

## PRE-K CONSIDERATIONS

This document outlines issues that should be considered during the scope and design process for a Pre-K Center. Issues related to the design of a Pre-K Center are addressed in the Pre-K Design Requirements and Pre-K Room Planning Standards.

**Filing Strategy:** All Pre-K projects located in leased facilities will be filed with the NYC Department of Buildings. The AOR is requested to file all Alteration Type 2 applications for the work as Professional Certification and Directive 14 to expedite the approval and inspection processes. Most of the Pre-K Centers shall require an Alteration Type 1 for change of use. If the Pre-K Center is located in a multi-tenant facility, the SCA will request the landlord to file the Alt 1. If the Pre-K Center occupies the entire leased facility, the consultant will be requested to file the Alt 1.

**Certificate of Occupancy:** A copy of the C of O must be obtained if one exists.

- The C of O will state the Allowable Live Load Capacity for the proposed space – for a school, Classrooms need a minimum of 40 psf, corridors 100 psf **at grade level and 80 psf on the upper floors**, Public Assembly spaces (if present) 100 psf, a Play Roof 100 psf. The space will have to have a valid C of O for occupancy.
- The C of O will state the construction Category, and whether the building is combustibile or non-combustibile construction. This is an important life safety consideration.
- Best case is that the proposed Pre-K area is already listed on the C of O as a School, Day Care or similarly appropriate Use. If the Use of the proposed Pre-K space as listed is unrelated to our intent, an Amended C of O (or DOB Letter of No Objection) will be needed. Studies must reveal potential impacts that may put the viability of the site in question.
- A Zoning Waiver may be needed for the new use. Investigation and determination is needed.
- If the Pre-K Use would change the dominant Occupancy Classification on the C of O for the building, further investigation into subsequent requirements must be studied.
- If a new or Amended C of O is needed, consequent requirements may include: a “Fire Division” between the new school occupancy and other existing occupancies and ADA compliance.

**Zoning:** A review of Zoning district and designation will be important, as it may trigger added construction requirements. Zoning waivers might be required for Use. (Sites with an “E” Designation may require special construction to mitigate the environmental impacts.)

**Landlord Scope of Work:** The scope of work for the landlord should be one of the first items established during the design process so that the lease can be executed as expeditiously as possible. The landlord is typically responsible for maintaining the existing building envelope including the roof, windows, exterior walls, and exterior doors as well as the boiler (if it is to remain). The landlord is also responsible for any existing building code violations, both recorded and observed. Any modifications to the building envelope and the building systems will have to be approved by the landlord; the SCA may negotiate for the landlord to perform the required modifications but any work that is not agreed upon by the landlord will become part of the scope of work for the SCA project.

**Non-Public School Conversions:** These projects consist mostly of parochial schools that are converted into Pre-K Centers. Therefore, an Alteration Type 1 is typically not required. Since these buildings typically already have existing gang toilets, these toilets should be utilized instead of providing a toilet in each classroom. However, each classroom should be provided with one sink and one bottle filling station. If there is no student gang toilet on a floor, a new student toilet shall be provided. If the existing Public Assembly space is to be used as the exercise space for the Pre-K Center, the AOR must verify that there is adequate natural ventilation if no mechanical ventilation is provided. If there is adequate ventilation in the PA space, supplemental cooling shall be provided. If there is not adequate ventilation, a HVAC unit shall be provided. Classrooms shall be provided with window AC units and all interior occupiable spaces shall be provided with supplemental cooling, after ensuring that ventilation is sufficient.

**Entrance Location/Car Queueing:** During preparation of the initial field report, the site plan shall identify any on-site or nearby/adjacent off-site loading docks, curb-cuts and/or driveways. Entrance location of the school should be located as far away as possible from any on-site or neighboring loading docks, curb-cuts and/or driveways as possible. Site plan shall also identify proposed car queueing spaces (for parent dropping off or picking up students) on the street and on-site locations such as Pre-K's located in shopping centers. As part of the SEQRA, DOT will need to see that there is adequate "safe" passage between the proposed car queueing space and the school entry without crossing any loading docks, curb-cuts or driveways.

**Floor Levels:** While first and/or second floors are preferred, Pre-K can be on the first through third floor (DOH approval required for basement or above third). If Pre-K is on multiple floors, the school's circulation stairs should not be shared with other tenants. (Safety and security considerations must be taken into account.)

**Entrance:** An appropriate area must be available for an Entrance Vestibule and Lobby with reception/security to accommodate safe drop-off and pick-up of children. It must be a dedicated entrance, not shared with others. (Safety and security considerations are paramount.) All Pre-K activities should be separate and apart from other tenants. (Shared fire egress for emergency use may be considered.)

**Required Egress:** Two (2) remote means of egress are required from every floor for the school space. (Fire-escapes or fire balconies are not acceptable for Pre-K). Fire stairs for emergency use might be shared with other tenants, however safety measures should be considered; primary circulation stair must be dedicated to the school's use, not shared.

**Accessibility:** While full ADA compliance is ideal, if an existing school is not accessible or ADA compliant, retrofitting for such is NOT required, however all new construction undertaken must be ADA compliant. Ideally the Pre-K entrance would be accessible for people with disabilities along with the Pre-K spaces.

**Outside Play Area:** If play space is available at grade or on the roof, the target square footage is provided in the P.O.R.

A play roof may be located above the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. If play area is on a roof, it must be separated from mechanical equipment and components. A 10 ft. high fence must be installed around the play area. If the proposed play space is remote from the site, the 3-K organization must be responsible for safe passage and oversight. If an outdoor space is not possible, an exercise room must be provided, unless there is only 1 classroom, in which case the single classroom will be enlarged.

**Classrooms:** Codes require a minimum of 30 net sf per child for classroom space (exclusive of ancillary rooms or built-in's). A greater area is recommended - 50 gross sf/child is ideal. Pre-K classrooms should not house more than 20 children.

- Ample storage space easily accessible from classrooms is needed.

- Each Classroom will need to have a sink (or easy access to water) for educational activities and clean-up; potable water is also recommended for in the Classrooms.
- Classrooms will require internet access.

**Exercise Room:** Provisions for the Exercise Room shall be made according to the P.O.R. The Exercise Room shall include a toilet room, sink counter. Moveable play equipment will be provided. The Exercise Room may be located in the Cellar or above the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.

**Classroom Windows:** Natural daylight is a requirement for classrooms. Best practice is for Classrooms to have windows, but if this is not viable, other means such as skylights or borrowed light from an atrium skylight may be utilized. Regarding placement of borrowed lights, consideration must be given to the requirements of the Active Shooter Drills.

**Toilets Rooms:** The school must satisfy Building Code for child and adult toilets. Children’s toilets with direct access to the classrooms are preferred. However, existing toilets can be utilized if the toilets are proximate to the classrooms. At least one unisex staff toilet shall be provided on every floor with classrooms. The staff toilet on the first floor shall include a wall-mounted changing table as an amenity for families. There shall be a student toilet accessible from the corridor that is proximate to the nurse’s office. A dedicated toilet in the Principal’s Office may be included following the parameters in the POR.

**Warming Kitchen/Pantry:** If the Pre-K Center has an elevator, a warming kitchen/pantry shall be provided, preferably on the first floor for ease of food delivery. If there is no elevator, a warming pantry shall be provided on each floor with classrooms; however, support spaces such as the food storage and locker room will only be required on one of the floors. One Locker Room shall be provide for Pre-K Centers with 4-5 classrooms and two locker rooms shall be provided for Pre-K centers with six or more classrooms. Refer to the Pre-K Design Requirements and Room Planning Standards regarding warming kitchen/pantry requirements.

**Support Spaces for Pre-K Center:** All Pre-K Centers shall be provided with support spaces as per the project’s Program of Requirements. Note that the P.O.R. adjusts the size and quantity of the support spaces according to the number of classrooms and whether or not outdoor play area is available.

**HVAC:** The Pre-K Center must have ventilation, air conditioning and heating including perimeter heating. For Pre-K Centers with 5 Classrooms or fewer, it is preferable to provide all electric equipment – consult with SCA. However, If there is adequate existing gas service and specifying all electric equipment would trigger the need for an electric service upgrade, then gas fired equipment may be provided. Refer to the Pre-K/3K HVAC Matrix.

**Fire Protection:** Prior to occupancy the school must have an operating Fire Alarm system, approved by the FDNY. Additionally, the school will need to have a Fire Protection Plan and a Fire Evacuation Plan approved by FDNY and DOB. If a Pre-K Center is larger than 20,000 sf, a sprinkler system is **required by code, as well as any area below the level of exit discharge.**

**Elevators:** if the Pre-K space is proposed for multiple floors, an elevator available for the school’s dedicated use is ideal, but not required in an existing building with a valid C of O for Pre-K/school use. **If an Alt1 needs to be filed for the building for a change of use and it has an existing elevator, verify that the existing elevator is ADA compliant. If not, it will need to be brought into compliance or replaced, if modifications are not possible.**

**Electrical Service and Distribution:** The electric service available for the school function, including potential window AC units in occupied spaces, will be needed. Generally classrooms will need to have outlets (child-protected) on each wall.

**Other Tenants/Building Uses:** Consider any potential impacts of being in a building with other tenants or any other building uses, such as cell phone antennas and/or billboards, which may have the potential to impact safety and security.