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About Keystone STARS
Keystone STARS is a program of Pennsylvania’s Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and is the state’s Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). Keystone STARS has four primary goals:

- To improve the quality of early childhood education (ECE);
- To support ECE providers in meeting their quality improvement goals;
- To recognize programs for continuous quality improvement and meeting higher quality standards; and
- To provide families a way to choose a quality ECE program.

OCDEL’s Keystone STARS Program supports all early childhood education programs to improve program quality. We encourage programs to think about the Keystone STARS Performance Standards as a tool to support continuous quality improvement (CQI) that impacts services to the children and families in your care.

Pennsylvania is required to use a portion of its federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds for activities that improve the quality of childcare services; and increase families’ options for, and access to, high-quality childcare. CCDBG is devoted to helping low-income families working or participating in education and training to pay for childcare and improve their access to quality childcare. Keystone STARS is funded by Pennsylvania’s quality set-aside fund as well as state funding streams.

Defining Quality in Early Childhood Education Programs
Quality early childhood education is made up of two components, structural quality and process quality.

1. **Structural Quality** often defines the foundational or regulated components of a quality ECE program. Structural quality components include aspects such as group size, children-to-teacher ratio, and teachers’ qualifications.

2. **Process Quality** focuses on the dynamic and human aspects of ECE programs that support the daily experiences of children. Process quality encompasses the social, emotional, physical, and instructional aspects of children’s activities and interactions with teachers, peers, and materials.

Keystone STARS – A Commitment to the Diversity of Pennsylvania’s Early Childhood Education Providers
Keystone STARS policies and performance standards were designed to be accessible to each and every provider in Pennsylvania. This commitment to an accessible STARS program means that providers have flexibility to create CQI plans that are meaningful to them and, at STAR 3 and 4, are able to choose which optional quality indicators best align with their goals. Quality coaches will work in partnership with providers to highlight strengths and create achievable plans to improve quality.

The Keystone STARS Program Manual and Performance Standards were written to capture the broad vision for quality ECE. The performance standards should be interpreted in a way that aligns with the type of program a provider owns, operates or works to support. If you have questions related to how a standard can be applied to your program, please contact your local Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) and ask to speak to a Quality Coach.
About the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)

**History:** The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) was established in 2007 as a joint initiative between the Departments of Education and Human Services. It was established to promote opportunities for all Pennsylvania’s children and families by building systems and providing supports that help ensure access to high-quality child and family services.

**Mission:** The Office of Child Development and Early Learning provides families access to high quality services to prepare children for school and life success.

**Goals:**

- Work effectively, collaboratively, creatively and successfully to ensure that all families have access to high quality programs for their children;
- Engage stakeholders in actionable ways that provide guidance on programs and policies; and
- Identify and use key data and research to improve policies and practices.

OCDEL is composed of four Bureaus:

**Bureau of Certification Services**
The Bureau of Certification Services is responsible for the regulation of all childcare centers, group childcare homes and family care homes in Pennsylvania. The Certification Bureau receives inquiries regarding a variety of topics, including: the requirements and process for opening a childcare facility; the statutes and regulations for designation a childcare facility; the status and compliance history of specific facilities; and the complaints regarding childcare facilities.

**Bureau of Early Intervention Services**
The Bureau of Early Intervention (EI) Services assures that all eligible children from birth to five with disabilities and/or developmental delays receive services and supports that maximize their development so they are successful in any early care and education setting. Services are provided to eligible infants, toddlers, and young children three and older. This Bureau oversees the Early Intervention Program for children from birth to school age and provides family support programs that strengthen families, reduce risk, and increase early learning opportunities for children.

**Bureau of Early Learning Resource Center Operations**
The Bureau of Early Learning Resource Center Operations provides direct support to the ELRCs in managing the Child Care Works and Keystone STARS programs through technical assistance and instruction on all fiscal, programmatic and system requirements. The bureau works with ELRCs to ensure program and grant compliance and adherence to federal and fiscal reporting requirements and provide any necessary technical assistance and remediation.

**Bureau of Policy and Professional Development**
The Bureau of Early Learning Policy and Professional Development works to ensure all programmatic policies align to improve cross-systems efficiencies, identify potential policy barriers, leverage policy opportunities, and ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements. In addition, ELRC program compliance will be supported through internal and external professional development and technical assistance supports ensuring consistent state-wide service delivery and efficient use of available state and federal resources.

**Benefits of Keystone STARS**
Quality ECE benefits everyone and serves as an economic development strategy for Pennsylvania.
Benefits for Children and Families:
- Quality early care and learning promotes healthy child development and early learning;
- STAR designations help families find quality child care for their children; and
- Reliable quality child care allows families to focus on work, have fewer absences and be more productive.

Benefits for Providers:
- Customized support and assistance to individual programs;
- Grants, awards and other financial supports as available;
- Supportive professional development;
- Outreach and marketing to families;
- Apply for other grant programs, such as the Pennsylvania Child And Adult Care Food Program (CACFP);
- A roadmap for strengthening the quality of care and an opportunity for lifting up the child care profession and child care system; and
- Increased Child Care Works (CCW) payments based on quality level.

To find out the other great opportunities Keystone STARS offers to help become a certified child care Keystone STARS provider, contact your local Early Learning Resource Center or visit raiseyourstar.org.

Keystone STARS Incentives

Child Care Subsidy Daily Add-On for Keystone STARS Programs

As part of OCDEL’s commitment to CQI, programs participating in Keystone STARS at STAR 2 level and above receive a quality add-on rate for every child they serve who is enrolled in Child Care Works (CCW).

This subsidy add-on, or tiered reimbursement, is applicable to Family Child Care Homes, Group Child Care Homes, and Centers at STAR 2 and higher and increases with each STAR level. The add-on is automatically applied to the daily, subsidized child care rate for the program. The additional daily amount may, in some circumstances, increase provider rates to an amount that exceeds the maximum child care allowance.

Grants and Awards

Qualifying childcare programs may receive Keystone STARS grants and awards. Grants and awards may not be available to all programs and will be prioritized to programs serving greater numbers of CCW participants in times of limited funding.

Tuition Assistance

Several types of tuition assistance are available to program staff working at Keystone STARS facilities:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) Assessment Fee Voucher Program

  The CDA ASSESSMENT FEE VOUCHER PROGRAM supplies payment for the CDA Assessment Fee that is required to complete the CDA Assessment process. The full CDA Assessment Fee of $425 is paid directly to the Council for Professional Recognition. This program does not reimburse individuals.
The Pennsylvania Key also offers a voucher for $125 to cover an individual’s CDA Renewal Fee.

For more information about the CDA Voucher Program, click [here](#) visit the Pennsylvania Keys website at [www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org)

- **Rising STARS Tuition Assistance**

  The Rising STARS Tuition Assistance Program pays 95% of tuition costs for eligible college coursework taken by early learning professionals, with a maximum benefit of $8,000 per individual each fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Tuition costs net of other funding sources such as scholarships, stipends, discounts or grants (except the Pell Grant) are used to determine the amount of assistance. It is recommended completed applications be submitted at least four weeks prior to the start of the course, or prior to the tuition due date, whichever is first.

  For more information about the Rising STARS Tuition Assistance program, click [here](#) or visit the Pennsylvania Keys website at [www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org)

- **Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Pennsylvania Scholarship Program**

  T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood PENNSYLVANIA Scholarship Program works with providers, colleges, and child care staff to offer scholarship programs and support systems that improve the education and compensation of child care workers. T.E.A.C.H obtains its funding through grants from businesses, foundations, and government. By helping increase professionalism, raise wages, and reduce staff turnover of child care staff, this public-private partnership brings higher quality care to Pennsylvania’s children. T.E.A.C.H is administered by the Pennsylvania Child Care Association (PACCA).

  For more information about T.E.A.C.H., click [here](#) or visit PACCA’s website at [www.pacca.org](http://www.pacca.org).
SECTION TWO: THE KEYSTONE STARS DESIGNATION PROCESS
Navigating the Process of Keystone STARS

Step 1: Maintain STAR 1 Eligibility
The following eligible programs demonstrate their ability to maintain a foundation for a safe and healthy environment for children and will automatically be designated a STAR 1.

- Early childhood education and school age programs holding a regular Certificate of Compliance from Pennsylvania’s Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Preschool programs holding a private academic license from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)

These early childhood education providers are awarded a STAR 1 and may increase their STAR level by meeting higher performance standards.

Receiving a STAR 1 designation is the first step on a program’s CQI journey. STAR 1 programs are invited to connect with a Quality Coach at the local Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC). Quality Coaches are available to help identify a program’s strengths and opportunities for growth. All programs hoping to advance through STAR levels should begin with making a connection with their most supportive resource – a Quality Coach.

Step 2: Complete the Request for Keystone STARS Designation and Program Information Form
Programs expressing an interest in moving up the STARS quality continuum should:

- Complete the Request for Keystone STARS Designation and Program Information Form
- Demonstrate structural quality elements that ensure children have a healthy, safe, challenging and supportive environment that fosters responsive and meaningful child-adult interactions.
- Connect with a Quality Coach at their Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC).

Your Quality Coach can

- Support your program through the STAR 2 evidence-gathering process
• Support your program in conducting an internal assessment using an evidence-based observation instrument that best meets your program’s needs and goals
• Provide guidance in the creation of a CQI Plan with goals and action items to support program improvement
• Review evidence of meeting STAR 2 program standards prior to submission through the Keystone STARS Document Uploader online portal.

Step 3: Achieve STAR 2 Designation
A program’s STAR 2 designation is determined by fully meeting all of the STAR 2 quality indicators.

Step 4: Engage in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) journey to higher STAR levels
Programs that successfully achieve a STAR 2 designation are encouraged to continue on their pathway to STAR 3 and 4. At the two highest levels of Keystone STARS, programs earn points by meeting all required quality indicators across the four performance standard areas and choose which quality indicators best meet their CQI plan. Programs must continue to use evidence-based program observation tools for internal assessment and plan for CQI activities.

Programs working toward the STAR 3 and 4 levels are encouraged to seek CQI assistance from a Quality Coach. At these levels, Quality Coaches will:

• Support programs through the STAR 3 and 4 evidence-gathering process
• Provide guidance in creating a CQI Plan with goals and activities to support comprehensive program improvements
• Review evidence of meeting STAR 3 and 4 quality indicators

Step 5: Achieve a STAR 3 or 4 Designation
STAR 3 and STAR 4 designations are considered to indicate the highest of quality levels for ECE programs. At these levels, a program’s designation is determined by meeting all required quality indicators and earning the required minimum number of points from the optional quality indicators.

Keystone STARS Renewal and Appeals Process
Keystone STARS Renewal Process
All programs that receive a STAR 2 or higher designation must complete an annual paperwork renewal that includes the following:

  o Request for STAR Designation and Program Information Form
  o Enrollment Calculation Tool (ECT)
  o Copy of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan update
  o Facility Staff Qualifications Grid

The annual paperwork renewal is due 30 days prior to a program’s designation anniversary.

Keystone STAR designations are awarded for a 3-year period. Exceptions to the 3-year designation may happen when special circumstances occur including:

• Programs are ready to achieve a higher STAR designation;
• Programs experience significant program growth (additional age groups added)
• Programs experience a revocation, suspension or issuance to provisional Certification status; and/or
• Programs experience changes or circumstances that warrant a designation review including but not limited to received complaints from families and other stakeholders, loss of OCDEL-approved Alternate Pathway accreditation and/or loss of Head Start federal funding

If any circumstances above apply, a program may need to repeat the full designation process. As significant changes occur, programs are required to report these to their Quality Coach who will then determine if a new designation is required.

Keystone STARS Appeal Process

If a program believes there has been an error in determining their STAR designation, the program may submit a written appeal that details the indicator(s) and the evidence submitted in question to the ELRC Director. Appeal letters must be submitted within 30 business days of a STAR designation and will be responded to within 30 days.

Role of Continuous Quality Improvement Plans in Keystone STARS Designation Process

A program’s CQI Plan should serve as a roadmap in goal setting based on an analysis of the program’s strengths and areas in which improvement is needed in order to improve the experiences of children and families. The CQI Plan should be reflective in nature and, as such, should be updated to include progress made in meeting previous goals as well as the addition of new goals that further pushes the pendulum to higher quality practices. CQI Plans are by their very nature dynamic and will change over time.

As part of all Keystone 2, 3, and 4 designations and annual reviews, programs are required to submit a copy of their updated annual CQI Plan to their Quality Coach. This annual update should include a review of the previous CQI Plan to:

• Summarize progress made toward achievement of both short-term and long-term goals
• Identify new goals and action steps based on reflective activities and other internal assessment activities
• Discuss any goals no longer deemed necessary
• Indicate individuals responsible for achieving goals

Program Quality Assessment in Keystone STARS

Program Quality Assessment (PQA) refers to the process of observing classroom or program leadership and management practices using observation instruments. These observations can help early childhood and school-age professionals review their program’s practices to see what they are doing well and identify areas for growth. Program Quality Assessment results in feedback that should be used to inform CQI Plan goals related to classroom practices and program management.

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated changes to the role of PQA within Keystone STARS in the 20/21 fiscal year. These specific changes are outlined in the Keystone STARS Performance Standards and include the temporary suspension of formal external PQA visits for STAR 3 and 4 programs. Changes to temporarily suspend the requirement for an external Program Quality Assessment (PQA) using ERS or CLASS in the 2020-21 STARS Performance Standards are related to best practices in the mitigation of the spread of COVID-19. Future STARS designations may require an external PQA to move up or maintain a STAR 3 or 4 designation.
Program Observation Instruments in Keystone STARS

Program Observation Instruments (POIs) are evidence-based, reliable tools used to measure various aspects of quality practices. Some POIs use a broad lens, reviewing multiple aspects of quality practice that support children’s growth and development across multiple domains. Others use a more focused lens to consider very specific quality practices or practices that reflect only a portion of a program’s daily programming for families. Selecting an appropriate POI to support gathering feedback for use in CQI goal planning is an important decision for programs. Over time a program may opt to use multiple POIs to inform their goals, as they develop new practices, encounter new challenges, or support staff with various levels of experience and skills. Below are charts outlining approved POIs for use in Keystone STARS PQA Activities.
## Program Observation Instruments for Classroom Practice

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<td>Infant and Toddler Classrooms</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ersi.info">www.ersi.info</a></td>
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<td>Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R)</td>
<td>Preschool Classrooms</td>
<td>- Space and furnishings&lt;br&gt;- Personal care routines&lt;br&gt;- Language-reasoning&lt;br&gt;- Activities&lt;br&gt;- Interaction&lt;br&gt;- Program structure&lt;br&gt;- Families and staff</td>
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<td>Infant Classroom Assessment Scoring System (Infant CLASS)</td>
<td>Birth to One Year Classrooms</td>
<td>Teacher-Child Interactions related to:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.teachstone.com">www.teachstone.com</a></td>
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<td>Toddler Classroom Assessment Scoring System: (Toddler CLASS)</td>
<td>One to Three-Year-Old Classrooms</td>
<td>Teacher-Child Interactions related to:</td>
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<td>Pre-K Classroom Assessment Scoring System (Pre-K CLASS)</td>
<td>Three to Five-Year-Old Classrooms</td>
<td>Teacher-Child Interactions related to:</td>
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<td>Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP)</td>
<td>Two to Five Years of Age</td>
<td>Daily inclusive practices for children with IEP/IFSP related to:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eZh4vaqcG0">www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eZh4vaqcG0</a>&lt;br&gt;(Author's YouTube overview of the ICP)</td>
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<td>- Adaptations of space and materials&lt;br&gt;- Adult involvement in peer interactions&lt;br&gt;- Adults’ guidance of children’s free choice activities and play&lt;br&gt;- Conflict resolution&lt;br&gt;- Membership&lt;br&gt;- Relationship between adults and children&lt;br&gt;- Support for communication</td>
<td>products.brookepublishing.com/The-Inclusive-Classroom-</td>
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<td>Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO)</td>
<td>10 - 47 Months</td>
<td>Positive Interactions and behaviors related to:</td>
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<td><strong>NOTE:</strong> Designed to observe parenting behaviors, there is research that indicates appropriate for use to observe teacher interactions with children.</td>
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<td>Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development</td>
<td>Preschool Classrooms enrolling children ages 2-5</td>
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<td>■ Individualized and developmentally appropriate pedagogy</td>
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<td>Developmental Environment Rating Scale (DERS)</td>
<td>2 ½ to 6 years</td>
<td>Environmental and teacher support for children’s development related to:</td>
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<td>■ executive functioning skills</td>
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<td>■ literacy</td>
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<td>■ social/emotional functioning.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ders-app.org/">www.ders-app.org/</a></td>
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<td>Rating Observation Scale for Inspiring Environments (ROSIE)</td>
<td>Not specified, but most appropriate for preschool classrooms</td>
<td>Classroom aesthetics related to:</td>
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<td>■ Nature</td>
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<td>■ Color</td>
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<td>■ Furnishings</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-SDG-8kRLE">www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-SDG-8kRLE</a></td>
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### Keynote Stars Program Manual

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<td>Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS)</td>
<td>Birth to 36 months</td>
<td>Teacher implementation of the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children</td>
<td>[prezi.com/g5d dqnmenws/rosie-rating-observation-scale-for-inspiring-environments/](<a href="http://prezi.com/g5d">http://prezi.com/g5d</a> dqnmenws/rosie-rating-observation-scale-for-inspiring-environments/)</td>
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<td>Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool for Preschool Classrooms (TPOT)</td>
<td>Preschool classrooms enrolling children aged 2-5 years</td>
<td>Teacher implementation of the Pyramid Model teaching practices</td>
<td><a href="http://brookespublishing.com/product/tpitos/">brookespublishing.com/product/tpitos/</a></td>
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<td>Family/Group Child Care Homes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Tool</td>
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| Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale – Revised (FCCERS-R) | Birth to School-age | Comprehensive Overview of practices related to:  
- Space and furnishings  
- Personal care routines  
- Listening and talking  
- Activities  
- Interaction  
- Program structure  
- Families and providers | [www.ersi.info](http://www.ersi.info) |
| Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO) | 10 - 47 Months | Positive Interactions and behaviors related to:  
- Affection  
- Responsiveness  
- Encouragement  
- Teaching  
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<th>Assessment Tool</th>
<th>Age Level / Setting</th>
<th>Target Area(s)</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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</table>
| School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale - Updated (SACERS-U) | School-age (ages 5 to 12 years) | Comprehensive Overview of practices related to:  
- Space and furnishings  
- Health and safety  
- Activities  
- Interactions  
- Program structure  
- Staff development  
- Special needs | www.ersi.info |
| Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) K-3 | School-age | Teacher-Child Interactions related to:  
- Emotional support  
- Classroom organization  
- Instructional support | www.teachstone.com |
| School-Age Program Quality Assessment (SPQA) | School-age (grades K-6) | Teacher practices and child experiences related to:  
- Safe Environment  
- Supportive Environment  
- Interaction  
- Engagement  
- Organization-level policies and procedures | cypq.org/assessment |

Program Observation Instruments for Leadership and Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Tool</th>
<th>Age Level / Setting</th>
<th>Target Area(s)</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care (BAS) | Family Child Care/Group Child Care homes that serve various ages | Qualifications and professional development  
- Income and benefits  
- Work environment  
- Fiscal management  
- Recordkeeping  
- Risk management | mccormickcenter.nl.edu/library/business-administration-scale-for-family-child-care-bas/ |
The Internal Assessment Process in Keystone STARS

Programs in Keystone STARS are required to complete internal assessments at STAR 2 using a POI selected from the above charts. As they work toward STAR 3 and 4, they are required to create an Internal Assessment Process that outlines the key elements in successfully observing program practices and using the feedback in authentic and meaningful ways to inform goals for classroom and leadership/management practice growth.

Historically, PQA activities included visits from OCDEL approved reliable Pennsylvania Key Program Quality Assessors for external assessment of classroom practices that provided feedback for CQI. The use of internal assessment for Program Year 2020-2021 and moving to web-based support of the process from your ELRC Quality Coach and Pennsylvania Key Program Quality Assessor reflects the high priority of reducing exposure to COVID-19 until a safe return to onsite work becomes possible. However, internal assessment is an ongoing process that can be used at any time to enhance your program’s commitment to growth and improvement. Developing a process for your internal assessments will support the conversations you have with your larger CQI Team and help you prepare for a meaningful experience that builds on your program’s philosophy, priorities, and culture.

There are many steps to an effective Internal Assessment Process. Your Quality Coach and Pennsylvania Key Program Quality Assessor are valuable resources to support your creation of a process. The most familiar step in the process is conducting the internal assessment observations (formerly known as self-assessments). The STARS Standards document includes a definition of internal assessment for your use. Although many programs are familiar with conducting observations, the goal of creating a formal Internal Assessment Process is to expand this internal monitoring of daily practice into a system that reflects a programs commitment to ongoing CQI. Below are some general tips for program use during the observation step of the process.

Additional information about the POI’s can be found here or by visiting the Pennsylvania Keys website at www.pakeys.org.
Tips for Successful and Effective Internal Assessment Observations

**Before:** Consider each classroom’s strengths and goals for growth to determine the program observation instrument (POI) selected. Thoroughly review the POI(s) you select, print the scoresheet(s) needed, and be sure to check the publisher or author’s website and the Program Quality Assessment section of the Pennsylvania Key website for additional guidance (For example, the PA Position Statements), updates, or clarification. Whenever possible, enroll all program staff in professional development for the POI(s) you’ll use. This will prepare you for discussions with your Quality Coach and Program Quality Assessor regarding the instrument selected.

**During:** The ideal internal assessment process is for one person to complete the full observation. Each POI will have its own guidance for time sampling and how to gather information. If the instruments guidance for use is not practical in your program, do the best you can to come close to that process – talk with your Quality Coach and Pennsylvania Key Program Quality Assessor about alternate approaches to gathering information. It is critical to base your assessment findings on what you observe and not what you already know about the teaching staff and the classroom environment.

**After:** The score sheet and your notes should reflect only what was observed. Be honest with yourself and your staff. Your internal assessment is not a test to be passed, it’s an opportunity to learn more and plan for growth in ways that matter to your program. Once the data-collection and/or scoring is complete, share the information with the teaching staff that were observed and begin planning for next steps.
SECTION THREE: KEYSTONE STARS SUPPORTS
Professional Development in Keystone STARS
Keystone STARS considers professional development (PD) as all education, technical assistance and coaching activities that support an individual’s or program’s continuous quality improvement.

STARS PD is provided to ECE programs participating in Keystone STARS to help them achieve movement in STAR levels. OCDEL funds PD aligned with CQI and the office’s priorities. Approved PD is available in the PD Registry. Quality Coaches can support programs in identifying PD that best fulfills the program’s CQI needs.

Professional Development Goals

- Assist eligible STARS facilities in achieving specific quality performance standards and higher STAR levels;
- Enhance, but not duplicate, the services provided by other parts of the ECE system; and
- Support a team approach to addressing the needs of educators and their programs.

Professional Development Guiding Principles

- PD is comprehensive and coordinated;
- PD is relationship-based, culturally sensitive, and use a strength-based approach that focuses on the individual needs of the teachers/directors and programs;
- PD maximizes resources by collaborating with, but not duplicating the services of other partners;
- PD values a collaborative model of service delivery;
- PD acknowledges and builds on the diversity and commonalities of all teachers/directors and programs;
- PD promotes a cross-systems network allowing partners to communicate and refer effectively;
- PD uses research and evidence-based practice; and
- PD establishes consistent data collection procedures to assess programs and inform decision-making and program improvement.

Professional Development (PD) Registry Information

The Pennsylvania Key provides access to professional development courses developed in-state and nationally through the Professional Development (PD) Registry. The PD Registry is a technology system that functions as a workforce registry. A workforce registry increases the number of high-quality early childhood education programs by helping to develop and track a knowledgeable and skilled ECE workforce in Pennsylvania.

The PD Registry tracks an individual’s professional achievements and provides important data about the early childhood workforce to help raise the status and compensation for ECE professionals.

In addition, individuals can complete their Professional Development Plan, take a self-assessment of their current knowledge and apply for placement on the Career Pathway, all through the PD Registry.

For more information on the PD Registry, click here or visit The Pennsylvania Key website at www.pakeys.org.

Professional Quality Assurance System (PQAS) Information
The Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System (PQAS) is a system designed to ensure quality PD and technical assistance (TA) is provided to early childhood and school-age practitioners in Pennsylvania.
Approved instructors are required to meet and maintain established qualifications, including educational achievements and professional development experience.

Generally, PD that an individual takes to meet Keystone STARS Performance Standards should be PQAS approved in order to ensure that it is high quality and delivered by approve instructors. In addition, by taking PQAS-approved courses, individuals can be assured that the PD they take will appear in their Learning Record in the PD Registry.

In instances where a Keystone STARS quality indicator speaks to a vendor specific tool including curriculum, developmental screening, and observation-based assessment, OCDEL recognizes the need for increased flexibility as these trainings can often be costly and hard to find when taken directly from the vendor. Information about meeting vendor specific PD training requirements can be found here or by going to the Pennsylvania Keys website at www.pakeys.org.

Career Pathway Information
What is a career pathway?
In every profession, there is a defined pathway for career advancement, as well as, a defined entry point into the field. Early Childhood Educators should not be the exception. As research on what infants, toddlers and young children need from their early learning settings evolves, so should how the early childhood workforce is prepared. PA’s Early Childhood Education (ECE) Career Pathway seeks to simplify and guide our profession towards meeting the minimal qualifications and competencies needed for each role an Early Childhood Educator may have. To see Pennsylvania’s ECE Career Pathway, click here or visit The Pennsylvania Keys website at www.pakeys.org/get-professional-development/career-pathway/

Why a move to a career pathway system?
Career pathways define entry level qualifications and steps one can take to ensure they have the skills, knowledge and competencies needed to fulfill their desired role. OCDEL aims to support the growth and development of the workforce already in the field, build upon the expertise of our profession and create a statewide framework to govern these efforts. Establishing shared benchmarks through the career pathway levels helps to do this with predictability and reliability across the commonwealth, while still allowing for flexibility in how one qualifies at each level.

How do I find out what my Career Pathway level is?
Once an Early Childhood Educator uploads their staff qualifications into the PD Registry and that information is verified by The Pennsylvania Key staff, they will receive a notification that they have been placed on the Career Pathway. This will allow ECE staff to see where they currently are and lay out the opportunities for growth, if interested.

What if I want to appeal my Career Pathway level?
A form is available in the PD Registry section of The Pennsylvania Key website. This can be filled out by an Early Childhood Educator or by a representative from an Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) or Professional Development Organization (PDO) on behalf of an Early Childhood Educator.

Keystone STARS Document Uploader Software
The Keystone STARS Document Uploader is a web-based resource that gives providers the ability to electronically submit sources of evidence in meeting their Keystone STARS Performance Standards to their Quality Coach and/or Designator.
The Keystone STARS Document Uploader is web-based, can be accessed at any time with any web-browser, and is easy to use. The documents uploaded are directly linked to specific quality indicators in the Keystone STARS Performance Standards and are visible to the assigned Quality Coach.

Users will have access to their Document Uploader Dashboard – allowing them to view what documents have been uploaded, get feedback on their acceptance status, and have a running audit of evidence that has been submitted previously to their Quality Coach.

Providers who do not yet have access to the Document Uploader software should request a link from their local ELRC. Providers will be emailed a region-specific link to create a profile for access. After completing the profile, they should receive a confirmation email from the Document Uploader team with step by step instructions on using the software.

The Keystone STARS Document Uploader is located at www.pastarsuploader.org.
SECTION FOUR: KEYSTONE STARS FORMS
Request for Keystone STARS Designation and Program Information Form

Instructions: All programs requesting to move up in Keystone STARS or completing their annual review must complete this form. Programs completing their annual renewal should complete and submit this document 14 days prior to their STAR expiration. During the annual review process, programs should also ensure all information in PELICAN related to their program is accurate and current including age of children accepted, accreditations, contact information, etc. Programs requesting to move up in Keystone STARS can submit this form at any point in their Keystone STARS activity cycle.

Location Information:

MPI#: __________________________ Certificate of Compliance #: __________________________
Name of Facility: ________________________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________ Zip Code: ____________ County: ______________
Facility Main Phone Number: ______________________
Primary Contact Person: __________________________________________ Title: ______________
Primary Contact Email: __________________________________________

☐ Request to Move Up in STAR level ☐ Annual Designation Renewal

Current STAR Level: ☐ STAR 1 ☐ STAR 2 ☐ STAR 3 ☐ STAR 4
Requested STAR Level: ☐ STAR 1 ☐ STAR 2 ☐ STAR 3 ☐ STAR 4

This facility holds a Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Certificate of Compliance: ☐ Yes ☐ No
This facility holds a Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Private Academic School License: ☐ Yes ☐ No
Provider Type: ☐ Center ☐ Family Child Care Home ☐ Group Child Care Home
Is your program’s STAR level designation based on an OCDEL Approved Alternate Pathway? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please indicate the Alternate Pathway Accreditation:

☐ ACSI – Association of Christian Schools International (STAR 3)  ☐ AMI/AMS – American Montessori Internationale Recognition or American Montessori Society Accreditation (STAR 4)  ☐ COA – Council of Accreditation School Age Child Care Accreditation (STAR 4)

☐ NAEYC - National Association for Education of Young Children (STAR 4)  ☐ NAFCC – National Association for Family Child Care (STAR 4)  ☐ NECPA – National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (STAR 4)

☐ HS/EHS - Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees (STAR 4)  ☐ 21st Century Community Learning Center (STAR 4)

Please attach/upload a copy of your program’s current accreditation certificate and/or documentation.

Number of children program site is certified/licensed for: _______  Current number of children enrolled: _______

How many years has site been in operation? _______  Ages of Children Accepted at this Site: _____ to _______

Answer the following questions regarding this site:

Is the Director/Owner Operator on-site a minimum of 30 hours per week?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

Is the site school age only?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

If site is School age only, is director on site a minimum of 5 hours per week?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No  [ ] N/A

Does the Director/Owner Operator have regular teaching duties?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

Is there internet access on site?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

Is there access to a scanner/fax on site?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

Has this site used the Keystone STARS Document Uploader to upload evidence?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

Do you currently use coaches or mentors other than Keystone STARS Quality Coaches?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

If yes, provide details: ___________________________________________________________

Is your program involved in any quality improvement projects other than those for Keystone STARS?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

If yes, provide details: ___________________________________________________________
Classroom Session Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Name</th>
<th>Classroom Age Range</th>
<th>Capacity of Room</th>
<th># of Children Enrolled</th>
<th># of Teachers</th>
<th>Affiliation Information (*see menu below) Indicate all that apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*PA PA Pre-K Counts = PKC, Head Start = HS, Early Head Start = EHS, Faith Based = FB, 21st Century = 21, PA Department of Education = PDE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following information is based on current enrollment:

Number of children who receive Child Care Works (CCW): ________

Number of children who have documented special needs [e.g. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Individualized Education Plan (IEP)] ________

Number of children who are dual language learners: ________
This site is involved in the following activities and initiatives: (check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Option</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)</td>
<td>☐ Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Participant</td>
<td>☐ Multi-Site (Chain or Franchise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Mind in the Making</td>
<td>☐ Use of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)</td>
<td>☐ Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Use of After School Quality (ASQ)</td>
<td>☐ Keystone Kids Go</td>
<td>☐ PA Eco Healthy Child Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past year, has your program experienced any of the following? (Check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you experienced 50% or more staff change?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you had a change in Director?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has there been a significant fluctuation in enrollment /FTE compared to last FY?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has there been a change in funding for slots (Head START, PA Pre-K Counts)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attestation for All Keystone STARS Providers:

**Instructions:** In order to receive your STAR Designation Certificate, please read and complete the following attestation. The person who signs this document is the individual legally authorized to represent the child care provider. By completing and signing this form, you attest that you have reviewed and accept the terms of the Keystone STARS Status, Review, Suspension and Removal Process. **To confirm agreement, place initials next to each statement.** If you do not initial all statements, the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) agent of the Department of Human Services, cannot designate a STAR to your child care program.

_____ I agree to abide by the Keystone STARS Performance Standards for the current STAR Designation and I understand the status of my Program’s STAR Designation may be reviewed, reduced, suspended, or removed if I am not meeting the Keystone STARS
Performance Standards and/or other conditions listed in the attached STAR Status Review, Reduction, Suspension and Removal Process.

______ I understand that the ELRC reserves the right to review my Program’s STARS status and share information with the DHS Regional Certification Office or Department of Education.

______ I understand that my Program’s STAR Designation may be suspended or removed if DHS initiates an Injunction, Emergency Removal, or issues a Provisional Certificate of Compliance. (for programs with DHS Certificate of Compliance)

______ I understand that my Program’s STAR Designation may be suspended or removed if the Department of Education revokes my private academic license. (for programs with private academic license)

______ I agree that, as applicable if the DHS Regional Certification Office initiates an action to revoke or refuse to renew my Program’s DHS Certificate of Compliance, that my STAR Designation will be suspended or removed. I understand that the STAR Designation will be suspended whether or not my Program appeals the DHS Regional Certification Office’s action.

______ I agree that, if my Program’s STAR Designation is suspended or removed, my Program may not advertise as a STARS child care provider, I will not receive grant/award funds, and my Program’s STAR Designation will be removed from DHS’s COMPASS website. The STAR Designation may be reinstated upon my Program’s correction of the noncompliance with DHS regulations, regaining private academic license or upon meeting the Keystone STARS Performance Standards.

______ I understand that false statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

______ I will provide assurance that I will participate in evaluation activities, if selected to participate.

______ I will provide researchers with access, consistent with the requirements of all applicable Federal, state, and local privacy laws, to data so that they can analyze the State’s quality improvement efforts and answer key policy and practice questions.

______ I agree to cooperate with the ELRC, Keystone STARS Evaluators, and other DHS and PDE agents in providing access to examine the child care provider, records, and documents that pertain to the STAR Designation. I further consent to review and release information for the STAR Designation to DHS and its agents.

______ I understand that DHS has contracted with several established entities to be their agents in administering and implementing the Keystone STARS program. The information I provide to DHS and its agents as a participant in the Keystone STARS program is shared among these agents for research and evaluation purposes, monitoring compliance, and development of the Keystone STARS program. My Program information is entered into a database that is accessible only to DHS and its agents. I affirm that I will cooperate with DHS and its agents.
Keystone STARS Status Review, Reduction, Suspension, & Removal Process

By signing this agreement, the GRANTEE (and affiliated Sub Grantees) understands and accepts the provisions of the Keystone STARS Status Review, Reduction, Suspension, & Removal Process as outlined below. The intent of this process is to provide a consistent mechanism for addressing noncompliance issues in early learning programs ("programs") participating in Keystone STARS. Please note: The Department of Human Services (DHS), the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and/or the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) may take action for other types of program non-compliance not specifically listed in this addendum. A change in a program’s STAR level designation status will impact quality subsidy add-on rates (for DHS regulated programs) and/or Keystone STARS Grants and Awards for programs that are eligible for these funding opportunities. The Resource and Restrictions chart at the end of this section details the impacts to a program’s access to various Keystone STARS resources as a result of the process. The ELRC will inform the GRANTEE/Sub Grantee in writing of any action taken to a program’s STAR level designation.

STARS STATUS REVIEW

The intent of the STARS Status Review is to provide a maximum of 30 days for the ELRC to make a determination regarding the appropriate action to take upon a program’s Keystone STARS designation status. The ELRC will verify area(s) of a program’s noncompliance and will work with DHS Certification (Bureau or Regional Office for DHS Regulated programs) or other program governing bodies (such as the federal Office of Head Start) as needed to help the program correct the noncompliance.

The ELRC may also conduct a STARS Status Review in response to complaints from parents and/or other community stakeholders.

The ELRC will work with the program in the development of a STARS action plan (not to exceed 90 days) if any of the following conditions are verified during the STARS Status Review:
• The program is not meeting Keystone STARS Performance Standards, other than the Program Quality Assessment Score quality indicator, but can meet STARS Performance Standards within a 90-day timeframe.
• For DHS Regulated programs, the program has area(s) of noncompliance with DHS Regulations that do not lead to a Provisional Certificate of Compliance (i.e. areas of noncompliance on a Licensing Inspection Summary).
• A STAR 3 or 4 Accredited program designated via an Alternate Pathway, per the Keystone STARS Performance Standards, loses its accreditation status, but can meet STARS Performance Standards within a 90-day timeframe.

After the program meets the requirements of the STARS action plan, the ELRC reissues a STAR Certificate with the original expiration date.

If the program does not meet the requirements of the STARS action plan, the ELRC or OCDEL proceeds with one of the following, based upon the circumstances explained below:

→ STAR Reduction – The program agrees to a reduced STAR level for which the program meets all STARS Performance Standards.
→ STAR Suspension – The program refuses a STAR Reduction but does not meet the STARS Performance Standards for its current STAR designation.

**STAR REDUCTION**

The ELRC will complete a STAR Reduction if any of the following conditions are verified during the STARS Status Review:

• A STAR 2, STAR 3 or STAR 4 program fails to submit a “Request for STAR Designation” to renew its current STAR designation. (program drops to STAR 1)
• The program does not meet the requirements of the STAR Suspension action plan. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STARS Standards)
• The program is not meeting STARS Performance Standards, other than the Program Quality Assessment (PQA), and the area(s) of noncompliance cannot be corrected within a 90-day timeframe. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STAR Standards).
• A STAR 3 or 4 Accredited program designated via an Alternate Pathway, per the Keystone STARS Performance Standards, loses its accreditation status. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STAR standards)
• The program is not meeting the required monitoring PQA threshold scores and are not eligible for a targeted reassessment. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STAR standards)
• If the GRANTEE/Sub Grantee refuses a STAR Reduction, the program will receive a STAR Suspension.

**STAR SUSPENSION**

The STAR Suspension will occur as a result of any of the following conditions or for other types of program non-compliance not specifically listed in this addendum:
For DHS regulated programs in Keystone STARS

- DHS initiates an Injunction or Negative Sanction or issues a Provisional Certificate of Compliance for areas of regulatory noncompliance.

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

- A Provisional Certificate of Compliance, issued for a period not to exceed six months, when there is a change in the physical location by a currently designated STAR 3 or STAR 4 program are not considered due to “regulatory noncompliance.” These programs may maintain their existing STAR level designation at their new location. This includes programs at an emergency, temporary physical location on a short-term basis (up to 60 days) returning to their permanent facility.
- After six months, programs must demonstrate receipt of a Certificate of Compliance. In the event that they are not fully compliant, an individual review of their STAR status will be conducted.

- Not following Child Protective Services Laws (CPSL)
- The program consistently has multiple incidents of noncompliance with DHS Regulations.
- The program fails to implement, complete, and/or maintain a STARS action plan.
- The program is under investigation by DHS for egregious circumstances. Issues falling under this condition will be handled on a case-by-case basis with OCDEL’s oversight.
- DHS OCDEL terminates the program’s subsidy agreement.

For Non-DHS regulated programs in Keystone STARS

- Not following Child Protective Services Laws (CPSL)
- Deficiencies found in the Head Start Key Indicator-Compliance (HSKI-C) Protocol
- The discovery of state/federal performance, integrity issues, disparities, and/or improprieties of the educational institution which includes, but not limited to, the School District, the Local Educational Agency (LEA), 21st Century Community Learning Centers and/or the educator (s) of such institutions.

For ALL programs in Keystone STARS

- The GRANTEE/Sub Grantee/program cannot be determined a Responsible Contractor as outlined in the commonwealth’s Management Directive 215.9 including but not limited to the following circumstances:
o Suspension or debarment by the Commonwealth within the past 5 years.
o Suspension or debarment by the federal government or any other state or governmental entity within the past 5 years.
o Liabilities owed to the Commonwealth (including recoupments for Child Care Works payments) and/or federal
government, including but not limited to tax liabilities.
o Notifying the ELRC of liens/liabilities is a requirement of receiving Keystone STARS funds.
o Unsatisfactory or deficient performance in past or current Commonwealth contracts or agreements as determined by the
Commonwealth in its sole discretion.
o Lack of capacity or ability to perform within the established time schedule and in accordance with the plans and
specifications of the contract or agreement.
o False, misleading, or incomplete information submitted to the Commonwealth.
o Default on a Commonwealth contract or agreement as determined by the Commonwealth in its sole discretion.
o The commission of any state or federal offense or criminal charges.
o Pending investigation by a federal or state agency or under investigation by a federal or state agency within the past 5
years.
o Facility health and safety related issues.
o General business integrity.
o The GRANTEE/Sub Grantee is under investigation for egregious circumstances by the program’s specific governing
body/authority. Issues falling under this condition will be handled on a case-by-case basis with OCDEL’s oversight.
o The GRANTEE/Sub Grantee fails to submit to the ELRC, OCDEL, or other requesting state/federal agency an
approvable final expense report and/or corresponding original receipts/documentations validating compliance with state
and federal requirements for the use of state and federal funds. Failure to account for or appropriately use all funds
received through Keystone STARS financial grants and awards may also result in a referral to the commonwealth’s
Office of State Inspector General.

During the Keystone STARS Suspension, the program must work with the ELRC on the development, implementation, and completion of a
STARS Suspension Action Plan.

The STAR Suspension Action Plan to correct the area(s) of noncompliance, will not exceed 90 days’ duration. For DHS regulated programs,
where the noncompliance is with DHS Regulations, the ELRC consults as needed with DHS regarding the corrective action plan submitted by
the program. The program’s DHS Certification corrective action plan, including applicable timeframes, may substitute for the STAR
Suspension action plan. After the timeframe of the STAR Suspension action plan has ended, one of the following will occur:

→ **STAR Reinstatement** - If the program meets the requirements of the STAR Suspension action plan, the ELRC reinstates
the program’s STAR by issuing a STAR Certificate with the original expiration date, if applicable. If the original expiration
date expired while the program was suspended, the ELRC will move the program to an active, No STAR Level and re-
designate the program to the appropriate STAR Level.
STAR Removal - If the program fails to implement, complete, and/or maintain a STAR Suspension action plan, the ELRC will remove the program from Keystone STARS based on the STAR Removal procedures.

STAR REMOVAL
The ELRC will complete a STAR Removal (of all STARS) if any of the following conditions exist:

For DHS regulated programs in Keystone STARS:
- The program closes
- DHS takes one of the following actions against the program’s Certificate of Compliance:
  - Emergency Removal
  - Refusal to Renew
  - Revocation

For non-DHS regulated programs:
- The program closes
- Head Start programs lose Federal Head Start funding
- Private academic programs lose their license from the Pennsylvania Department of Education
- 21st Century Community Learning Center loses its federal funding

During the STAR Removal phase, all correspondence with the program should be in the form of a certified letter with return receipt. The following steps apply to STAR Removal:

1) Notification of STAR Removal
   Immediately after the program’s STAR Removal is recorded in PELICAN-Keys to Quality, OCDEL will notify the ELRC to send to the program the “Notification of STAR Removal” letter. The ELRC will send this letter to the program within 3 business days of notification. In the letter, the ELRC will manually enter the effective STAR Removal date as it appears in PELICAN-Keys to Quality. If the program disputes the removal, it has 10 days from the mailing date of the removal notification letter to respond with a letter of disagreement to the ELRC. Because the removal is effective before the mailing of the letter, the program’s STAR Removal will continue to be in affect during the 10-day dispute time period.

2) Further Notification
   If the program responds to the ELRC with a letter of disagreement regarding the removal, the ELRC will respond with one of the following letters as appropriate:
- “Notification of STAR Removal - Continuation” Letter - This letter is sent to the program if the ELRC finds cause for continuation with the STAR Removal after review of the program’s letter of disagreement.

  -OR-

- “Notification of STAR Reinstatement” Letter - This letter is sent to the program if the ELRC finds cause to restore the STAR designation after review of the program’s letter of disagreement.

If the program files an appeal with Certification in regard to a Provisional Certificate, Emergency Removal, Refuse to Renew, or Revocation action, and continues to operate, the ELRC will proceed with STAR Removal pending the results of the appeal.

3) No STAR Level Designation Action

The ELRC or OCDEL records the STAR Removal into PELICAN–Keys to Quality the day of being notified of the non-compliance. The program is designated as “No STAR Level.” If the ELRC cannot record the STAR Removal the day of being notified, the ELRC must inform OCDEL. The ELRC records the date the removal notification letter was sent to the program in the Location Contact Log section of PELICAN-Keys to Quality.

EXCEPTIONS:
The intent of STARS Status Review, Suspension, & Removal is to provide a consistent process for addressing noncompliance issues in Keystone STARS participating programs. In the event of circumstances not addressed in this document, please contact OCDEL for guidance.

NOTIFICATIONS AND APPEALS

The ELRC will inform the program in writing of any action taken to the program’s STAR level designation. If the program disputes the action outlined in the notification letter, it has 10 days from the mailing date of the letter to respond with a letter of disagreement to the ELRC.

Appeals will be handled in accordance to 1 Pa. Code (§ 35.9, § 35.10, § 35.20, § 35.35, § 35.111, and § 35.112).

The program may appeal the ELRC’s final decision to OCDEL by submitting in writing a letter to:
Office of Child Development and Early Learning
Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Human Services
333 Market Street, 6th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126
Attention: Bureau of ELRC Operations
If further action is necessary, the appeal will move to Bureau of Hearings and Appeals.

**RESOURCES AND RESTRICTIONS**

During STARS Status Review, Suspension, & Removal the following restrictions and resources apply. A check mark (✓) indicates the resource is available to the program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources/Restrictions</th>
<th>Under Review</th>
<th>Suspension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Programs eligible for STARS Financial Awards</td>
<td>Eligibility resumes upon satisfactory completion of STARS Status Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program posts STAR Certificate and advertises as a STARS program</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For DHS Regulated programs eligible for tiered subsidy reimbursement (STAR 2 – STAR 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program’s STAR listed with COMPASS</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program has access to STARS Representative for help with Performance Standards</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program has access to STARS Quality Coaching</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program’s Staff Prioritized for Vouchers/ Rising STARS Tuition Assistance &amp; T.E.A.C.H.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program has access to other special opportunities such as Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, etc.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program eligible to attend professional development opportunities</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</table>
Keystone STARS Continuous Quality ImprovementPlans: Templates and Instructions for Completion

Instructions for Completion

Purpose: Keystone STARS is a system of continuous quality improvement (CQI) that guides early learning and school-age programs toward achieving and maintaining high quality and best practices. CQI is an ongoing process that includes reviewing sources of evidence that indicate program quality, planning goals, and implementing strategies that move learning programs toward best practices. A well-developed plan is an essential tool in guiding the development of CQI across all areas of the program.

Overview: This document contains general requirements and instructions on creating a STARS Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQI Plan). Practitioners may design their own CQI Plan format; however, the submitted plan must address the information requested in the instructions below. Assistance in the creation and completion of a CQI Plan is available from the Early Learning Resource Center.

Instructions: The following steps (1-5) outline the required components of a CQI Plan. The plan should be site-specific and focus on the needs of the community served including children, families, staff, etc. The goals chosen by a facility should be based on needs identified through a variety of sources of evidence and should reflect the program’s philosophy and mission.

1. Background Information: Include the following information in the CQI Plan:
   - Facility name, address, and other contact information.
   - Overall time frame for the plan including current and projected STAR levels.
   - Facility size and projected grant requests (if applicable).

2. Goal Planning: determine specific goals needed to guide the program toward achieving and maintaining high quality and best practices. Each goal must address the following points (a-f).
   a) Goal Statement – Write a clearly defined goal statement that is specific and measurable.
   b) Time Frame – Identify the goal as immediate, short term (1-2 years), or long term (3-5 years) and select a projected date of completion.
   c) Quality Standard - Align each goal with a quality standard or criterion. Quality standards/criteria include, but are not limited to, Keystone STARS Performance Standards, Pennsylvania Learning Standards, accreditation criteria (including NAEYC, NAA, NAFCC, etc.), Head Start Performance Standards and Caring for Our Children (CFOC) national health and safety standards for children.
   d) Source(s) of Evidence - Identify the source(s) of evidence that indicate the need for the goal. Sources of evidence are typically assessments that provide information about the quality of services in the facility. There are a variety of quality indicators completed at different STAR levels that may serve as sources of evidence for the CQI plan.
      - Feedback from Designation Visit and previous Program Quality Assessments and Internal assessments
      - Illness and Injury Tracking Review
      - Program Assessment – including Family, Staff, and School-Age Surveys
      - Financial Review
      - Risk Management Assessment
• Strategic Plan
• Business Plan
• Additional sources such as the Program Administration Scale (PAS), Business Administration Scale (BAS), Environmental Rating Scale (ERS), Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), After School Quality (ASQ), Child Assessment Data, Staff Observations & Evaluations, Family Conference feedback, Accreditation resources and other sources as determined by the facility.

At a minimum, the CQI Plan should identify and include the following number of sources of evidence to support the goals identified in the CQI plan: **STAR 2 = 3 sources; STAR 3 = 4 sources; STAR 4 = 5 sources.** Note: While the overall plan needs to be supported by multiple sources, individual goals may emerge from a single source.

e) **Action Steps** - Outline a series of action steps needed to accomplish the goal including who is responsible for coordinating the action steps and monitoring their completion and effectiveness.

f) **Resources & Supports** - Describe the resources and supports needed to achieve the goal. As appropriate, include needs related to:
   - Professional Development/Technical Assistance
   - Learning Program, Management, or Business Practices
   - Materials, Equipment, or Facility Improvements

3. **Repeat**: Repeat Step 2 for each CQI goal developed for the program as part of the overall CQI Plan.

4. **Annual Review**: Establish a written process for at least an annual review of the plan. The review should address how quality was improved (including goals achieved and those still in process), what STARS supports and resources were used to assist in improving quality, and what challenges were faced in working toward CQI goals. The results of the annual review should be used to guide the revision of existing goals and the planning of additional goals to be included in the new CQI Plan.

5. **Moving On**: The CQI Plan may be expanded to include goal planning for a variety of program needs. Other considerations for a CQI Plan may include “above and beyond” goals created to enhance and strengthen existing competencies within the program such as program administration, curriculum, and relationships with families, etc. These “above and beyond” goals may emerge from current research or the director’s personal goals for the program.
Continuous Quality Improvement Plan – Template #1

Name of Facility: ________________________________  MPI# ______________
Date Goal Created: ___________________________  Current STAR Level: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Goal*:</th>
<th>Staff Coordinating/Staff Involved</th>
<th>Projected Date of Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❑ Immediate  ❑ Short Term (1-2 yrs)  ❑ Long Term (3-5 yrs)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Actual Date Of Completion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does your goal align with quality standards?  What action steps are needed to achieve this goal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keystone STARS Performance Standards</th>
<th>Action Steps (include initials of staff responsible)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❑ Staff Qualifications and Professional Development</td>
<td>❑ Learning Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❑ Partnerships with Family and Community</td>
<td>❑ Leadership and Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❑ Other Quality Standard:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What source(s) of evidence did you use to determine this goal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source(s) of Evidence</th>
<th>Date(s) Completed</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

What resources or supports are needed to assist in the achievement of this goal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes or Improvements to Learning Program, Management, or Business Practices</th>
<th>Materials, Equipment, or Facility Improvements</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

*Please use a separate page for each goal. Copy this page, as needed, to accommodate your program’s goals
**Review of Plan Year** _____________ to ____________  
(month/year)         (month/year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Goals in Previous Year’s Plan</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Goals Completed from Previous Year’s Plan</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Goals to be Reconsidered from Previous Year’s Plan**  
(these goals will be added to your new CQI Plan)

| How has quality improved in your facility during the past year?  
(Include consideration of regulatory compliance, quality of services, staff performance, organization and management, family/community partnerships, and financial practices.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| How did you use STARS supports and resources to assist your facility in improving quality?  
(Include consideration of grants, awards, technical assistance, TEACH scholarships, voucher program, STARS management support, professional development workshops, and credential programs.) |
| What challenges did you face in working toward your CQI goals?  
How can these challenges be addressed in this year’s plan? |
| How did you share your CQI goals, including progress made, with staff, families, and other stakeholders? |

Name of Person Responsible for Formulating CQI Plan: ________________________________

Title: ___________________________________________ Date: _____________________________
## Keystone STARS Continuous Quality Improvement Plan – Template #2

Name of Facility: ___________________________
MPI# _____________  County: ________

Date Goal Created: _________________________  Current STAR Level: ______________

### STARS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Area of Strength</th>
<th>Area of Growth</th>
<th>Action Steps What, Who, When</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Completed Y or N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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40
# PROGRAM OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT

**Instrument(s) Used:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Area of Strength</th>
<th>Area of Growth</th>
<th>Action Steps What, Who, When</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Completed Y or N</th>
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</table>

**Review of Plan Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(month/year) to (month/year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **# of Goals in Previous Year’s Plan**
- **# of Goals Completed from Previous Year’s Plan**

**Goals to be Reconsidered from Previous Year’s Plan**

(These goals will be added to your new CQI Plan)
### Keystone STARS Program Manual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How has quality improved in your facility during the past year?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Include consideration of regulatory compliance, quality of services,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff performance, organization and management, family/community</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>partnerships, and financial practices.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>How did you use STARS supports and resources to assist your facility</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>in improving quality? (Include consideration of grants, awards,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical assistance, TEACH scholarships, voucher program, STARS</td>
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<tr>
<td>management support, professional development workshops, and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>credential programs.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>What challenges did you face in working toward your CQI goals? How</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can these challenges be addressed in this year's plan?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you share your CQI goals, including progress made, with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff, families, and other stakeholders?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name of Person Responsible for Formulating CQI Plan: ______________________________

Title: ___________________________________________ Date: ___________________________
Keystone STARS Internal Assessment Process Planning: Overview and Template

Internal Assessment Process Overview:

**Purpose:** Internal assessment for CQI is the process of using an evidence-based tool to objectively measure the quality of observed classroom practices, environments, and experiences for children during a defined period of time. Internal assessment for CQI happens within the classroom while children are present and is most meaningful when the observer is familiar with the tool being used. Results from internal assessment do no confer a definitive or permanent status of high or low program quality; they are a guide to support goal setting with a program-driven plan for growth.

**Overview:** This document contains the basic elements programs should include in their Internal Assessment Process that will frame their decision-making, classroom observations, conversations and goal planning. Practitioners may design their own Internal Assessment Process document; however, the process must initially address at a minimum the information outlined below. Assistance in the creation and completion of an Internal Assessment Process is available from the Early Learning Resource Center and Program Quality Assessment team.

**Additional Resource:** OCDEL has developed an Internal Assessment Process Guide to support programs in developing a process that is reflective of their values and goals, inclusive of key stakeholders and flexible enough to ensure that ongoing internal monitoring of classroom practice quality supports ownership of practice growth. This comprehensive guide, available from the Early Learning Resource Center and Pennsylvania Key Program Quality Assessment team, can serve as a reflective resource for the program’s team outlined in the process document below as the Internal Assessment Process is designed and documented.
Keystone STARS Internal Assessment Process Initial Cycle Planning Document – Template

**Facility Name:** ____________________________________________________________

**MPI:** ____________________________________________

### Team for Internal Assessment Process Creation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Member Role</th>
<th>Individual Selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program’s Process Lead (internal observer)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ELRC Quality Coach:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania Key Program Quality Assessor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Colleagues:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projected completion date for Internal Assessment Process development: ________________

Projected date for completion of initial round of internal assessments (classroom observations) using the established process: __________________________________________________________

Complete the chart for each classroom being assessed during this internal assessment cycle (at least one classroom in each age group served should be observed).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom</th>
<th>Teaching team</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>POI Selected</th>
<th>How does this POI support our CQI goals? (i.e. classroom environment, intentional teaching, inclusive practices)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**Note:** Programs are encouraged to assess all classrooms annually using their Internal Assessment process. Internal assessment should be completed on a typical day for the classroom being observed. Avoid days when special events are planned and try to avoid days when the regular teaching team is not present. Observe during the most active part of the day when most children are present.

**Next Steps:**

After completing the classroom observation step of the Internal Assessment Process schedule a time to review the feedback with the Internal Assessment Process Team listed above. After that meeting consider the following questions and capture the team’s reflections prior to creating goals for improvement to add to the program’s CQI Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What strengths were observed in current classroom practices?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What areas for growth did the observations reveal?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Who should be included in the goal creation conversations/process and why?

Name of Person Completing Internal Assessment Process Document:

____________________________________________________________________________________

Title: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
Facility Staff Qualifications Grid

Name of Facility: ___________________________ MPI # __________ County: ________________ ELRC: __________

Instructions: Complete Column A with the names of all onsite leadership/management and teaching staff, as defined in the Keystone STARS Performance Standards Glossary of Terms. Include the staff person’s PD Registry ID Number in Column B. For column C, use the key at the bottom of the chart to indicate the staff’s position title. In Column E, indicate if the staff person is considered to be part of the onsite leadership team. Columns F through J can be completed for each individual using the PD Registry reports, Staff Report and Staff Detailed List Report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(A) Employee Name</th>
<th>(B) PD Registry ID#</th>
<th>(C) Position*</th>
<th>(D) Date of Hire</th>
<th>(E) Member of Onsite Leadership Team Yes or No</th>
<th>(F) Career Pathway Level Assigned (Indicate applied for if they are awaiting CP Level)</th>
<th>(G) Current Education Level Enrolled In (E) or Attained (A)</th>
<th>(H) Annual PD Self-Assessment Last Update SQ.2.3</th>
<th>(I) Annual Prof. Development Plan Last Update SQ.2.3</th>
<th>(J) Orientation Within 90 days of Hire SQ.2.1</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: Jane Doe</td>
<td>1122233</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>1/1/2020</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Rising A</td>
<td>A (ECE)</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
<td>1/2/2019</td>
<td>2/1/14</td>
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# KEYSSTONE STARS PROGRAM MANUAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Name</th>
<th>PD Registry ID#</th>
<th>Position Title*</th>
<th>Date of Hire</th>
<th>Member of Onsite Leadership Team Yes or No</th>
<th>Career Pathway Level Assigned (Indicate applied for if they are awaiting CP Level)</th>
<th>Current Education Level Enrolled In (E) or Attained (A) Date</th>
<th>Annual PD Self-Assessment Last Update SQ.2.3</th>
<th>Annual Prof Development Plan Last Update SQ.2.3</th>
<th>Orientation Within 90 days of Hire SQ.2.1</th>
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<td>Member of Onsite Leadership Team Yes or No</td>
<td>Career Pathway Level Assigned (Indicate applied for if they are awaiting CP Level)</td>
<td>Current Education Level Enrolled In (E) or Attained (A) Date</td>
<td>Annual PD Self-Assessment Last Update SQ.2.3</td>
<td>Annual Prof Development Plan Last Update SQ.2.3</td>
<td>Orientation Within 90 days of Hire SQ.2.1</td>
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* Position Titles: D = Director, O=FCC or GCC Owner Operator; GS= Group Supervisor/Lead Teacher, AS= Assistant Group Supervisor/Teacher/Assistant Teacher, A=Aide
Professional Development Tracking Grid for STAR 3 & 4 Programs: Teaching Staff

Name of Facility___________________________ MPI #_________________ County_______________ ELRC___________

**Instructions:** Complete Column A with the names of all leadership/management and teaching staff, as defined in the Keystone STARS Performance Standards Glossary of Terms. Include the staff person’s PD Registry ID Number in Column B. Indicate if the staff member is actively enrolled in credit-bearing coursework by completing “yes” or “no” in Column C. For Columns D through I, enter the date of the most recent PD taken within the last 3 years. For staff actively enrolled in credit bearing coursework, Columns D – I can be marked “N/A” unless those staff members have taken PD that is supportive of their quality practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(A) Employee Name</th>
<th>(B) PD Registry ID #</th>
<th>(C) Actively Enrolled in Credit-Bearing Coursework Yes or No</th>
<th>(D) List Date(s) and Title of completed Professional Development</th>
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<th>(C) Actively Enrolled in Credit-Bearing Coursework Yes or No</th>
<th>(D) Language Development SQ.3.4.3</th>
<th>(E) Social and Emotional Development SQ.3.4.4</th>
<th>(F) Positive Interactions SQ.3.4.5</th>
<th>(G) Curriculum SQ.3.4.6</th>
<th>(H) Developmental Screening SQ.3.4.7</th>
<th>(I) Assessment SQ.3.4.8</th>
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Professional Development Tracking Grid for STAR 3 & 4 Programs: Non-Instructional Staff

Name of Facility: ___________________________ MPI # on Certificate of Compliance: ___________ County: _______________

**Instructions**: Complete Column A with non-instructional staff names. In Columns B through I, mark the dates of the most recent Professional Development or Information Sharing Session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Employee Name</th>
<th>B Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)</th>
<th>C Diversity</th>
<th>D Age Appropriate Standards</th>
<th>E Adult Child Interactions</th>
<th>F Other</th>
<th>G Other</th>
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<th>I Other</th>
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<td>Example: Jane Doe</td>
<td>2/15/19</td>
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Non-instructional staff may include household members, lunch assistants, bus drivers, and maintenance personnel. Non-instructional staff can be employed by the program or serve as volunteers.
SECTION FIVE: BONUS POINT QUALITY INITIATIVES
Keystone STARS Bonus Point Quality Initiative: After School Quality (ASQ)

In which Keystone STARS Performance Standard will my program earn bonus points for successfully implementing ASQ?

Leadership and Management (2 points)

How does ASQ align with the Keystone STARS Performance Standards?

ASQ supports the Leadership and Management Performance Standards because it is an effort to invest in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and utilizes program observation instruments. A program that is using ASQ will use observations and internal assessments to inform their CQI plan and technical assistance goals.

ASQ is a five-step process that helps a program and a team of people committed to quality improvement examine their program and make changes that will lead to better practices. Programs will involve their ASQ team in an open dialogue about their program. Together, programs set a vision and assess how well they are meeting the needs of the children, youth, and families they serve. A program’s ASQ Team will develop an action plan to reach improvement goals. The ASQ process considers that administration, staff, families, children, youth, and community members – are the best people to make the quality improvement changes.

What evidence should I expect to provide to my Quality Coach to show full implementation of ASQ?

Upon completion of the ASQ process, a paperwork review will be conducted by a trained ASQ quality coach/consultant. A specific template has been established that helps ensure a program has implemented the ASQ 5-step process. This template is available from Betsy Saatman at the email address above. In addition to the template, programs should expect to share evidence of implementation and take part in an informal interview with a trained ASQ Quality Coach or consultant.

Who do I contact for more information on ASQ?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organization:</th>
<th>The Pennsylvania Key</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>200 N. 3rd St. 2nd Floor Harrisburg, PA 17101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>800-284-6031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact:</td>
<td>Betsy Saatman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:betsaa@pakeys.org">betsaa@pakeys.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pakeys.org">www.pakeys.org</a></td>
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Where do I go to find additional information on ASQ?

- ASQ Website: www.niost.org
Keystone STARS Bonus Point Quality Initiative: PA Eco Healthy Child Care

In which Keystone STARS Performance Standard will I earn bonus points for successfully implementing PA Eco Healthy Child Care?

Leadership and Management (2 points)

How does PA Eco Healthy Child Care align with the Keystone STARS Performance Standards?

PA Eco Healthy Child Care supports Leadership and Management because it is an organized effort to promote environmental health improvements in early learning programs. Programs will be making their facilities and programs healthier resulting in a positive impact on the health of the children and program staff.

Through completing professional development courses, programs will focus on creating and maintaining an early childhood learning environment that addresses the range of environmental health topics including:

- Air Quality
- Integrated Pest Management
- Chemical Hazards
- Environmental Tobacco Smoke
- Water Quality
- Lead (soil, water, products)
- Sun Safety
- Radon
- Plastics
- Furniture and Carpets
- Playground Equipment
- Noise Pollution
- Art Supplies

This will reduce children’s and staff’s exposure to chemicals and pollutants and will support programs that sustain environmentally friendly practices (recycling, reducing paper use, purchasing sustainable products, reducing waste, etc.).

What evidence should I expect to provide to my Quality Coach to show full implementation of PA Eco Healthy Child Care?

Evidence of annual professional development for staff (minimum 2 hours per person) on environmental health topics, presented by qualified professionals or approved Pennsylvania Key online module.

Assessment using EHCC Checklist Self-endorsement is optional because of cost and extremely limited validation of checklist items. Fee: $25.00 if 1 - 20 children; $50.00 if 21 or more children.

Policies in staff and family handbooks that are consistent with Model Child Health Policies, or equivalent, with inclusion of Caring for Our Children Standards.

Who do I contact for more information on PA Eco Healthy Child Care?

Organization: PA Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics/Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS)
Address: Rose Tree Corporate Center II – 1400 North Providence Rd, Suite 4000 Media, PA 19063
Phone: 800-243-2357 or 800-395-3948
Contact: Libby Ungvary or Nancy Alleman
Email: ecels@paaap.org; lungvary@paaap.org; nalleman@paaap.org
Website: www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org
Where do I go to find additional information on PA Eco Healthy Child Care?

- Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS): www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org
- ECELS Indoor Air Quality Self-Learning Module
- ECELS Pest Management: Integrated Pest Management Self-Learning Module
- Children’s Environmental Health Network: https://cehn.org
- Eco-Healthy Child Care Online Module
- Eco-Healthy Child Care Fact Sheets
- Eco-Healthy Child Care Endorsement
- PD Registry: papregistry.org
- ADM100: The Eco-Friendly Child Care Center, Part 1: Green Lifestyle and Environmental Health
- ADM101: The Eco-Friendly Child Care Center, Part 2: Environmental Education and Sustainability
- Green Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting: A Curriculum for ECE Self-Learning Module
- Healthy Child Care Environments: Using Green Cleaners Self-Learning Module
- Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs - Chapter 5: Facilities, Supplies, Equipment, and Environmental Health
- 5. Model Child Care Health Policies (MCCHP5) - Section 8 Environmental Health
Keystone STARS Bonus Point Quality Initiative: Farm to Early Care and Education (Farm to ECE)

In which Keystone STARS Performance Standard will my program earn bonus points for successfully implementing Farm to ECE?
Partnerships with Families and Communities (2 points)

How does Farm to ECE align with the Keystone STARS Performance Standards?
Farm to ECE offers benefits that parallel the goals and priorities of the early care and education community. Farm to ECE expands healthy food access for children and families. The reasons below highlight how Farm to ECE activities help providers meet their goals of providing the highest quality care and educational experience available to the children they serve.

Health: Farm to ECE activities like taste tests, cooking lessons, and gardening offer repeated exposures to new and healthy foods. This promotes lifelong healthy food preferences and eating patterns and decreases the risk for obesity.

Family and Community Engagement: Gardening and food related activities appeal to families and create more opportunities for meaningful engagement. Children take home the excitement of learning about new foods and act as a catalyst for change in the family and community. Purchasing local products also helps the community.

Experiential Education: The experiential learning opportunities associated with Farm to ECE enhance the learning environment, can help achieve early learning standards, and support appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.

Below are some specific examples of Farm to ECE:

- Using a curriculum of set of activities that includes a focus on local foods such as the USDA’s Grow It, Try It, Like It curriculum or using a Harvest of the Month framework for classroom activities.
- Cooking in the classroom
- Farm field trips
- Having a farmer or chef visit the classroom
- Serving local fruit and/or vegetable for a snack
- Procuring a locally grown or produced item to use in CACFP
- Planting seeds indoors
- Creating a raised bed garden and inviting parents to volunteer

Though healthy foods of all kinds are valuable, Farm to ECE is about a connection to local agriculture. This could mean local food from your county, state or region.

What evidence should I expect to provide to my Quality Coach to show full implementation of Farm to ECE?
Upon implementation of this quality initiative, you should be able to do one or more of the following:

- Offer photos
- Walk through your garden
- Share lesson plans & activity write ups
- Highlight local items on CACFP menu
- Identify farms from which items were procured
- Keep an Early Care and Education binder to record activities and dates
Who do I contact for more information on Farm to ECE?
Organization: The Food Trust
Address: 1617 John F Kennedy Blvd. Suite 900 Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone: 215-575-0444 ext. 7172
Contact: Kelsey Porter
Email: kporter@thefoodtrust.org
Website: www.thefoodtrust.org

Where do I go to find additional information on Farm to ECE?
- www.pareadysetgrow.org
- www.farmtoschool.org
- www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/community-food-systems
Keystone STARS Bonus Point Quality Initiative: Pennsylvania Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (PA NAP SACC) Program

In which Keystone STARS Performance Standard will my program earn bonus points for successfully implementing the PA NAP SACC program?

Partnerships with Families and Communities (2 points)

How does the PA NAP SACC program align with Keystone STARS Performance Standards?

The PA NAP SACC program supports Partnerships with Families and Communities because it is an organized effort to promote nutritional health for children and includes families to support nutrition and physical activities at home. Families are encouraged to be part of the continuous quality improvement team.

The PA NAP SACC program is a continuous quality improvement process focused on nutrition and physical activity practices and policies within early childhood settings. The program utilizes Go NAPSACC, an evidence-based tool, to guide participants through self-assessment, action planning, implementation, policy development, re-self-assessment and reflection. The process is web-based and empowers program leadership and includes individualized technical assistance to increase knowledge and improve quality of practice and policy.

What evidence should I expect to provide to my Quality Coach to show full implementation of the PA NAP SACC program?

The PA NAP SACC program is a sustained, high level, comprehensive example of professional development that is ongoing and is more intensive than a one-time professional development event or activity. Upon full implementation, you should be able to provide:

- Action Plans showing completed nutrition and physical activity goals, including steps to develop/enhance written policy within each area
- Pre and post self-assessment results (using web-based Go NAPSACC tool)
- Registry transcript records for any professional development completed related to their action plan
- Pre and post nutrition and physical activity policy samples showing development
- Reflection form

Who do I contact for more information on PA NAP SACC?

Organization: Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 - Community Education and Workforce Services
Address: 6395 SR 103 N. Lewistown, PA 17044
Phone: 717-248-4942
Contact: Lori McMonigal or Rose Gioia-Fine
Email: lmcmonigal@tiu11.org or rgioia.fine@tiu11.org
Website: www.keystonekidsgo.org
Keystone STARS Bonus Point Quality Initiative: Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

In which Keystone STARS Performance Standard will my program earn bonus points for successfully implementing PBIS?

Early Childhood Education Program (2 points)

How does PBIS align with Keystone STARS Performance Standards?
Children benefit from safe, nurturing environments, clear and consistent routines, and effective teachers who understand behavior is a child’s way of communication needs.

Program-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PW-PBIS) is a conceptual framework for supporting social emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors in early childhood, based on the guidance and resource of the Pyramid Model. PW PBIS supports administrative teams to use implementation science and practical strategies to support their staff and families. This initiative guides programs to make data-based decisions, engage in shared leadership, and coach staff to implement evidence-based practices.

What evidence should I expect to provide to my Quality Coach to show full implementation of PBIS?
The PAPBS Network will evaluate programs who have implemented PBIS based on their standards. Once the facility has met those standards, they will receive a banner to display. In subsequent years, the program will receive a dated badge to attach to the banner. The Quality Coach will need to see the banner indicating recognition within the past 12 months.

Who do I contact for more information on PBIS?

Organization: PA Positive Behavior Support Network (PAPBS)
Address: 6340 Flank Dr. Harrisburg, PA 17112
Phone: 717-829-1711
Contact: Susan Zeiders
Email: szeiders@pattan.net
Website: www.papbs.org

Where do I go to find additional information on PBIS?
- Website: www.eita-pa.org/sedevelopment