

*System Transformation for Equitable  
Preschools (STEP Forward with Data)  
Framework Implementation Guide*

# Activity 2: Understanding the data landscape of your preschool system

This resource is part of a larger Implementation Guide for the STEP Forward with Data Framework. For more information, find the complete [Implementation Guide](#) or visit the [STEP Forward with Data Framework website](#).

Child Trends.

The Early Childhood  
**D A T A**  
Collaborative

## Activity 2: Understanding the data landscape of your preschool system

After defining the preschool system, the next step in implementing the STEP Forward with Data Framework will be to understand the data landscape in your preschool system. The data landscape includes the data that are collected, stored, and used. It also includes the data capabilities of staff to determine what leaders can answer now and what they could collect in the future.

We recommend that you identify what data are accessible and the data capabilities of the preschool system to understand what Framework questions may be feasible to answer and/or understand where data capacity needs to be expanded to answer priority questions. The Framework is intended to support you regardless of the level of sophistication of your preschool system's data landscape. The following exercise is designed to walk you through your existing data system landscape.

After completing this exercise, you should have a better understanding of where you have strong data capabilities and access to data and where there are areas to improve. You and your partners can then decide whether you want to begin with a step or question in the Framework where you have sufficient data to answer the question(s), or begin in an area where you want to strengthen your data collection and accessibility practices.

### Access to programmatic preschool system data

Do you have access to data on the number of preschool programs in your preschool system broken down by type or setting?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

*If no or unsure, what is the next step in obtaining that data (i.e., who do you need to speak with, who should be part of this conversation, what data access do you need, etc.)?*

Do you have access to data on the number of preschool slots available in your preschool system?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

*If no or unsure, what is the next step in obtaining that data (i.e., who do you need to speak with, who should be part of this conversation, what data access do you need, etc.)?*

What, if any, reporting requirements exist for the preschool system (e.g., Head Start Program Information Reports (PIR); Preschool Development Grant (PDG) reporting; Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection Reporting; licensing inspection reports, etc.)?

## Identifying what data you have on the children, families, and workforce members in your preschool system

To answer the questions in the STEP Forward with Data Framework, you will need to understand who is included in your preschool system (i.e., children, families, workforce members). The Framework questions typically encompass three types of populations in addition to data collected at the preschool program or site level:

- Eligible preschool-aged children and their families in the system who are enrolled in a preschool program.
- Eligible preschool-aged children and their families who live within the geographic bounds where the preschool system is administered.
- The preschool workforce.

The exercise below is intended to support you in identifying what type of data you have access to directly or by request. Depending on which Framework questions and associated metrics you will focus on, you may need this data as you think through how to calculate the total population of children, families, and/or workforce members. Therefore, this exercise is intended to be a starting point to determine what data you have or what data you may need to gather to answer questions of interest within the Framework. The righthand column in the exercise is intended for you to add in any notes or next steps about how to

access or collect the data if they are not accessible or indicate a next step if you are unsure about the accessibility of the data. The questions below designated with an asterisk (\*) are aligned with the E-W Indicators Framework.

**Data about eligible preschool-aged children and their families in the system who are enrolled in a preschool program**

Are data accessible on....	Notes
How many eligible children are enrolled in the preschool system? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
What number or percent of children in preschool are receiving child care assistance/subsidy?*" <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	

**Data about eligible preschool-aged children and their families living within the geographic bounds where the system is administered**

Are data accessible on....	Notes
The total number of children eligible for preschool in the geographic area overseen by the preschool system? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The number of children eligible for preschool in the geographic area overseen by the preschool system who are on a waitlist for preschool? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	

Data about the preschool workforce

What data, if any, are collected on workforce members in the preschool system?				
Type of data collected	Who is the data collected on (e.g., lead teachers, assistant teachers, etc.)?	Is data accessible at the system level (versus only available locally at program sites)?	Which entity oversees or owns the data?	Can these data be linked with other data outside of the entity who oversees it?

Are data accessible on....	Notes
The total number of workforce members in the preschool system? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
Workforce demographics (e.g., race, ethnicity, languages spoken, disability status, low-income status, gender/sex)* <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The type of role of workforce members (i.e., lead teachers, assistant teachers, program directors/principals, etc.)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The education levels of workforce members? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
Are you able to compare education levels across workforce members: Roles <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure Years of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure Ages served <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure Program setting type <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The percentage of lead teachers that have at least a bachelor's degree?*" <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	

Are data accessible on....	Notes
Teachers with a CDA or other credential (e.g., NAEYC)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The percentage of lead teachers with specialized training in preschool/pre-K/Head Start?* <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The number of years workforce members have worked with preschool aged children? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The percentage of teachers who have less than one year, one to five years, and more than five years of experience?* <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
Turnover rates among workforce members in your preschool system? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	

Are data accessible on....	Notes
The staff vacancy percentage in your preschool system? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
The average salary for lead teachers in your preschool system? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
Which benefits lead teachers receive (e.g., paid leave, health insurance, retirement, etc.)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	
How many teachers are receiving assistance for services through subsidies?* <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure	

**Data about preschool program sites and classrooms**

What data, if any, are collected on child outcomes (e.g., Woodcock Johnson Assessments, Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), Teaching Strategies GOLD, etc.)?				
Name of tool/assessment	Is data collected on all children in the system? If no, specify.	Is data accessible at the system level (versus only available locally at program sites)?	What entity oversees or owns the data?	Can these data be linked or shared with other data outside of the entity who oversees it?

What data, if any, are collected on classroom environments and/or teacher child interactions (e.g., ERS, CLASS)?				
Name of tool/ assessment	Is data collected on all classrooms in the system? If no, specify	Is data accessible at the system level (versus only available locally at program sites)?	Which entity oversees or owns the data?	Can these data be linked or shared with other data outside of the entity who oversees it?

**Example:** *Our preschool system collects information on children’s developmental screening results, workforce member characteristics and qualifications, and classroom level observations for all program types. Children’s individual developmental screening results are stored at the program level in a student information system. Individual developmental screening results are available at the program level only. Preschool programs report aggregated screening results to state level administrators. Classroom level observational assessments (CLASS/ECERS-R) are administered by state observers and outcomes data is stored in an Access database at the state level accessible to a database administrator. Information of workforce member characteristics, qualifications, and work experience are collected in a state-funded early childhood workforce registry that can produce state level aggregate reports. Workforce member data are also collected through a statewide teacher credentialing system. At this time, classroom observation (CLASS/ECERS-R) information is only used for coaching and training purposes and is not linked to child level data or data on workforce member characteristics.*

**Application: Understanding your data landscape**

The three steps I/my team need to do to answer the questions above about accessible data on children, families, and the workforce where we responded no or unsure are.....

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The three steps I/my team need to do to identify what child outcome, classroom environment, and workforce data are collected within my preschool system are...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are three concrete next steps we need to take to determine which data are accessible to me and my team that can be used to answer the Framework questions of interest?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.