibility, languages, and other elements
    - Consider FCC Pilot design issues.
- **Evaluation:**
  - *FCC Pilot Evaluation Plan.* A description of how and when the FCC Pilot evaluation will occur.

- *Implementation of the FCC Pilot Evaluation.* Occurring in SY 2016-17 or in SY 2017-18, as described in the Plan (due spring 2016).

## Attachment 1: Contracted Evaluation Team for 2015–16

---

This team is responsible for Tiers 2, 3, and 5.

- Third Sector Intelligence (3SI) Team
  - Chris Strausz-Clark, Managing Principal
  - Maria Gingerich, Senior Manager
  - Joelle Gruber, Consultant
- National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) Team
  - W. Steven Barnett, Director
  - Milagros Nores, Associate Director of Research
  - Allison Friedman-Krauss, Assistant Research Professor at NIEER
  - Jessica Francis, Research Fellow at NIEER
- Augenblick Palaich and Associates (APA)
  - Anne Mitchell, Consultant, APA
  - Simon Workman, Associate, APA
- Advisors
  - Jim Minervino, Senior Advisor to 3SI and Founder and CEO Ready On Day One
  - Phil Sirinides, Senior Advisor to 3SI and Senior Researcher, Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania
  - Valisa Smith, Senior Advisor to 3SI
  - Gail Joseph, Associate Professor, University of Washington and Director, Childcare Quality and Early Learning Center for Research and Professional Development and the University of Washington
  - Kathleen Bruck, Chief Executive Officer, PRE-K 4 SA

Special thanks for input from:

- Dr. Ellen Frede, Deputy Director, Early Learning, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (former Assistant to the Commissioner for Early Childhood Education at the New Jersey Department of Education)
- Dr. Jason Sachs, Director of Early Childhood Education for Boston Public School

## Attachment 2: Glossary

---

Comprehensive Evaluation Strategy – A document outlining the evaluation strategy for the demonstration phase of the Seattle Preschool Program, developed in partnership with external evaluation experts.

CLASS™ – Classroom Assessment Scoring System used to assess interactions between teachers and children to determine teachers' professional development needs; includes areas of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support.

DEEL – City of Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning

DEL – Washington State Department of Early Learning offers voluntary, high-quality early learning programs and support to families and early learning professionals.

Early Achievers – A voluntary quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for licensed child care providers in Washington that helps early learning programs offer high-quality care.

ECERS-R – The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised: A rating scale designed to assess group programs for children two through five years of age. Total scale consists of 43 items. (Also available in Spanish.)

ERS – A set of Environmental Rating Scales used to assess early childhood and child care program quality. The ECERS-R is one of four instruments available for this purpose.

FCC – A family child care provider is a person who uses their residence to provide paid child care on a regular, ongoing basis.

Head Start – Federal program that promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social and emotional development.

MERIT – Managed Education and Registry Information Tool managed by the Washington State Department of Early Learning. It allows individuals who work in early child care and education to track online their education and training experience, find training by state-approved trainers, be recognized and receive awards for their professional achievements, and more.

NIEER – National Institute for Early Education Research, a nonprofit organization that conducts and communicates research to support high quality, effective, early childhood education for all young children.

PPVT-IV – Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Fourth Edition (PPVT™-4) measures verbal ability in standard American English vocabulary; can measure receptive processing from ages two to over ninety.

Program Plan – See Seattle Preschool Program Plan

RSJI – The Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in City government. RSJI builds on the work of the civil rights

movement and the ongoing efforts of individuals and groups in Seattle to confront racism. The Initiative's long-term goal is to change the underlying system that creates race-based disparities in our community and to achieve racial equity.

SPP – Seattle Preschool Program.

SPS – Seattle Public Schools, also called the Seattle School District.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® (TS GOLD®) – An observation-based assessment system used to document children's development from birth-kindergarten; can be used with all children, including English Language Learners, children with disabilities, and children who exceed typical developmental expectations.