

An Overview of NAEYC's Early Learning Program Quality Assessment and Accreditation System

October 2025



Session Objectives



Knowledge of the research & learning that has informed the system re-envisioning



Awareness of new system process and requirements

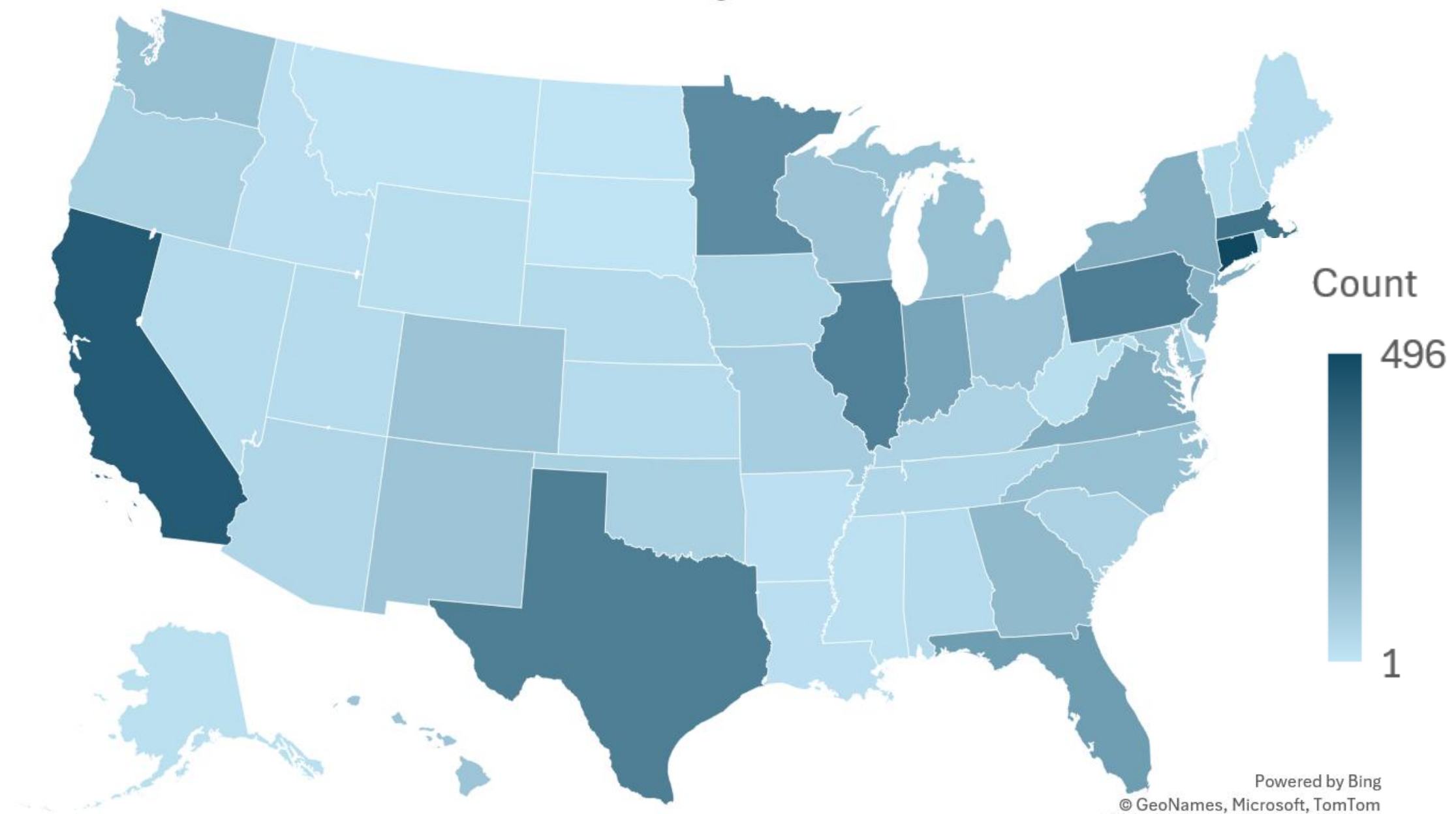


Understand the steps to get started in new system

NAEYC Accreditation

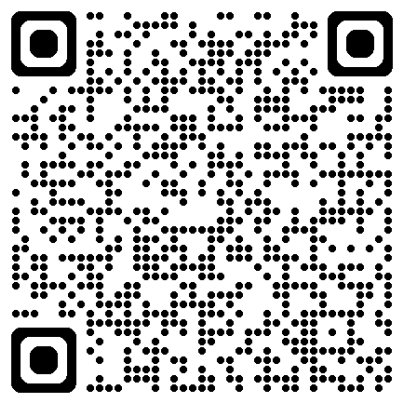
40 years of quality measurement

- Nearly 6,000 accredited programs; 50+ international sites.
- Adopted by 12 large early learning systems including the Department of Defense.
- Embedded in 16 Quality (Rating) Improvement Systems across the country.



Map includes all currently accredited programs in US as of 9/1/25

Revised Early Childhood Program Standards



Use this QR code to access the new Standards!

Ordering and Naming of Standards	
2005 Version	2025 Version
1. Relationships*	Creating a Caring & Equitable Community of Learners
2. Families & Communities*	Engaging in Reciprocal Partnership with Families & Fostering Community Connections
3. Curriculum*	Planning & Implementing Engaging Curriculum to Meet Meaningful
4. Teaching*	Teaching to Enhance Each Child’s Development & Learning.
5. Assessment*	Observing, Documenting, & Assessing Children’s Development & Learning
6. Health	Promoting Health & Wellness in Early Childhood Programs
7. Physical Environment	Designing Physical Environments to Meet the Needs of Early Learning Communities
8. Professionalism*	Demonstrating Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator
9. Leadership & Management	Supporting Staff, Children, & Families through Effective Leadership & Management.

* indicates direct alignment with the six Guidelines for DAP

Changes are informed by research

Connecting data, outcomes, research and stakeholder input to evaluate the quality assessment content through a mixed method, intentional and inclusive process.



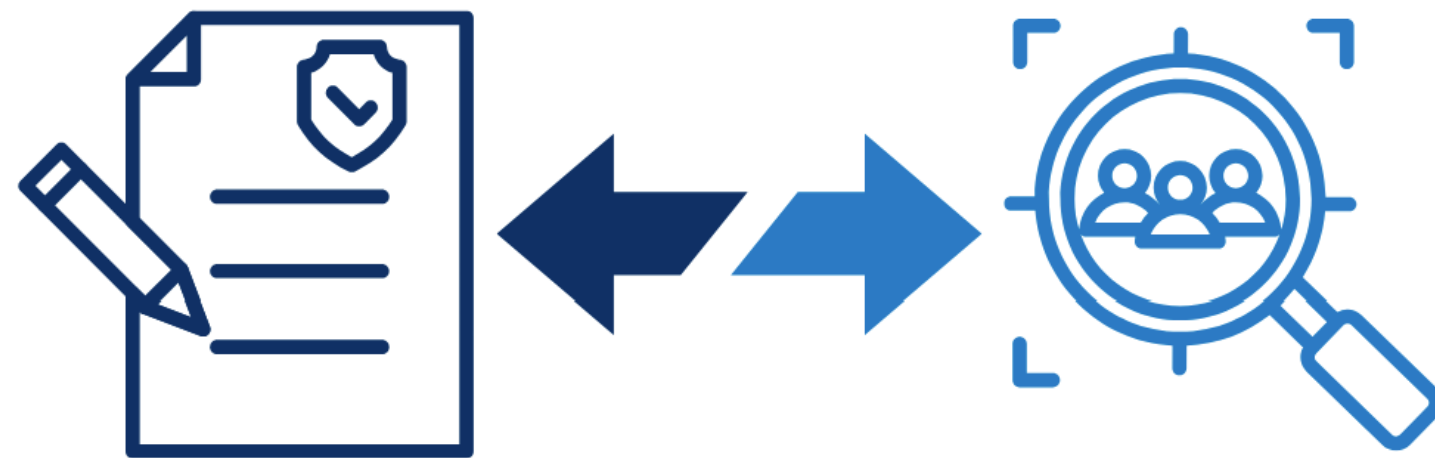
And have resulted in...

- Overall reduction in the number of assessment items (by 36%)
- Redistribution of the existing accreditation assessment items across the tiered system
- Content that is accessible, equitable and tied to outcomes

Decoupling Documentation & Observation

- A key change in the new system process is the decoupling of the documentation assessment from the observation assessment
- Resulting in changes to how document-based evidence is collected, organized and evaluated.

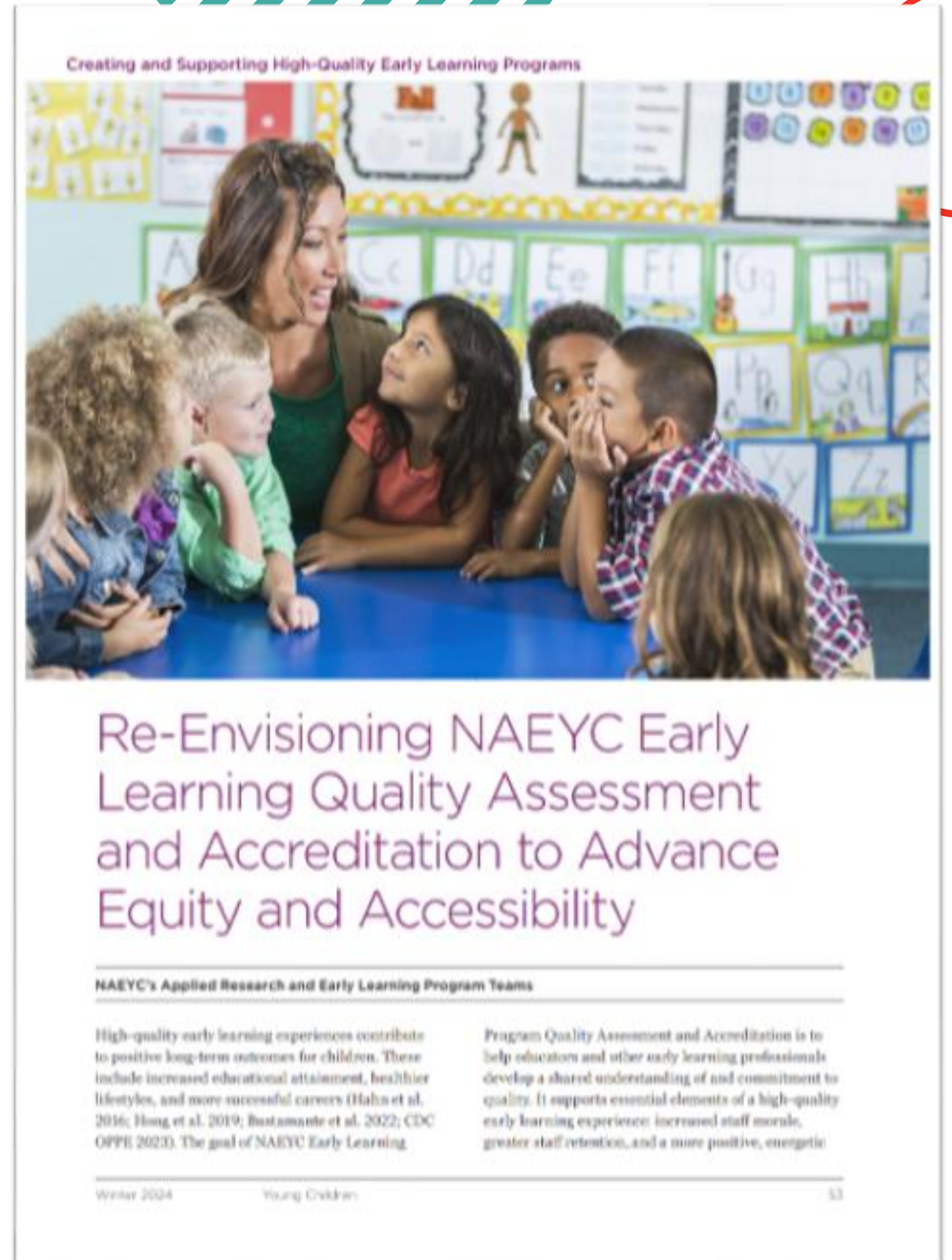
Document-Based
Assessment Items



Observation-Based
Assessment Items

Decoupling Documentation & Observation

- Learnings from the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Provisional Accreditation Research
- Winter 2024 YC Article



System Goals

A consistent measure of quality.



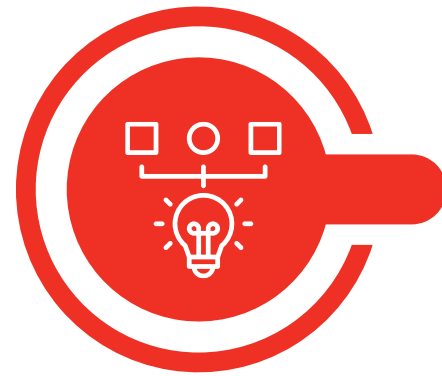
Streamlined

collecting information from programs in an efficient and meaningful way that reduces redundancy and improves the measurement of quality



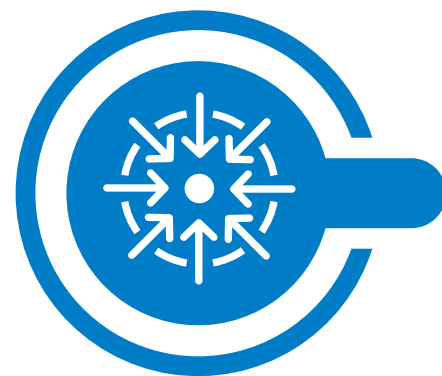
Innovative

linking quality assessment standards and items to the latest research



Aligned

working to reduce the administrative burden for early learning programs and finding ways to connect NAEYC and other systems



Accessible

introducing multiple ways to engage and allowing for programs at all stages of quality improvement to showcase their strengths through a tiered system of quality assessment and accreditation

Introducing a Tiered System



RECOGNITION

Program has demonstrated a foundation of policies and structures on which a quality care and learning environment can be built.

Documentation review only

Recognized programs can apply
for Accreditation status



ACCREDITATION

Program continuously demonstrates high-quality policies, structures and practices necessary for a high-quality care and learning environment.

Documentation review
Potential for a random site visit

Accredited programs can apply
for Accreditation+ status



ACCREDITATION+

Program continuously demonstrates high-quality policies, structures and practices necessary for a high-quality care and learning environment AND adheres to increase accountability protocols.

Documentation review
Site visit
Potential for a random site visit

Current accredited programs
will transition to this tier

Introducing a Tiered System

Legacy accredited programs transitioned to Accreditation+

	Recognition	Accreditation	Accreditation+
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ First step to high quality - Program has demonstrated a foundation of policies and structures on which a quality care and learning environment can be built.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ High quality - Program continuously demonstrates high-quality policies, structures, and practices.	
Assessment Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ 40 document-based assessment items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ 125 document-based assessment items➤ 75 observation-based assessment items	
Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ One year term - renewed annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Five-year term with annual reporting required	
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Documentation review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Documentation review➤ Potential for a random site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Site visit➤ Adheres to increased accountability protocols

Revised Assessment Items

- New assessment items are evaluated across six (6) evidence types.
- Required items must be met to achieve applicable tier.
- Optional items provide a nominal boost to scores and do not negatively affect scores if unmet.

Staff Handbook



Show & Describe



Family Handbook



Narrative Description



Observation

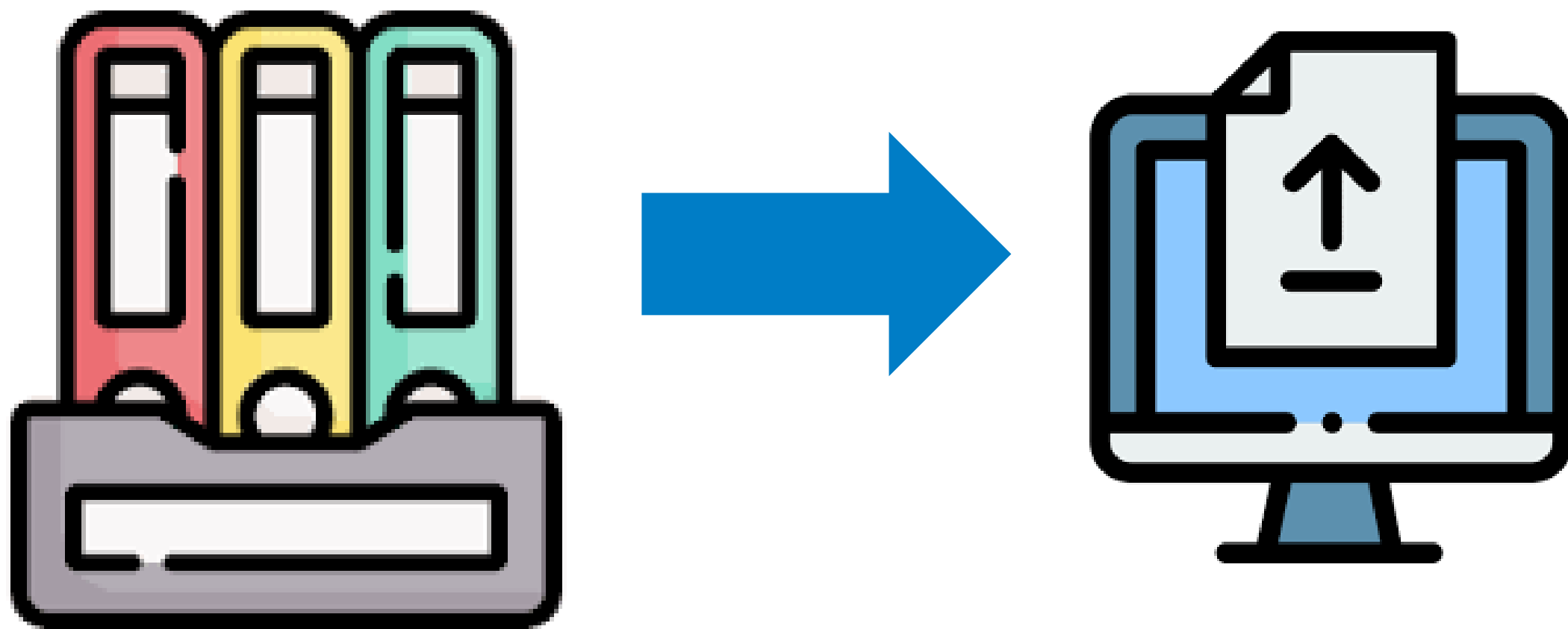


Licensing & Staff Qualifications (ELP Hub)



Documentation of Evidence

Programs will transition to submitting digital evidence as appropriate for the item and ages served.



Programs are encouraged to engage educators in collection of classroom / age specific evidence that is submitted.

New Content By Evidence Type

Evidence Type	Recognition	Accreditation & Accreditation +	
	Application	Application	Site Visit
ELP Hub (Licensing & Staff Qualifications)	4 (1 Required)	7 (1 Required) (3 Optional)	--
Staff Handbook	7 (1 Required)	25 (5 Required) (2 Optional)	--
Family Handbook	11	5	--
Narrative Description	13	29 (6 Optional)	--
Show & Describe	5	59 (9 Optional)	--
Observation	--		75 (7 Required) (3 Optional)
Total Items	40 (2 Required)	125 (6 Required) (20 Optional)	75 (7 Required) (3 Optional)

New Content By Age Category

Age Category	Recognition	Accreditation & Accreditation+	
	Application (40 Items)	Application (125 Items)	Observation (75 Items)
Universal (All Ages)	37 (2 Required)	79 (5 Required) (20 Optional)	34 (3 Required)
Infant	3	23 (1 Required)	13 (3 Required) (1 Optional)
Toddler	3	28	19 (3 Required) (1 Optional)
Preschool	3	36	23 (1 Required) (1 Optional)
Kindergarten	3	36	23 (1 Required) (1 Optional)

New Content By Standards

Standard	Recognition	Accreditation & Accreditation+	
	Application (40 Items)	Application (125 Items)	Observation (75 Items)
1. Relationships: Creating a Caring and Equitable Community of Learners	5	2	8
2. Families and Community: Engaging in Reciprocal Partnership with Families and Fostering Community Connections	5	13	1
3. Curriculum: Planning and Implementing Engaging Curriculum to Meet Meaningful Goals	3	24	26
4. Teaching: Teaching to Enhance Each Child's Development and Learning.	3	15	16
5. Assessment: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children's Development and Learning	3	8	--
6. Health: Promoting Health and Wellness in Early Childhood Programs	6	22	16
7. Physical Environment: Designing Physical Environments to Meet the Needs of Early Learning Communities	5	7	4
8. Professionalism: Demonstrating Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator	5	16	--
9. Leadership and Management: Supporting Staff, Children, and Families through Effective Leadership and Management.	5	18	4

A Tiered Process

- New programs will first apply for Recognition.
- Programs can move through steps at their own pace.
- Legacy system accredited programs transitioned to Accreditation+ and can choose to go to another Tier at renewal or by contacting the NAEYC Support Team.



Application Process

- Application process is completed through new portal via survey collection tool of documentation evidence.
- All documentation is submitted through an online system, that is aligned to the evidence types across the new revised items.

Staff Handbook



Show & Describe



Family Handbook



Narrative Description



Observation Items should always be in practice and will be assessed during Site Visits.

Observation



Licensing & Staff Qualifications (ELP Hub)



Feedback & Re-Submission Cycle

- Programs are allowed one round of documentation review and feedback.
- After receiving feedback, they may revise and resubmit their materials once before a final decision is made.
- Resubmissions must be completed within 30 days of initial decision.



Document Submission

- Evidence submission takes place via survey tool that is integrated with the Early Learning Hub.
- Responses are collected for assessment items, based on the various evidence types.

Evidence Type	File Upload	Narrative
Licensing & Staff Qualifications	Confirmed by program; reviewed in ELP Hub / regulatory website	
Staff Handbook	Yes	Yes
Family Handbook	Yes	Yes
Narrative Description	No	Yes
Show & Describe	Yes	Yes

Family Handbook

- Programs can upload up to 10 files.
- Programs must provide the exact page numbers or range of pages where the corresponding information can be found.
- If multiple documents are uploaded, the response must also indicate which specific document is to be referenced.

Program will:

1. Upload the Family Handbook File(s) that include the applicable information within Family Handbook items. **Up to 10 PDF files.**
2. Indicate whether they meet EACH assessment item applicable to the age(s) served.
3. Provide guidance on where to find the specific information based on each item.

Family Handbook Questions

The following questions are assessed based on information in the uploaded family handbook.

Upload the program or provider's family handbook here. The handbook must be one file and must include a table of contents.

Minimum: 1 Maximum: 10

 Upload a file

Accepted formats: .pdf

A.2.03

The family handbook outlines **at least two ways** families can negotiate difficulties that arise which involve increasing levels of formality.

The intent is that families have multiple ways to raise issues and work toward resolution. This may include phone calls, emails, open-door or scheduled meeting requests. Families should also receive guidance on where to turn next if their concerns have not been satisfactorily addressed. For example first directly raising a concern to the classroom teacher, then administrative staff, then governing board/parent advisory group, then licensing/regulatory body.

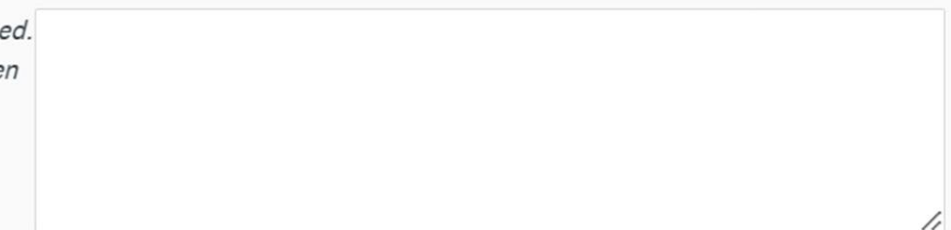
Does the program or provider meet this assessment item?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Evidence of this assessment item must be in the **uploaded family handbook**.

Please describe where in the family handbook this information can be found. If the table of contents clearly identifies where a NAEYC assessor can find this information, you may leave this field blank.



Staff Handbook

- Programs can upload up to 10 files.
- Programs must provide the exact page numbers or range of pages where the corresponding information can be found.
- If multiple documents are uploaded, the response must also indicate which specific document is to be referenced.

Program will:


1. Upload the Staff Handbook File(s) that include the applicable information within Staff Handbook items. **Up to 10 PDF files.**
2. Indicate whether they meet EACH assessment item applicable to the age(s) served.
3. Provide guidance on where to find the specific information based on each item.

Staff Handbook Questions

The following questions are assessed based on information in the uploaded staff handbook.

Upload the staff handbook here. The staff handbook must be one document and must include a table of contents.

Minimum: 1 Maximum: 10

 Upload a file

Accepted formats: .pdf

A.4.13

The staff handbook includes a policy to address the use of technology in learning environments. The policy

1. restricts screen time and media use to children over the age of 2 years,
2. limits technology and media use to less than 30 minutes in half-day programs or providers and 60 minutes in full-day programs or providers for toddlers over the age of 2 years, and
3. instructs educators of preschoolers and kindergarteners to integrate technology use into children's play and offering children access to apps that support collaborative play.

This is an optional assessment item. Programs or providers that demonstrate meeting the stated practice will receive credit. Programs or providers that do not pass the item or choose not to address the item will not be penalized.

The policy does not need to address specific ages that are not served by the program or provider at the time of assessment.

Does the program or provider meet this assessment item?

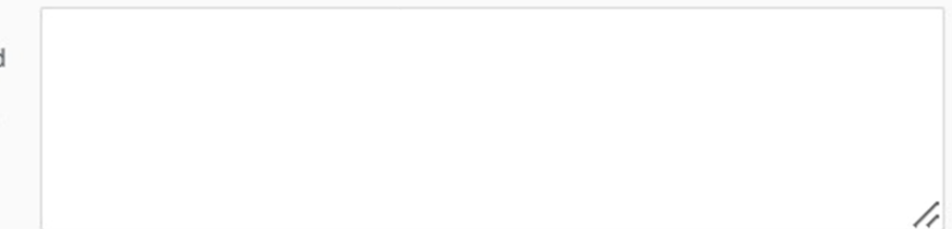
☒ Yes

☐ No

Evidence of this assessment item must be in the **uploaded staff handbook**.

Family childcare and home-based providers that do not employ staff may submit separate evidence to address this item.

Please describe where in the staff handbook this information can be found. If the table of contents clearly identifies where a NAEYC assessor can find this information, you may leave this field blank.



Show and Describe

- Two separate pieces of evidence are needed for this section.
- A show item is an attached example to demonstrate how the program or provider meets the item.
- The description typically ranges from 3 to 8 sentences depending on item requirements.

Program will:

1. Indicate whether they meet EACH assessment item applicable to the age(s) served.
2. Upload appropriate evidence based on guidance.
3. Provide narrative that is within the sentence limitation indicated for each item.

Show and Describe Questions

The following questions are assessed based on a narrative description AND uploaded information. Both the uploaded evidence and description are required unless otherwise noted.

A.1.02 (Toddler)

Educators have anticipated and taken steps to prevent unsafe or disruptive behavior of toddlers.

The intent of this item is to demonstrate how teachers have taken pro-active steps to prevent unsafe or disruptive behaviors. This item is not addressing educator responses to unsafe or disruptive behaviors.

"Disruptive or unsafe behavior" is any behavior that interferes with a child's cognitive, social, or emotional development; is harmful to the child, other children, or adults; and puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure. (Kaiser, B. & Rasminsky, J.S. (2021). Addressing Challenging Behavior in Young Children: The Leader's Role. NAEYC.)

Does the program or provider meet this assessment item?

☒ Yes

☐ No

This assessment item requires both a description and uploaded evidence of **one example** of how the program meets the assessment item.

This assessment item is specific to **toddlers**. Your response must be specific to this age category.

Describe in **3 - 5 sentences** how the program meets this assessment item. This description may also indicate where in the uploaded evidence a NAEYC assessor can find proof that the program meets the assessment item.

Narrative Descriptions

- This section requires ONLY narrative responses.
- The description typically ranges from 5 to 8 sentences depending on item requirements. Descriptions will not be reviewed past sentence 8.
- Each description requires one to two examples in the description.

Program will:

1. Indicate whether they meet EACH assessment item applicable to the age(s) served.
2. Provide narrative that is within the sentence limitation indicated for each item.

Narrative Description Questions

The following questions are assessed based on a narrative description by the program or provider.

A.1.01 (Toddler)

Toddlers have had opportunities to decide what the class will do together (e.g., unit of study, interest areas, which book to read or song to sing as a group).

The intent of this item is to provide children with open-ended opportunities to co-create shared learning experiences.

Does the program or provider meet this assessment item?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Clear

This assessment item requires a description of **two examples** of the program or provider meeting this assessment item.

This item is specific to **toddlers**. Your response must be specific to this age category.

Describe in **3 to 5 sentences** how the program or provider meets this assessment item.

Site Visits

- Site Visits will only include Observation Assessment Items.
- Site Visits will be separate from documentation review, and consistent across all types:
 - Random
 - Accreditation+
 - Verification Visit



Site Visit Requirements

Accreditation	Accreditation+
Subject to Random Site Visits	Subject to Random Site Visits Required Scheduled Site Visit

If a program is “Deferred” from a Site Visit, they will be regressed to Recognition, for up to 1 year with no fee.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance will vary by Tier to ensure accountability and quality across the system.



72-Hour Incident Report

Notifications will be required to maintain compliance across Tiers.

Required for Recognized and Accredited programs



Feedback Response

Programs will be expected to respond to feedback received from staff, parents and the community.

Quality improvement plans may be required based on the issue and investigation outcome.



Required Item Response

Required items exist across Tiers and must be met to achieve status.

Real-time technical assistance and response will be embedded to support quality improvement.



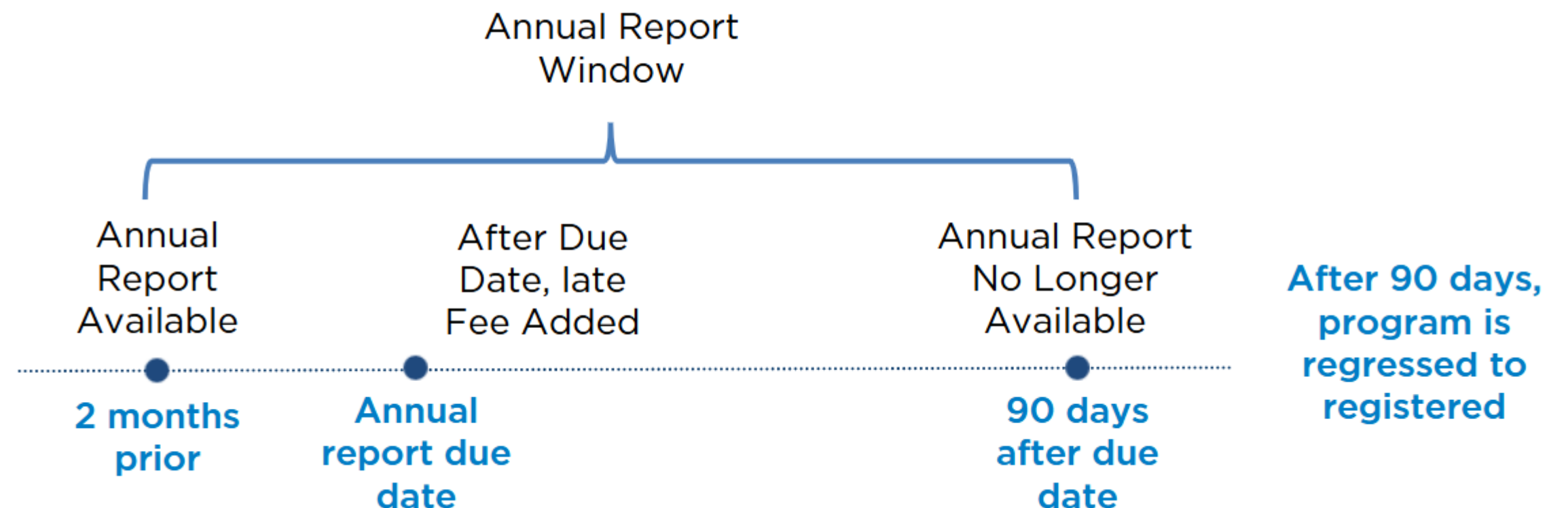
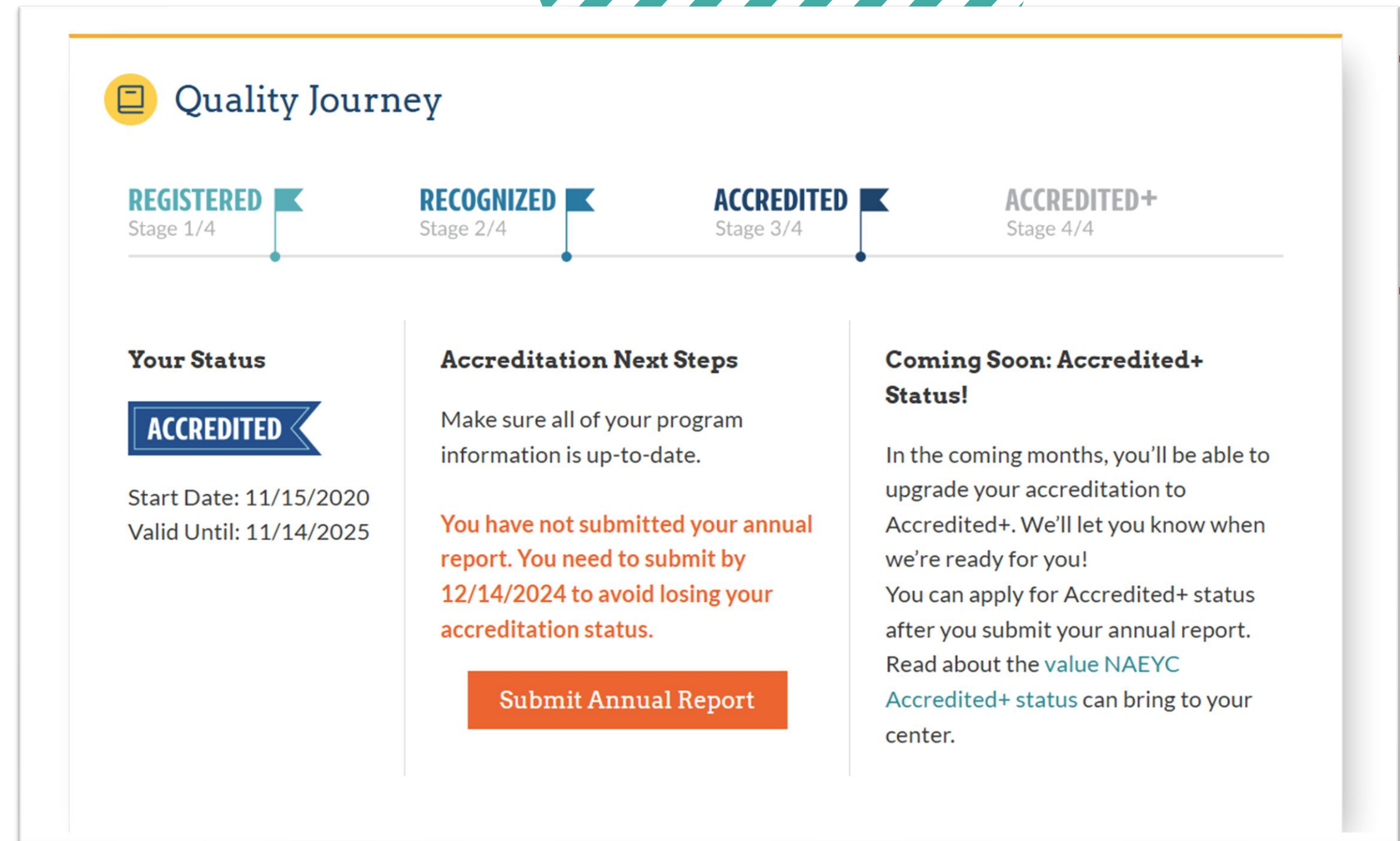
Annual Reports

Annual reports are required at Accreditation tiers and aligned to assessment items.

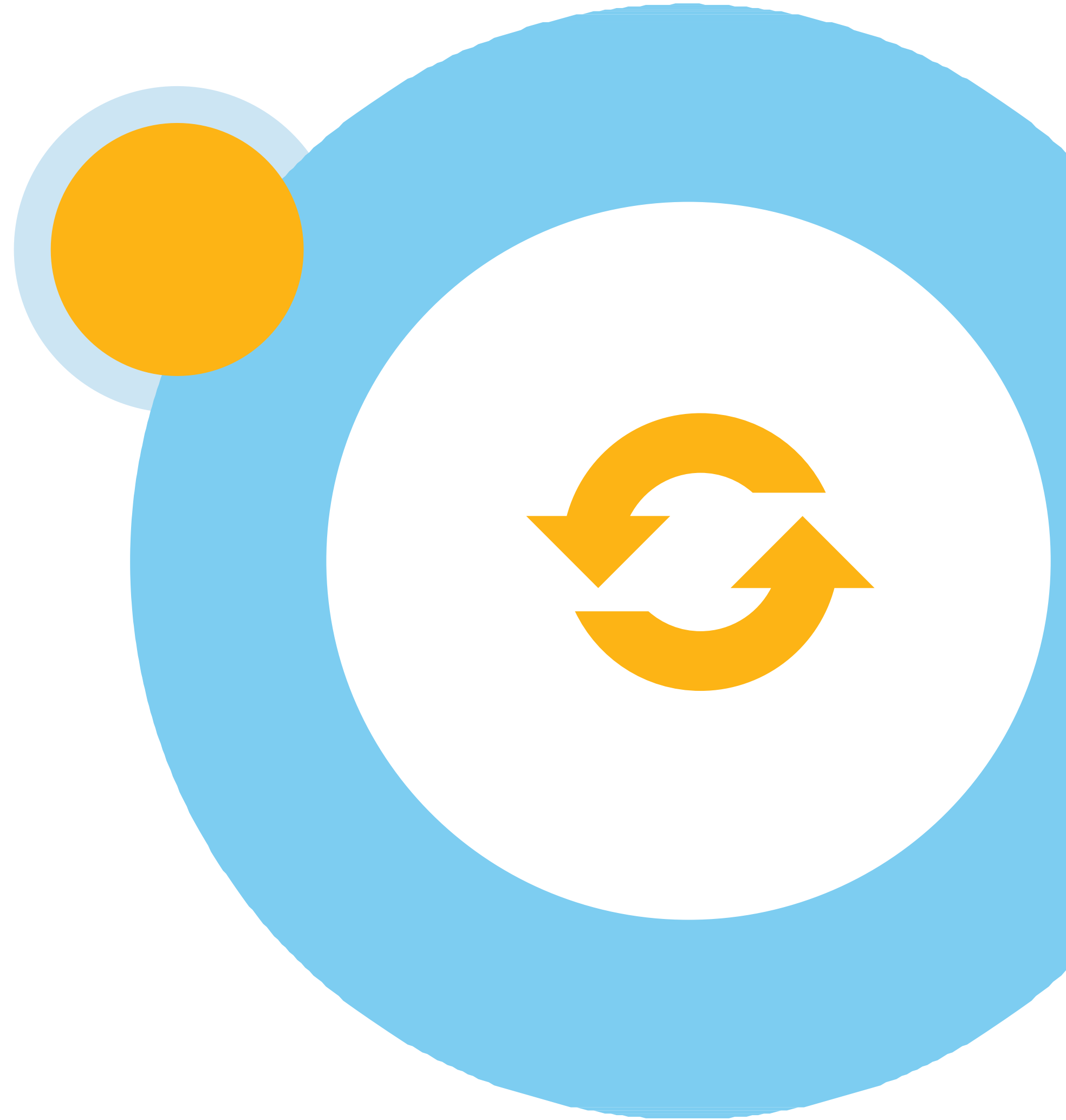
Programs will be expected to respond to requests for information..

Annual Reports

- Annual Reports are due annually for the 5-year term.
- Annual Reports are available 60 days prior to the due date.
- A late fee is added after due date.
- Annual report is no longer available after 90 days and program will be regressed to Registered.



Renewal Process



Renewal Process by Tier

The following outlines the high-level process for renewal at each tier:

Recognition	Accreditation	Accreditation+
Application is available in ELP Hub 60 days prior to VUD	Application is available in ELP Hub 1 year prior to VUD after the 4 th Annual Report has been completed and the Annual Fee has been paid	
<div>1. Application available 60 days prior to VUD</div> <div>2. Submit application</div> <div>3. Complete payment</div> <div>4. Assessment completed</div> <div>5. Application is scored</div> <div>6. Decision</div>	<div>1. Renewal application available 1-year prior to VUD</div> <div>2. Submit application 6-mo. prior to VUD</div> <div>3. Assessment completed</div> <div>4. Application is scored</div> <div>5. Decision</div> <div>6. Complete payment</div>	<div>1. Renewal application available 1-year prior to VUD</div> <div>2. Submit application 6-mo. prior to VUD</div> <div>3. Assessment completed</div> <div>4. Program notified</div> <div>5. Site Visit created</div> <div>6. Pay for site visit</div> <div>7. Site visit completed</div> <div>8. Site visit scored</div> <div>9. Decision</div> <div>10. Complete annual payment</div>

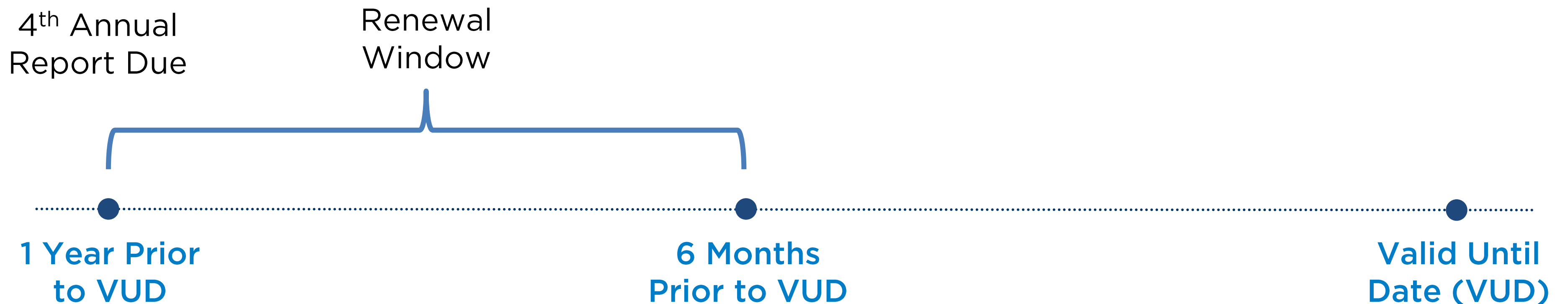
Recognition Renewal Process

- Programs who wish to remain at Recognition will pay the annual fee and re-apply each year.
- If the program is successfully awarded Recognition status, a new 1-year term will be granted.
- Programs will have an opportunity to re-submit documentation 1 time prior to a final decision.
- Program who receive a deferred decision after the 2nd submission do NOT have an option to appeal.



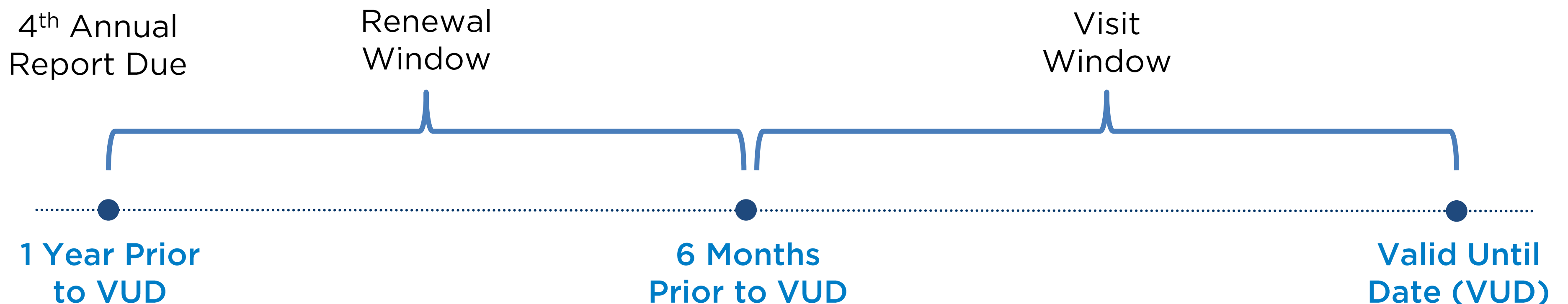
Accreditation Renewal Process

- The 4th Annual Report is separate from the Renewal Application.
- Programs will be able to start the Renewal Application 1 year prior to the VUD and have up to 6 months to submit all documentation.
- Accreditation+ programs can choose to go to another Tier at renewal or by contacting the NAEYC Support Team.

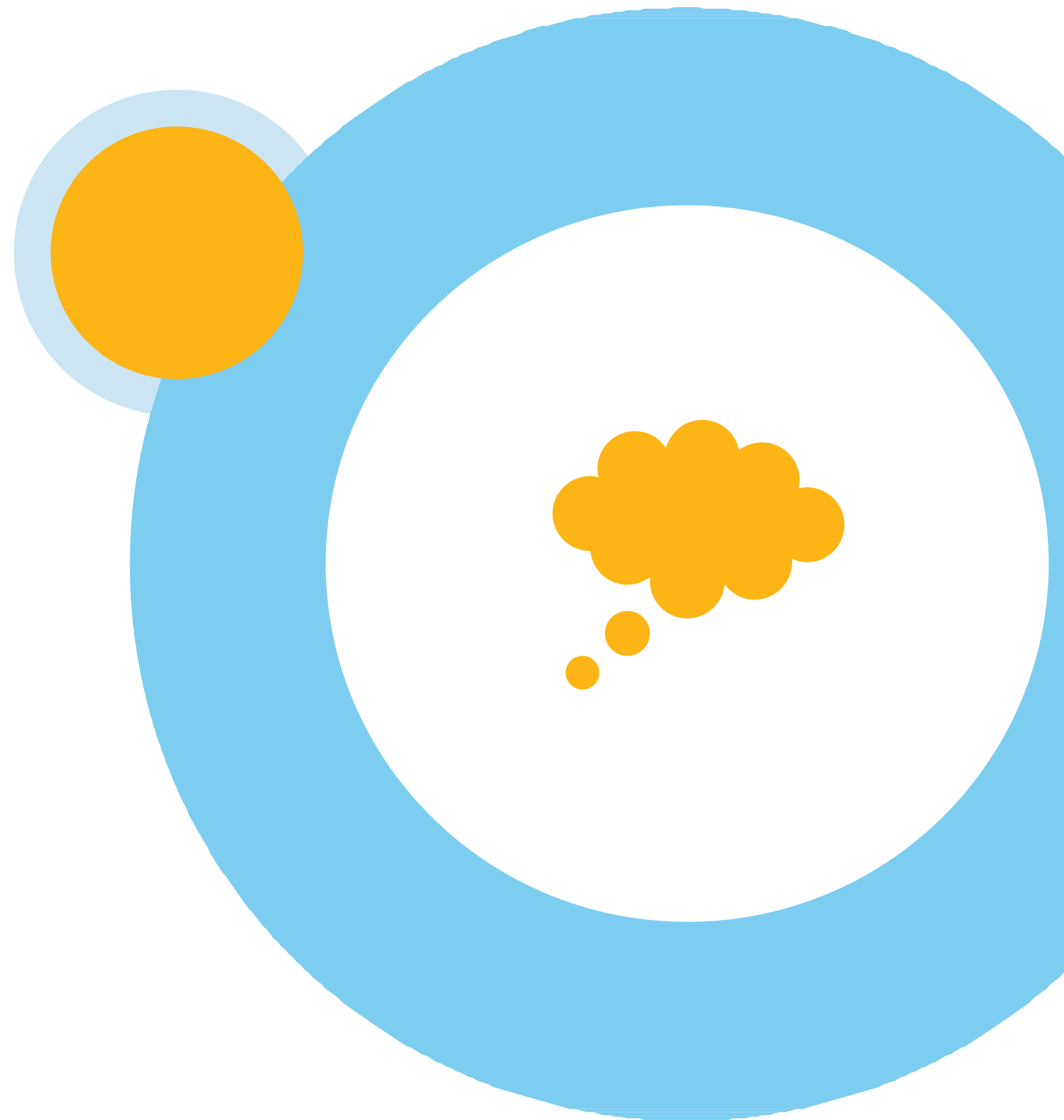


Accreditation+ Renewal Process

- After the documentation has been submitted and reviewed, the program will be notified.
- If a passing score was received, the program will pay the Accreditation+ Site Visit Fee.
- Once the fee has been paid, the Program will be added to the Queue for a Site Visit. The program will receive a 6-month window.

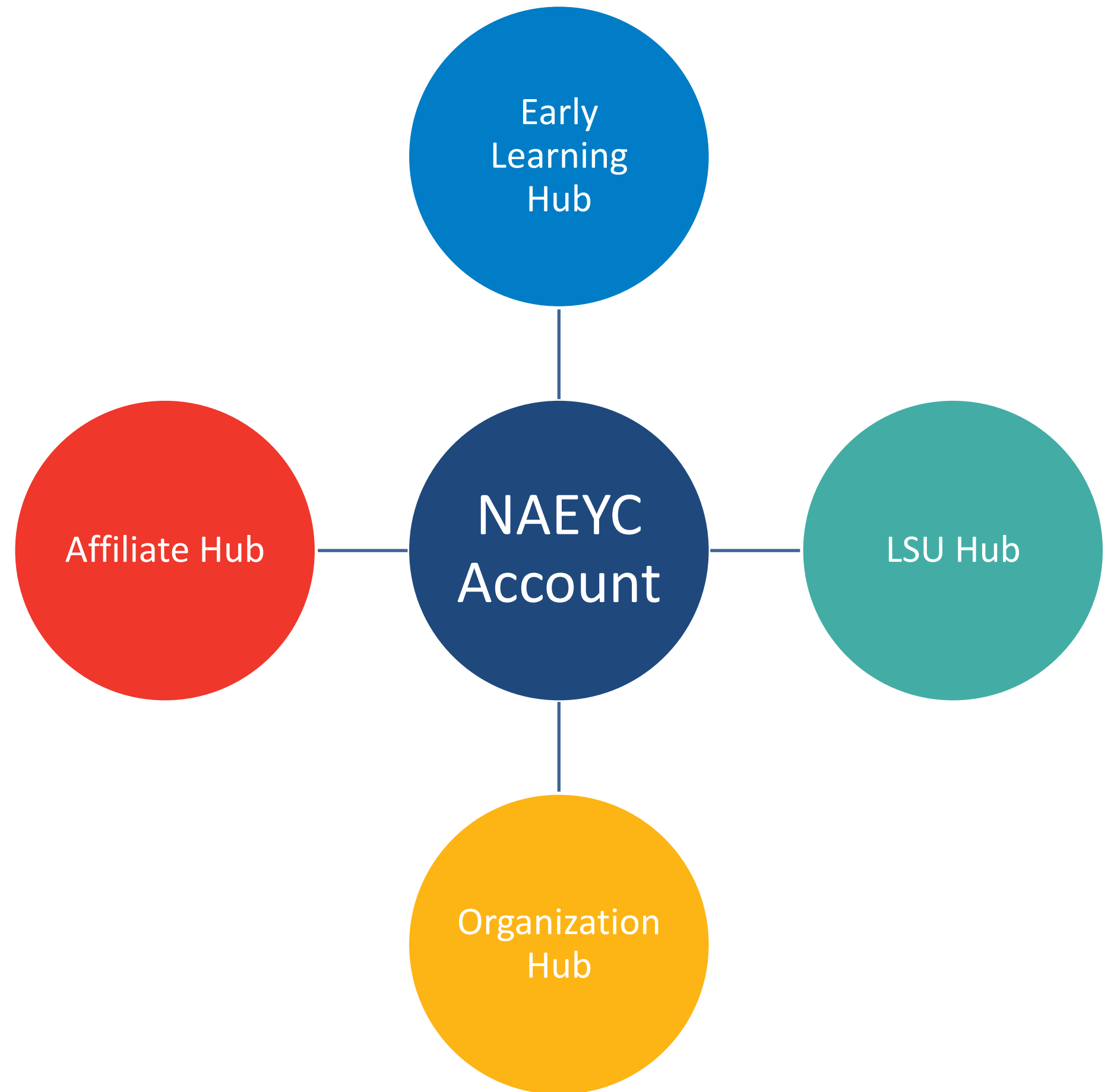


New NAEYC Portal



New NAEYC Portal

- The new online portal will be a “one-stop-shop” for all your NAEYC needs, including membership.
- Users will have access based on role and assignment.
- Early Learning Hub is intended for Directors and Administrators that support programs with accreditation.



New NAEYC My Account

naeyc® My Account

Join

Register a Program

Accredited Early Learning Programs

Accredited Higher Education Programs

Our Work

Resources

Events

Accreditation

Get Involved

About Us

HELLO Community

Learning Lab

Store

My Account

My Organizations

naeyc® annual conference

NAEYC.org/conference

November 19-22, 2025
Orlando, Florida

REGISTER TODAY

Home

Lisa Agent

Home

My Profile

My Membership

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Renewal Notices

My Profile

Lisa Agent

202-555-5555
lagent@naeyc.org

1401 H ST NW Ste 600,
Washington, DC 20005-2051 US

Edit My Profile

My Affiliates

Name

District of Columbia Association for the Education of Young Children

View All My Affiliates ›

Add Another Affiliate

My Membership

Membership Status: Active

Valid Through: 1/14/2026

naeyc®

Lisa Agent

lagent@naeyc.org

is a member in good standing of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and its Affiliate(s)

District of Columbia Association for the Education of Young Children

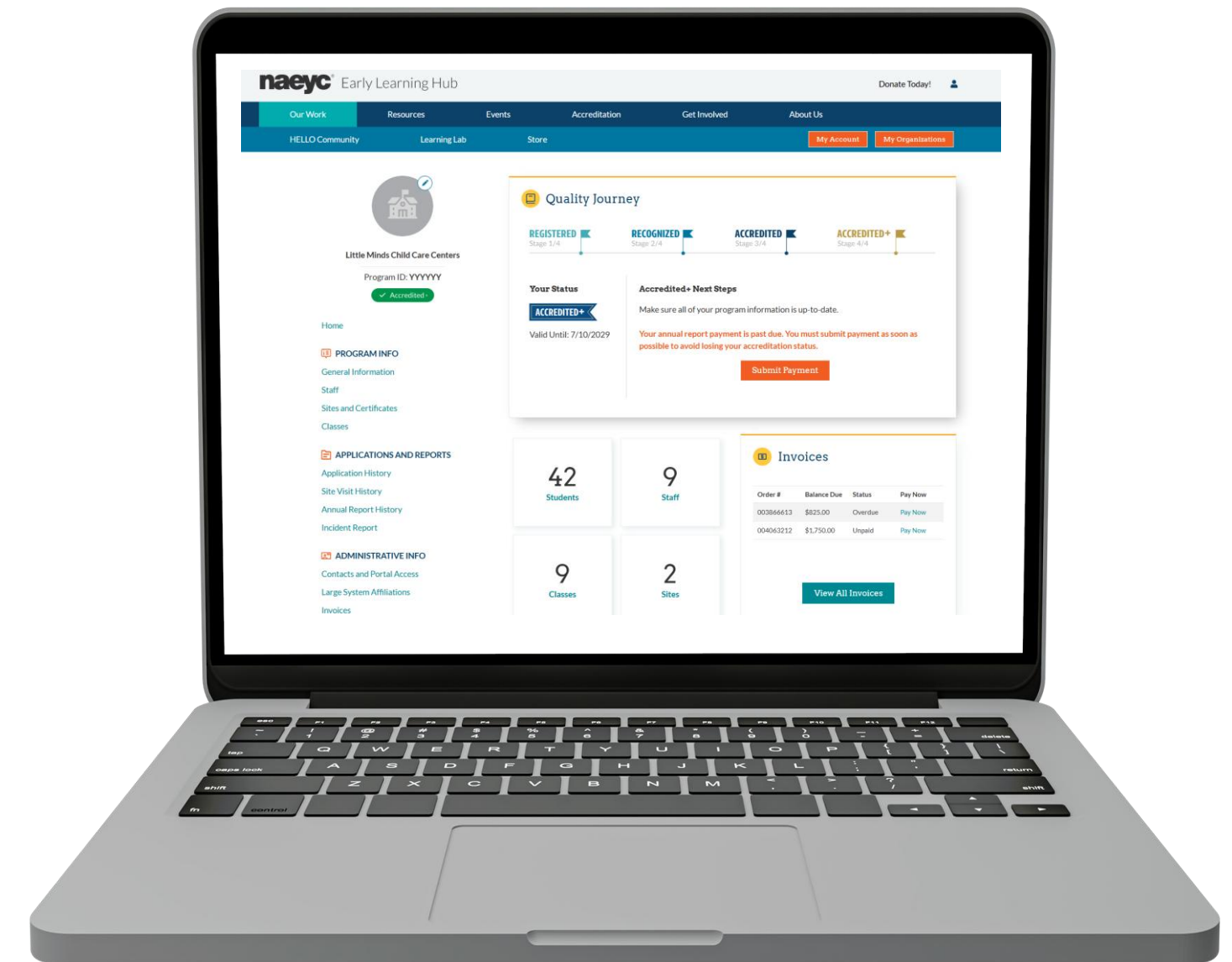
Member ID
300046

Valid Until
1/14/2026

Once in the NAEYC My Account, use the “My Organizations” option to access the Early Learning Hub

NAEYC Account -> Early Learning Hub

- The Early Learning Hub (or ELP Hub) allows program to manage accreditation information and is intended for director and administrator use.
- All legacy portal users and program relationships were migrated to the new Hub.
- Existing users complete a password reset to access Hub for the first time.
- Individuals must have a NAEYC My Account before they can be added as an Admin, Primary or Secondary contacts to access ELP Hub.
- NAEYC membership is not required to have a NAEYC My Account.



Early Learning Hub

From the Home page, programs can:

- View their status and valid until date
- Access Annual Reports and Applications
- View summarize data for the program and
- View invoices
- Make payments

The screenshot shows the naeyc Early Learning Hub interface. The header includes the naeyc logo, navigation links (Our Work, Resources, Events, Accreditation, Get Involved, About Us), and user options (HELLO Community, Learning Lab, Store, My Account, My Organizations). The main content area displays the program's status as 'Accredited+' with a valid until date of 7/10/2029. It also shows a 'Quality Journey' progress bar with stages: REGISTERED (Stage 1/4), RECOGNIZED (Stage 2/4), ACCREDITED (Stage 3/4), and ACCREDITED+ (Stage 4/4). A 'Submit Payment' button is visible under 'Accredited+ Next Steps'. A summary section shows 42 Students, 9 Staff, 9 Classes, and 2 Sites. An 'Invoices' section lists two orders with their respective balances and statuses.

naeyc Early Learning Hub Donate Today!

[Our Work](#) [Resources](#) [Events](#) [Accreditation](#) [Get Involved](#) [About Us](#)

[HELLO Community](#) [Learning Lab](#) [Store](#) [My Account](#) [My Organizations](#)

Little Minds Child Care Centers
Program ID: YYYYYY
✓ Accredited+

[Home](#)

PROGRAM INFO
[General Information](#)
[Staff](#)
[Sites and Certificates](#)
[Classes](#)

APPLICATIONS AND REPORTS
[Application History](#)
[Site Visit History](#)
[Annual Report History](#)
[Incident Report](#)

ADMINISTRATIVE INFO
[Contacts and Portal Access](#)
[Large System Affiliations](#)
[Invoices](#)

Quality Journey

REGISTERED Stage 1/4 **RECOGNIZED** Stage 2/4 **ACCREDITED** Stage 3/4 **ACCREDITED+** Stage 4/4

Your Status
ACCREDITED+
Valid Until: 7/10/2029

Accredited+ Next Steps
Make sure all of your program information is up-to-date.
Your annual report payment is past due. You must submit payment as soon as possible to avoid losing your accreditation status.
[Submit Payment](#)

42 Students **9** Staff **9** Classes **2** Sites

Invoices

Order #	Balance Due	Status	Pay Now
003866613	\$825.00	Overdue	Pay Now
004063212	\$1,750.00	Unpaid	Pay Now

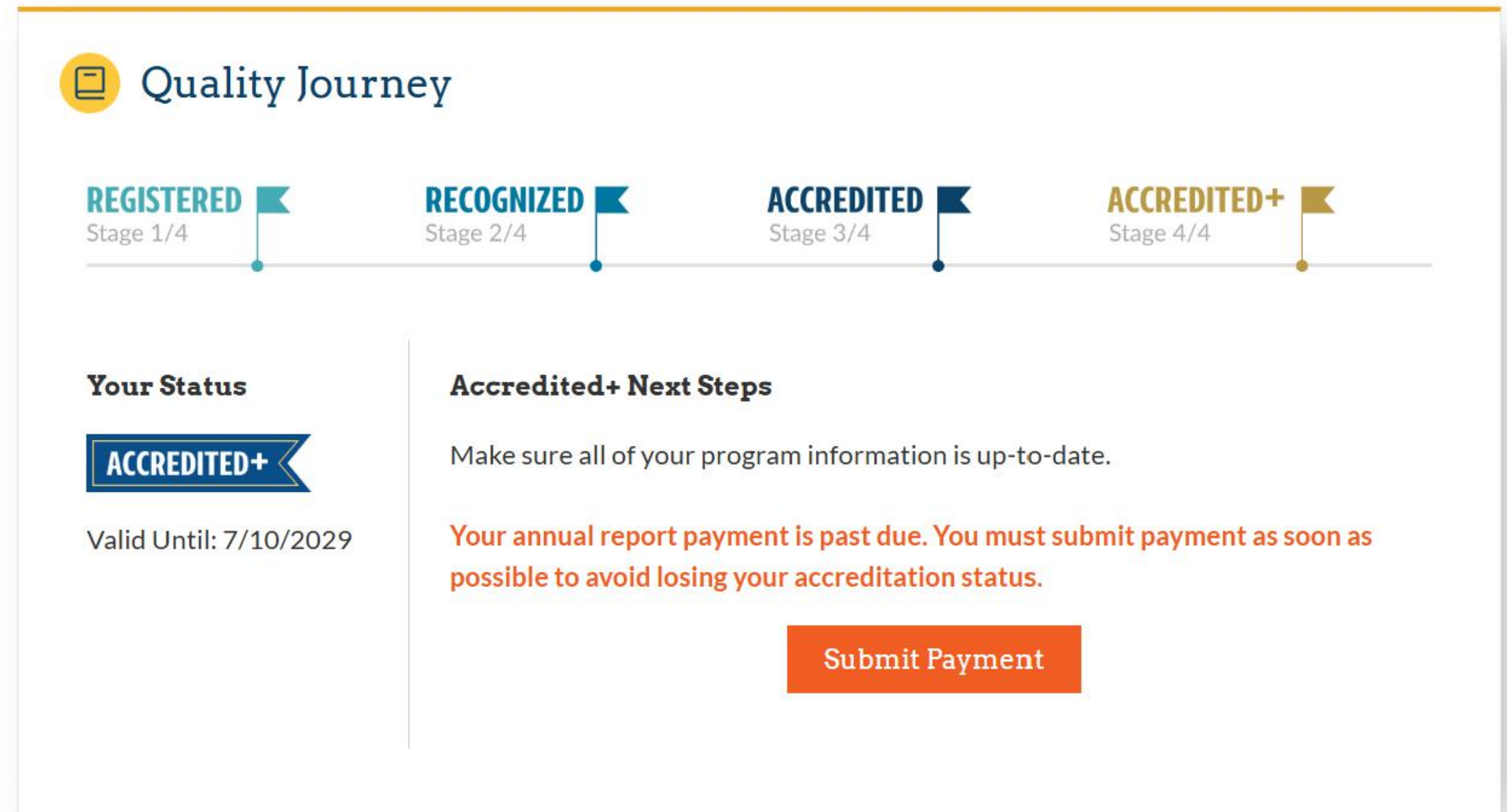
[View All Invoices](#)

Quality Journey Widget

On the ELP Hub Home page, the “Quality Journey” widget provides the program’s status and details on next steps.

Provides the ability to:

- Submit Annual Reports
- Submit Annual Payment
- Complete initial Recognition or Accreditation Application
- Complete renewal applications



Program Information

Program administrators are expected to keep their program information in the Early Learning Hub current and up to date:

General Information

- Includes information about the program status and location

Staff

- Includes all teaching / caregiving staff

Sites and Certificates

- Includes key details on the Primary location and any eligible satellites
- Allows users to download the program's certificate for Recognition or Accreditation

Classes

Includes all classes that are included in the program (and any satellites)

PROGRAM INFO

General Information

Staff

Sites and Certificates

Classes

APPLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Application History

Site Visit History

Annual Report History

Incident Report

ADMINISTRATIVE INFO

Contacts and Portal Access

Large System Affiliations

Payments

Applications and Reports

Application History

- View completed applications in new system

Site Visit History

- View completed site visits in new system

Annual Report History

- View completed Annual Reports in new system

Incident Report

- This is where programs can go to submit new Incident (72 hr) Reports

PROGRAM INFO

General Information

Staff

Sites and Certificates

Classes

APPLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Application History

Site Visit History

Annual Report History

Incident Report

ADMINISTRATIVE INFO

Contacts and Portal Access

Large System Affiliations

Payments

Administrative Info

Contacts and Portal Access

- Use the Contacts and Portal Access page to add or update administrative contacts for the program.
- Added administrators must first log into their account and accept before they will be granted access to the program. Until they accept, they will be listed as “pending”.

Large System Affiliations

- Ability to request to be affiliated with a large system

Payments

- View and make payments

PROGRAM INFO

General Information

Staff

Sites and Certificates

Classes

APPLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Application History

Site Visit History

Annual Report History

Incident Report

ADMINISTRATIVE INFO

Contacts and Portal Access

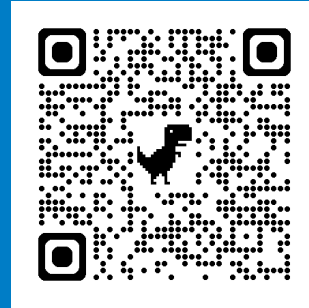
Large System Affiliations

Payments

HELLO Communities for Each Tier

- Users have access to a HELLO Community specific to the current Program Status (Recognition, Accreditation, Accreditation+).
- Branding Guide, Logos, Family Letters and Press Releases are available within the applicable tier HELLO Community.

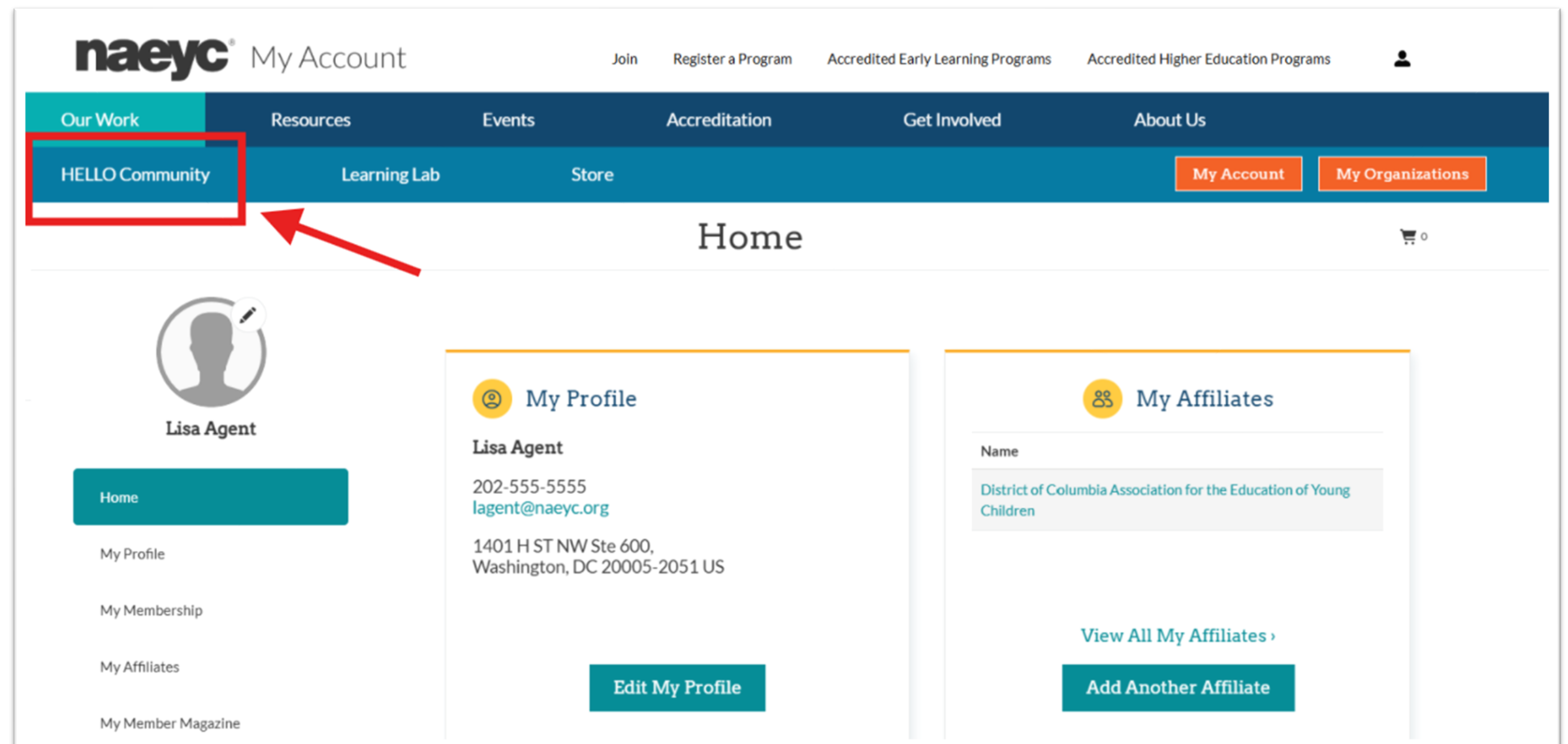
All other resources are available [here](#)



HELLO

Powered by **naeyc**

HELLO is NAEYC's community of learning where users have access to a private community to find important resources and information, engage in conversations with fellow administrators, and more.



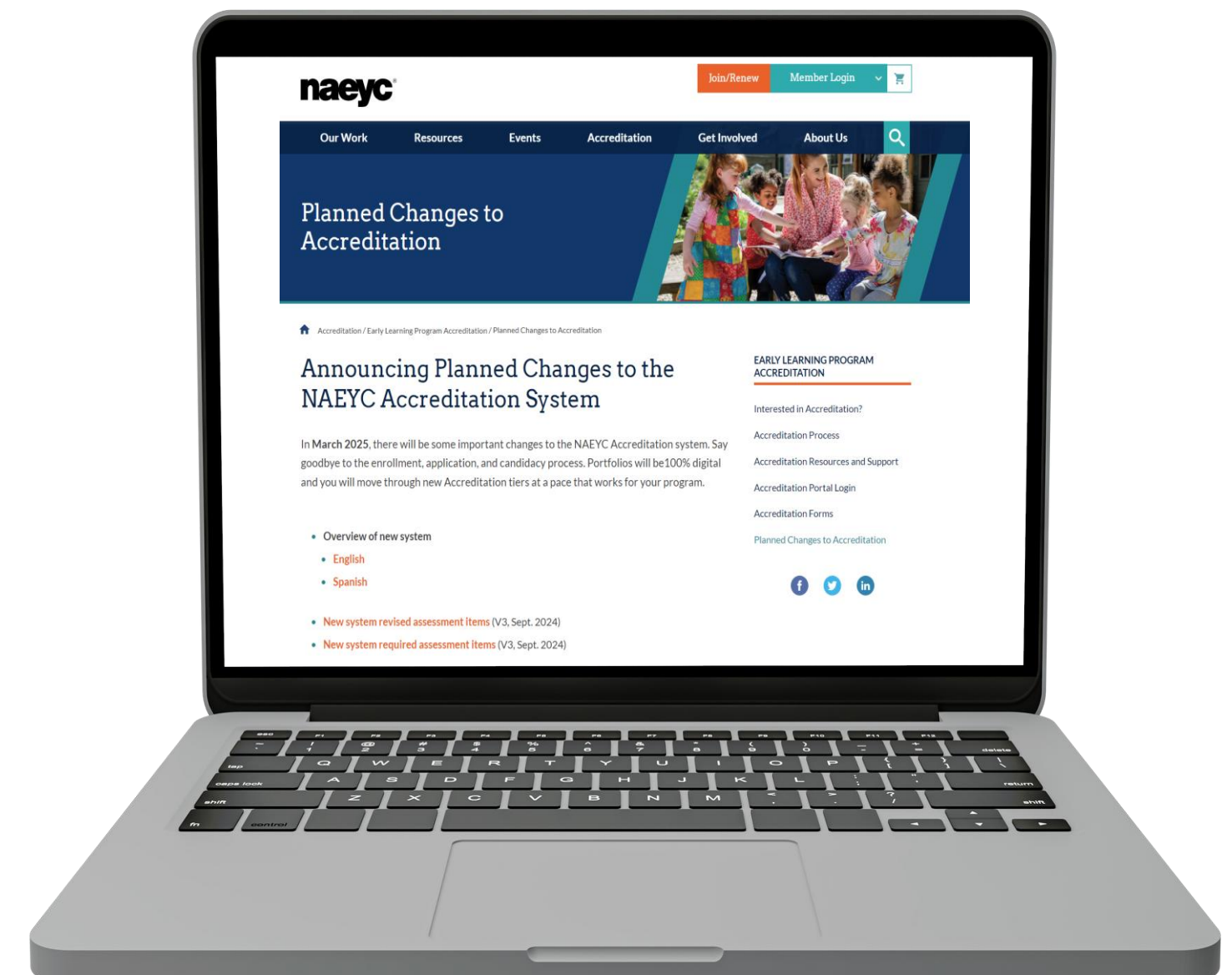
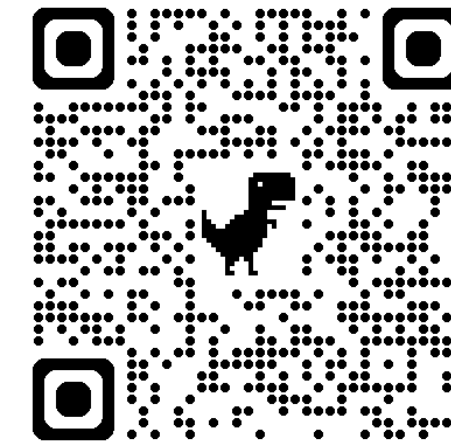
Support & Resources

Visit the [“Planned Changes” webpage](#) for current resources:

- Policy Handbook
- Quality Assessment and Accreditation Assessment Items
 - Available in English & Spanish
- Self Assessment Tools
- Fee Structure

Accreditation Support Team

- accreditation.information@naeyc.org
- 800-424-2460



Policy Handbook

Key resource for understanding the new tiered system, including:

- Eligibility requirements
- Overview of tiered process
- Application process
- Renewal process
- Policies
- Procedures
- Glossary of terms

Contents

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	
School-Age Eligibility	
GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS.....	
PROCESSES.....	
Getting Started: Registration	
Tier 1: Recognition.....	
Tier 2: Accreditation.....	
Tier 3: Accreditation+	
Application Terms & Conditions.....	
Scoring and Administrative Review	
Decision Definitions.....	
Notification of Decisions.....	
Decision Effective Dates.....	
Maintaining Status.....	
Annual Reports.....	
Renewal	
POLICIES.....	
Quality Assurance Policy.....	
Site Visit Policy.....	
Appeal Policy	
Feedback Policy.....	
Site Visit Disruption Policy	
Location Change Policy.....	
Ownership Transfer Policy.....	
Documentation Policy	
PROCEDURES.....	
Fees.....	
Site Visits.....	
Assessors	
Satellite Locations.....	

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National Association for the
Education of Young Children

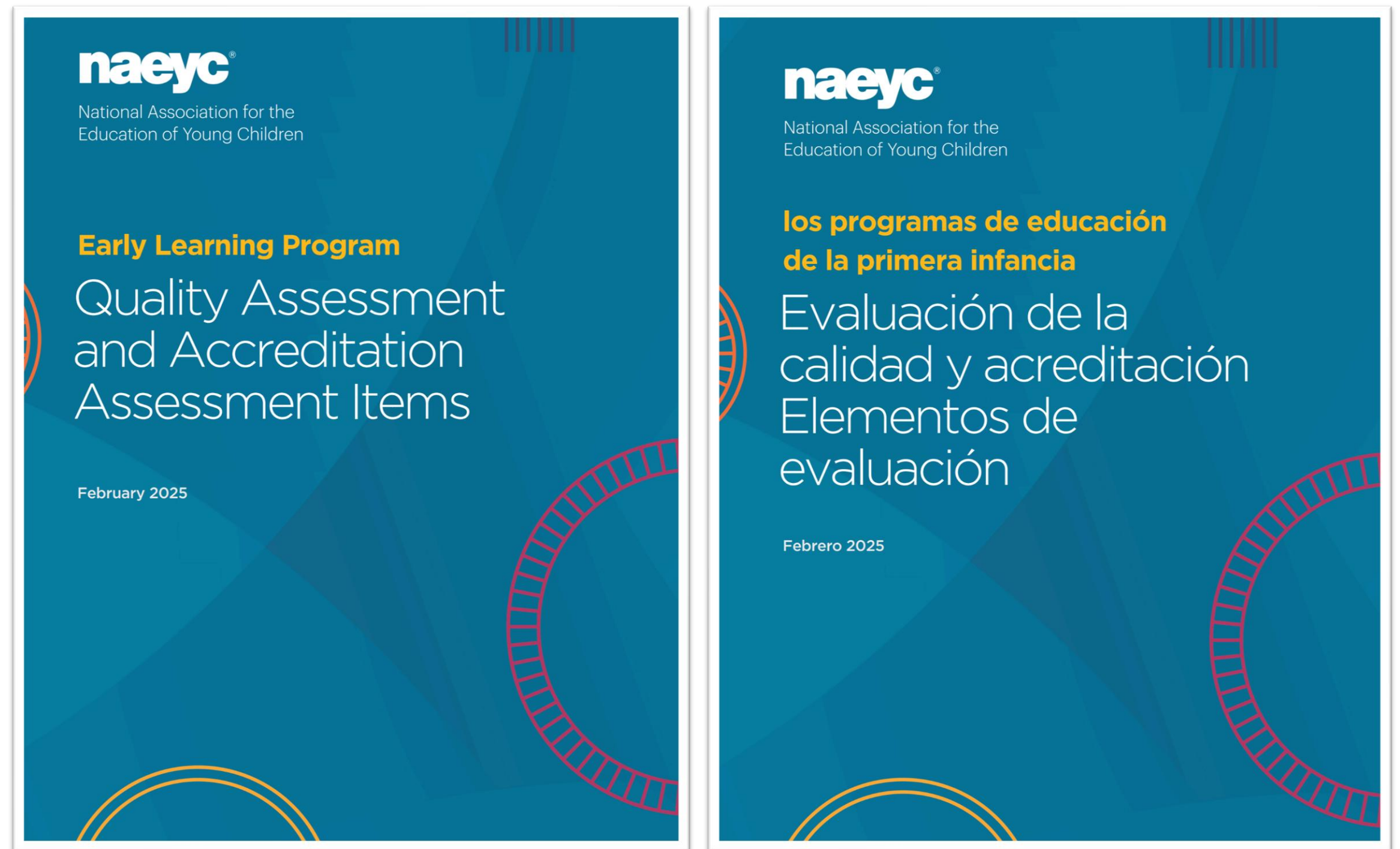
Early Learning Program

Quality Assessment and Accreditation Policy Handbook

February 2025

Assessment Items


- All Assessment Items aligned by New ELP Standards
 - Recognition
 - 40 document-based items
 - Accreditation
 - 125 document-based items
 - 75 observation-based items
- Required Items
- Optional Items
- System-Wide Eligible



Available in English & Spanish

Self-Assessment Tools

- Self-Assessment Tools include the Assessment Items from the tier and evidence type, along with guidance that is available within the electronic application.
- Provides information on what the item language means and scoring guidance to ensure the appropriate evidence is provided to fully meet the item requirements.
- Programs can use these tools to reflect on their practices and evidence to identify their strengths and identify areas that are not fully met to then create an action plan.



Narrative Description Evidence

Accreditation Application

Directions:

1. For each of the assessment items below, provide a written response as directed.

Item A.1.01 (Toddler)

Toddlers have had opportunities to decide what the class will do together (e.g., unit of study, interest areas, which book to read or song to sing as a group).

The intent of this item is to provide children with open-ended opportunities to co-create shared learning experiences. Select N/A if this age category is not served by the program/provider.

Does the program or provider meet this assessment item? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

*This assessment item requires a description of **two examples** of the program meeting this assessment item. This item is specific to toddlers. Your response must be specific to this age category.*

Describe in 3 to 5 sentences how the program meets this assessment item.

Item A.1.01 (Preschool)

Preschoolers have had opportunities to decide what the class will do together (e.g., unit of study, interest areas, which book to read or song to sing as a group).

The intent of this item is to provide children with open-ended opportunities to co-create shared learning experiences. Select N/A if this age category is not served by the program/provider.

Does the program or provider meet this assessment item? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

*This assessment item requires a description of **two examples** of the program meeting this assessment item. This item is specific to preschoolers. Your response must be specific to this age category.*

Describe in 3 to 5 sentences how the program meets this assessment item.

Self-Assessment Tools



Microsoft Word files for both
Recognition and Accreditation tiers:

- Family Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Show and Describe
- Narrative Descriptions

These files can also be used to
prepare information for the
electronic application.

Observation Tool provides
guidance used by assessors when
completing a site visit.

Recognition Tools

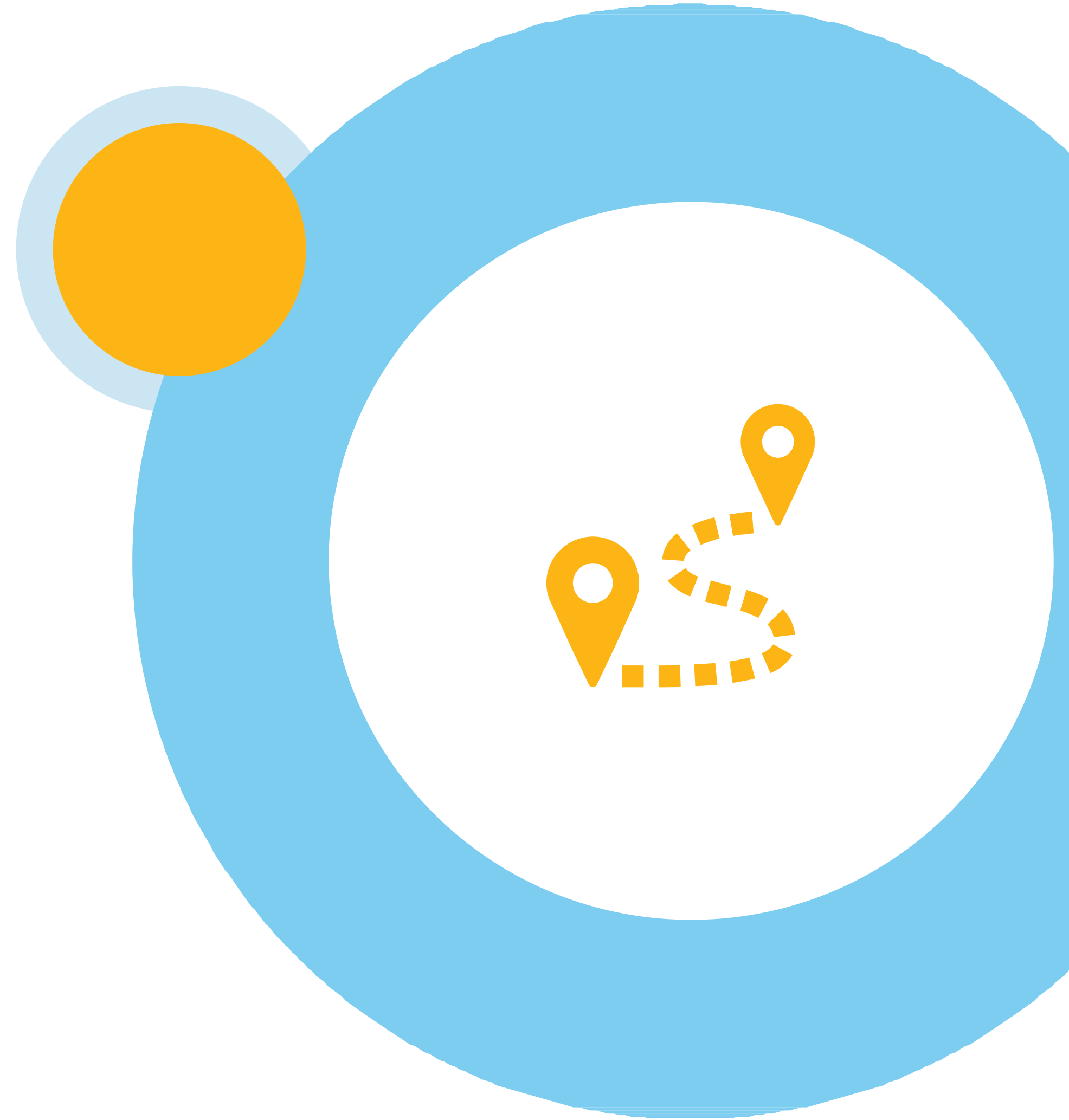
- Family Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Show and Describe
- Narrative Description

Accreditation Tools

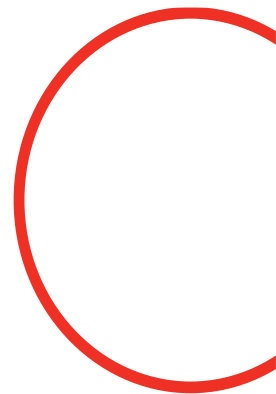
- Family Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Show and Describe
- Narrative Description

Accreditation Observation Tool

Next Steps



Getting Started: What should I do next?



Current Accredited Programs	
STEP 1	Complete a password reset to access the new Early Learning Hub
STEP 2	Review and confirm all the information listed for the program
STEP 3	Review and update the users who have access to the programs
STEP 4	Keep the program information up to date.
STEP 5	Get familiar with the new Content and Assessment Items
STEP 6	Plan for your renewal timeframe. - Renewal application will be available 1 year prior to VUD

Programs that were working towards accreditation in the legacy system will also request a password rest in the Early Learning Hub to get started.

Getting Started:

What should I do next?

New Programs	
STEP 1	Create a new NAEYC My Account
STEP 2	Register the program by selecting “Register a Program”
STEP 3	Enter the program information
STEP 4	Access the program’s record via the Early Learning Hub by going to “My Organizations” from your NAEYC My Account
STEP 5	Complete the additional information for the program
STEP 6	Get familiar with the new Content and Assessment Items
STEP 7	Begin the Recognition application – available from the Quality Journey widget in Early Learning Hub

Thank you!

Accreditation Support Team

- accreditation.information@naeyc.org
- 800-424-2460

