

APPLE: HIO

Assessing Preschool Professionals' Learning Experiences

Overview

APPLE: Ohio is an initiative involving the Ohio Office of Early Learning and School Readiness at the Ohio Department of Education, the Early Childhood Quality Network, and The Ohio State University. Together with Ohio early childhood educators, we are seeking to evaluate the professional development opportunities that are currently offered via ODE/ecQ-net. Participating teachers will receive professional development relevant to preschool education and contribute to data used to support the continuation of such professional development efforts. The latter will include completion of professional development materials, evaluation questionnaires/surveys, and four classroom observations. Additionally, APPLE: Ohio staff will conduct assessments on a small number of children in participating teachers' classrooms.

What Does Program/School Involvement Require?

For a program or school to participate, they must:

1. Agree to allow participating teachers to complete assigned professional development activities
2. Agree to not coerce any teacher, parent, or child into participation
3. Agree to work with APPLE: Ohio staff on scheduling child assessments, conducting classroom observations, and the like.

What Does Teacher Involvement Require?

To participate in this evaluation, teachers must give written consent. Teachers agree to:

1. Be randomly assigned to receive ODE/ecQ-net professional development on one of four content area topics, with or without accompanying in-class mentoring
2. Complete all professional development activities and materials
3. Permit videotaped classroom observations to be conducted (We will give teachers advanced notice of any observation.)
4. Complete written questionnaires on self and children in the classroom
5. Facilitate the parent permission/consent process for children enrolled in their classroom
6. Allow for assessment of participating children in the fall and spring of the year.

What Do Teachers Receive?

1. FREE, high-quality, state-sponsored professional development
2. Up to \$130 in gift certificates for completing evaluation-related activities
3. Appropriate ODJFS, ODE, college, or CEU credit for participating in professional development (as applicable)
4. A chance to help shape the future of Ohio's professional development for early childhood educators
5. The knowledge that one has helped contribute to a scientific knowledge base that will directly inform "best practices" in future years.

What is Required of Children in Participating Classrooms?

We will seek informed consent from parents to assess their children during preschool and into kindergarten. Of the children consented, we will randomly select approximately five to assess during the fall and spring of the preschool year (as well as once during the following academic year). Families and children will receive thank you gifts up to \$45 in value, and all testing is completed by highly-qualified and well-trained research personnel. Additionally, preschool and kindergarten teachers will also complete a small set of questionnaires regarding the skills and abilities of these children.