Understanding the Appeal Process

Revised May 2014
NAEYC Academy and Governance Structure

NAEYC Governance Structure

- The **NAEYC Governing Board (Board)** is the governing body for the NAEYC Association, comprised of qualified NAEYC members that demonstrate strong leadership, commitment, and contributions to the field of early childhood education and in assuring the well-being of all young children.

- The **Council for NAEYC Accreditation (Council)** is an independent body of early education experts with knowledge of NAEYC Accreditation of early childhood programs that ensures the equity, integrity, and accountability of the accreditation system.

- The **Quality Assurance Committee (Committee)** is a subset of the Council for NAEYC Accreditation and is responsible for reviewing program appeals and rendering appeal decisions.

NAEYC Academy

- The **NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NAEYC Academy)** is a department within NAEYC that sets and monitors standards for high quality programs for young children and accredits programs that meet these standards – the mark of quality in early childhood education.
NAEYC Academy and Governance Structure

Key

Blue = NAEYC

Red = Governance

NAEYC Governing Board → NAEYC

Council for NAEYC Accreditation → NAEYC Academy

Council Quality Assurance Committee → Accreditation Decisions

Appeal Decisions
# Appeal Process: Step-by-Step

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The program receives an applicable Accreditation Decision</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The program submits the Appeal Options Form and appeal letter to NAEYC via email, fax, or mail</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The NAEYC Academy confirms receipt of the appeal via email</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The program’s appeal and documentation from the program’s accreditation file is provided to the Council Quality Assurance Committee for review</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The Council Quality Assurance Committee may or may not request additional information from the program</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The Council Quality Assurance Committee upholds or overturns the decision by majority vote</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Council Quality Assurance Committee’s decision is sent to the program via email and postal service</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Council Quality Assurance Committee’s decision is final</td>
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NAEYC Appeal Policy

NAEYC Appeal Policy:

The NAEYC Council provides a formal appeal process for programs that receive the following decisions from the NAEYC Academy:

1. Deferral, denial, or revocation of accreditation
2. Denial of candidacy or renewal

The appeal process is available to currently accredited programs and programs seeking accreditation. Appeals are made to the Quality Assurance Committee of the Council on NAEYC Accreditation. Revocations of Accreditation resulting from a failure to submit an Annual Report in a timely manner are not subject to appeal. The Quality Assurance Committee reviews appeals that meet the established procedures.
Procedures Related to Appeal Policy

**Grounds for Appeal:**

Programs have the right to appeal an accreditation decision that includes deferral or denial of accreditation, revocation of accreditation due to verification or random unannounced visit results, required criteria violation(s), and/or complaints, and denial of Candidacy or Renewal materials.

An appeal must:

1. provide evidence that the NAEYC Academy when rendering the decision:
   a) did not follow its established policies and/or procedures, and/or
   b) made a substantive error, such as a factual error, mistake, or misinterpretation; and
2. provide evidence that NAEYC’s failure to follow established policies and procedures or substantive error materially affected the outcome of the accreditation decision.

Dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.
Appeal Process

Submitting an Appeal:

An Appeal Options Form* along with an appeal letter and any related documentation must be submitted by the program within 30 days of the NAEYC Academy’s adverse accreditation decision. The due date will be listed on the Appeal Options Form. An appeal and any related documentation submitted after the due date will not be reviewed or considered.

An appeal letter and any related documentation may be up to 5 pages in length. Information beyond the fifth page will not be reviewed or considered.** An appeal may not include information that the program had the opportunity to provide previously, including evidence from the site visit, or changes to the program that occurred after the NAEYC Academy’s decision. Information of this type that is submitted along with an appeal will not be reviewed or considered. The only exception is that programs may include documentation not previously available from external investigations, such as licensing, regulatory, or medical investigations, related to a program’s ability to meet and maintain the NAEYC Required Criteria.

*An Appeal Options Form is provided only when a program receives an applicable accreditation decision of deferred or denied accreditation, denied Candidacy or Renewal materials, or revocation of accreditation. The Appeal Options Form allows the program to indicate that an adverse accreditation decision will be appealed by the due date indicated on the form.

**Documentation not previously available from external investigations, such as licensing, regulatory, or medical investigations, may be submitted in addition to the 5 page appeal limit.
Appeal Process

Submitting an Appeal, continued:

Accredited programs will maintain their NAEYC Accredited status until an appeal decision is reached by the Council Quality Assurance Committee unless there are circumstances present that, in NAEYC’s reasonable judgment, jeopardize the health or safety of the children enrolled in the program.
Appeal Process

Review of Appeal:

Once an appeal is received by NAEYC Academy, NAEYC Academy staff use reasonable efforts to ensure that personal and program identifying information is omitted from the appeal and related documents from the program’s NAEYC Accreditation file before forwarding to the Council Quality Assurance Committee.

The Council Quality Assurance Committee may request additional factual information about the appeal from NAEYC, the NAEYC assessor, and/or the program.
Appeal Process

Reaching a Decision:

After a detailed review of the program appeal and related documentation from the program’s NAEYC Accreditation file, along with the related NAEYC Academy policies and procedures, the Council Quality Assurance Committee determines the outcome of the appeal by majority vote. The possible outcome is dependent on the type of appeal and may include:

TYPE OF APPEAL - Deferred or Denied Accreditation
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES include:
- Uphold the NAEYC Academy’s decision
- Overturn the NAEYC Academy’s decision
- Overturn the NAEYC Academy’s decision, with a revisit required

TYPE OF APPEAL - Revocation of Accreditation due to a verification or random unannounced visit
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES include:
- Uphold the NAEYC Academy’s decision
- Overturn the NAEYC Academy’s decision
- Overturn the NAEYC Academy’s decision, with a revisit required
Appeal Process

Reaching a Decision, continued:

TYPE OF APPEAL - Revocation of Accreditation due to a required criteria violation(s)
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES include:
• Uphold the NAEYC Academy’s decision
• Overturn the NAEYC Academy’s decision

TYPE OF APPEAL - Revocation of Accreditation due to a complaint
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES include:
• Uphold the NAEYC Academy’s decision
• Overturn the NAEYC Academy’s decision

TYPE OF APPEAL - Denial of Candidacy or Renewal Materials
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES include:
• Uphold the NAEYC Academy’s decision
• Overturn the NAEYC Academy’s decision
Appeal Process

Notification of Decision:

The primary and secondary program contacts will be sent the appeal decision through email and postal service approximately 60 days after the Appeal Options Form due date.

*The Council Quality Assurance Committee’s decision is final.*