

Review of Head Start Pre-K , Early Head Start (EHS) and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)



- The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool developed to describe and measure the effectiveness of educator-child interactions in learning settings. CLASS includes three broad domains of educator-child interactions that support children's learning and development: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. Within each domain are multiple dimensions of educator-child interactions and behaviors.
- The CLASS tool is based on developmental and educational psychology theory and research suggesting that interactions between children and adults are the primary way of supporting children's development and learning, and that effective, engaging interactions and environments form the foundation for all learning in early childhood classrooms.
- CLASS is scored by trained and certified observers using a specific protocol. Following an observation of educator-child interactions, CLASS Observers rate each dimension on a 7-point scale, from low to high.
- Score Ranges - Seven-point scoring scale
 - Low Range (1-2) – Behaviors and interactions are rarely present or low-quality, superficial, strained, rote, or ineffective.
 - Middle Range (3-5) – Behaviors and interactions are somewhat present during the classroom observation or a part of some children's experience. Interactions are mixed; some interactions remain superficial, ineffective, or absent, whereas others demonstrate more intentional support that deepen children's experiences.
 - High Range (6-7) – Behaviors and interactions are meaningful, consistent, sustained, and reflective of most children's experience in the classroom. Interactions deepen children's experience or understanding and convey a level of intentional and effective support.
- During the 2011-2012 program year, the Office of Head Start (OHS) began using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) teacher-child observation instrument during its on-site reviews.
- The Head Start Program began using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) teacher-child observation instrument for during the 2011-2012 program year. CLASS was implemented to support professional development planning as one method of data driven decision-making. Only classrooms with a full-time teacher and/or long-term substitutes receive a CLASS Observation.
- In 2022, CLASS 2nd Edition (CLASS 2.0) was released and includes enhancements with a focus on improving equity, access, and impact. CLASS 2.0 includes more diverse and inclusive definitions and representation, considerations for scoring across diverse settings, and guidance for reducing bias.
- CLASS Thresholds – The Office of Head Start has published two sets of thresholds for CLASS scores as a part of the Designation Renewal System (DRS): Quality Thresholds and the Competitive Thresholds. During an OHS CLASS Federal Review, if a Recipient receives a score below the Quality Threshold for one or more of the CLASS domains, OHS provides support for quality improvement. If a Recipient receives a score below the Competitive Threshold for one or more of the CLASS domains, then the Recipient is required to compete for continued funding.

**City of San Antonio Head Start Program
Federal Review Results and Office of Head Start Thresholds**

Source	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
2014 – 2015 OHS Monitoring	5.9978	5.8216	2.5585
2019 – 2020 OHS Monitoring	5.8500	5.6788	2.6818
Quality Threshold	6	6	3
Competitive Threshold	5	5	2.3/2.5*

*Observations conducted on or after August 2025

Office of Head Start National Average Scores*

Program Year	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
2014-2015	6.03	5.80	2.88
2015-2016	6.00	5.73	2.83
2016-2017	6.07	5.83	3.00
2017-2018	6.08	5.80	2.96
2018-2019	6.05	5.79	2.91
2019-2020	6.03	5.78	2.94
2020-2021**	-	-	-

*Data pending for 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 223-2024, 2024-2025

**Due to COVID-19, CLASS Observations were not conducted

**City of San Antonio Head Start Program
Internal Monitoring CLASS Results**

CLASS 2008

Program Year	% Classrooms Observed & Scored	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
2018-2019	100%	5.75	5.19	3.12
2019-2020*	N/A	-	-	-
2020-2021*	N/A	-	-	-
2021-2022	100%	5.88	5.32	3.25

*Due to COVID-19, CLASS Observations were not conducted

CLASS 2.0

Program Year	% Classrooms Observed & Scored	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
2022-2023	60%	5.92	5.39	3.09
2023-2024	60%	6.14	5.69	3.36
2024-2025	99%	5.99	5.55	3.17

Resources & Information

- [Use of Classroom Assessment Scoring System \(CLASS\) in Head Start](#)
- [National Overview of Grantee CLASS Scores by Year](#)
- [Resources on CLASS Pre-K](#)

- The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool developed to describe and measure the effectiveness of educator-child interactions in learning settings. The Infant CLASS includes one domain of educator-child interactions that support children's learning and development: Responsive Caregiving. The Toddler CLASS includes two domains of educator-child interactions that support children's learning and development: Emotional and Behavioral Support Engaged Support for Learning. Within each domain are multiple dimensions of educator-child interactions and behaviors.
- The CLASS tool is based on developmental and educational psychology theory and research suggesting that interactions between children and adults are the primary way of supporting children's development and learning, and that effective, engaging interactions and environments form the foundation for all learning in early childhood classrooms. The Infant CLASS is primarily used in classrooms serving children 15 months or younger but can be used up to 18 months old. The Toddler CLASS is primarily used in classrooms serving children 15 – 36 months old.
- CLASS is scored by trained and certified observers using a specific protocol. Following an observation of educator-child interactions, CLASS Observers rate each dimension on a 7-point scale, from low to high.
- Score Ranges - Seven-point scoring scale
 - Low Range (1-2) – Behaviors and interactions are rarely present or low-quality, superficial, strained, rote, or ineffective.
 - Middle Range (3-5) – Behaviors and interactions are somewhat present during the classroom observation or a part of some children's experience. Interactions are mixed; some interactions remain superficial, ineffective, or absent, whereas others demonstrate more intentional support that deepen children's experiences.
 - High Range (6-7) – Behaviors and interactions are meaningful, consistent, sustained, and reflective of most children's experience in the classroom. Interactions deepen children's experience or understanding and convey a level of intentional and effective support.
- The Early Head Start Program began using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) teacher-child observation instrument for both Infant and Toddler classrooms in the Early Head Start Program during the 2017-2018 program year. CLASS was implemented to support professional development planning as one method of data driven decision-making. Only classrooms with full time teachers and/or long-term substitutes receive a CLASS Observation.
- The Office of Head Start does not utilize the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) teacher-child observation instrument during on-site reviews for infant and toddler classrooms.



Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) – Early Head Start

City of San Antonio Head Start Program Internal Monitoring CLASS Results

Infant CLASS

Program Year	% Classrooms Observed & Scored	Responsive Caregiving
2019-2020	100%	4.41
2020-2021*	-	-
2021-2022	100%	5.14
2022-2023	100%	5.51
2023-2024	54%	5.70
2024-2025	91%	4.05

**Due to COVID-19, CLASS Observations were not conducted*

Toddler CLASS

Program Year	% Classrooms Observed & Scored	Emotional & Behavioral Support	Engaged Support for Learning
2019-2020	100%	5.38	2.82
2020-2021*	-	-	-
2021-2022	88%	5.52	3.60
2022-2023	94%	5.72	3.68
2023-2024	56%	5.79	3.83
2024-2025	87%	5.48	3.56

**Due to COVID-19, CLASS Observations were not conducted*