



STEPS AND TIMELINE CERTIFICATION

If your community is interested in seeking EXCEL BY 5 certification, contact the state office at 601-707-7726 to arrange an informational meeting to explain the project and its requirements. A representation of the citizens of the community must be present including the local school district, local Head Start centers, medical personnel, childcare providers, parents, elected officials, local media, business and religious leaders.

EXCEL BY 5 staff will explain the program and answer questions. This community group will decide if they want to undertake the effort of being recognized as a certified EXCEL BY 5 early childhood community.

The following time line will guide the EXCEL BY 5 certification process and is to be used as a tool by the EXCEL BY 5 community lead agency, coalition members and community certification manager. Meetings with the candidate community and state EXCEL BY 5 staff will be held throughout the process.

Phase 1 Months 0-6

Candidate Community attends information meeting on EXCEL BY 5 conducted by state EXCEL BY 5 staff

Community organizes and completes application to be an EXCEL BY 5 Community

Community applies to be an EXCEL BY 5 Community

Application is reviewed by state staff and determined to be in order

Information of acceptance as an EXCEL BY 5 Candidate Community is provided to the lead agency

State EXCEL BY 5 staff meets with lead agency to review the next steps

- Coalition Members are named

- Community Certification Manager is employed/named by representatives of the coalition and the lead agency
- Agreement of Understanding between the lead agency, the Coalition and the Community Certification Manager regarding the Manager's job duties, as related to EXCEL BY 5 activities, is signed by all.
- Coalition Charter is adopted

Needs Assessment is completed by Community Certification Manager and community coalition and submitted to the state office.

State EXCEL BY 5 staff meets with Community Certification Manager and committee chairs to review the criteria for each committee to meet and to discuss the use of the community needs assessment in determining how to meet the EXCEL BY 5 criteria through the creation of a communication/action plan.

Community Certification Manager conducts quarterly coalition meetings for the purpose of updating members and gaining more information on how to address the EXCEL BY 5 criteria, providing a written report to the lead agency and state EXCEL BY 5 Director (ongoing throughout the process)

Phase 2 Months 7-12

Community Certification Manager schedules monthly committee meetings for the purpose of developing responses (activities, events, programs) to address the identified needs in the community and to address the EXCEL BY 5 criteria specific to that community.

Community certification manager gains information from childhood programs in the community that they wish to participate and distributes forms for collecting data from the childcare center directors with staff hours and credentials. State staff analyzes the data to see if the certification percentages have been met.

State EXCEL BY 5 staff guides the community certification manager to sources of classroom assessments and technical assistance for childcare centers.

State EXCEL BY 5 staff meets with community certification manager, lead agency and coalition members at month 10 to assess the progress made to date in meeting the criteria and to assess next steps in addressing the criteria yet to be met.

Phase 3 Months 13-20

Community Certification Manager continues to meet with committees and facilitate the work needed to meet the criteria.

Community Certification Manager notifies EXCEL BY 5 state director that the community has met all the required criteria and seeks a review for certification.

Phase 4 Months 20-24

State EXCEL BY 5 staff visits community and conducts final review of documentation that community has met all required elements to be an EXCEL BY 5 certified child-friendly community.

Notification of results of review provided to the lead agency and the community certification manager

If the results are positive: EXCELebration is planned by the community coalition members and lead agency.

If the results indicate more work is needed, then the specifics will be provided to the lead agency and community certification manager with a plan to assist them in meeting the remaining criteria.