

ANNOUNCEMENT

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Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning
Bureau of Early Learning Policy and Professional Development

Issue Date: May 16, 2022

Effective Date: July 1, 2022

Subject: 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards and Program Manual

To: All Keystone STARS Providers; Early Learning Resource Centers (ELRCs); and The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Early Learning Resource Center Program Representatives

From:

Tracey Campanini

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tracey Campanini'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a loop at the end of the last name.

Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development & Early Learning

PURPOSE

To provide the 2022 updated Keystone STARS Performance Standards, Program Manual, and corresponding resource documents.

Attached to this announcement are the following documents:

- 1) [2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards \(NEW\)](#)
- 2) 2022 Keystone STARS Program Manual – *COMING SOON (NEW)*
- 3) [Crosswalk of 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards to Previous Version \(NEW\)](#)
- 4) [Facility Staff Qualifications Grid](#) (PDF Writeable) (**UPDATED**)
- 5) [Professional Development Tracking Grid for STAR 3 & 4 Programs: Teaching Staff](#) (PDF Writeable)
- 6) [Professional Development Tracking Grid for STAR 3 & 4 Programs: Non-instructional Staff](#) (PDF Writeable)
- 7) [Child Records – Confidential Records Sign Off](#) (For ELRC Use, PDF Writeable)
- 8) [Leadership and Management and Staff Records – Confidential Records Sign Off](#) (For ELRC Use, PDF Writeable) (**UPDATED**)
- 9) [Continuous Quality Improvement Plan Instructions and Template #1](#) (PDF)

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- Writeable) (**UPDATED**)
- 10) [Continuous Quality Improvement Plan Template #2](#) (PDF Writeable)
 - 11) Webinar: An Overview of the 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards **COMING SOON (NEW)**

This announcement becomes effective July 1, 2022, and will replace in its entirety:

- *ELRC Announcement 20 #12 Keystone STARS Performance Standards and Program Manual and all accompanying documents*

BACKGROUND

On July 1, 2020, the most recent version of the Keystone STARS Performance Standards and Program Manual were released and became effective August 1, 2020. Since that time, several events and updates have taken place which has necessitated an updated version of the Keystone STARS Performance Standards to be released, along with an updated Keystone STARS Program Manual. In addition, some of the resource documents have also been updated.

DISCUSSION

For clarity, the updates that have been made in the 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards are outlined below by Performance Category.

Updates and Edits to the Staff Qualifications and Professional Development (SQ) Indicators:

- **SQ 2.1** – Indicator has been updated to reflect the new training entitled *Overview of Keystone STARS: Pennsylvania’s Quality Rating and Improvement System*. This new course will replace the STARS 101 and STARS 102 effective July 1, 2022.
 - All onsite leadership team members and teaching staff will need to take this new training by the time of their next designation occurring after **October 1, 2022**. Ongoing, all newly hired onsite Leadership Team and Teaching Staff will be required to complete the course within 90 days of hire unless previously completed.
- **SQ 2.2** – Indicator has been updated to include the expectation that Professional Development (PD) Registry profiles must be renewed annually even if no changes have taken place. Updating one’s PD Registry will result in

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- one's Career Pathway (CP) placement being renewed as well.
- **SQ 2.3** – Indicator has been updated to require that a program use its staff's Professional Development Plans (PDPs) to inform its Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan.
 - **SQ 3.4.1** – The indicator's intent has been refocused on a program's implementation of a system to support the staff's education and career development based upon their PDPs.
 - **SQ 3.4.3 through SQ 3.4.9** – Indicators now include additional information about the Pennsylvania (PA) Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (PSCECE) Standard Areas to which the PD Topic is most closely aligned. More information about the PA PSCECE can be found [here](#).
 - **SQ 3.4.6, SQ 3.4.7, and SQ 3.4.8** – Indicators now include the updated clarification that staff who take PD in each of these three areas are **not** required to take additional training unless the author of the tool releases updates or changes to their product; the program adopts a new curriculum, screening tool, or developmental assessment; or leadership determines additional PD is indicative of quality teaching practices.

Updates and Edits to the Early Childhood and Education Program (EC) Quality Indicators:

- **EC 2.1** – Clarifications to indicator were made to more clearly identify the annual expectations related to (CQI) plans.
- **EC 3.4.1** – Additional information added to indicator regarding process for applying to have homegrown curriculum approved by OCDEL.
- **EC 3.4.2** – Clarification specific for programs serving School-Age children has been added. Programs who serve school age children are **not** required to perform an observation-based assessment for school aged children if assessment information is made available from the child's school and/or the family, and the provided assessment includes evidence of assessment across all learning domains covered in the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards.
- **EC 3.4.5** – Additional information has been added to the indicator enhancing the expectations related to the Internal Assessment Process (IAP). Additional information on the changes to the IAP can be found later in this document and in upcoming related Policy Announcements.
- **EC 3.4.6** – Additional information has been added to the indicator enhancing

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the expectations related to the use of an additional Program Observation Instrument (POI) and clarifying that neither the Program Administration Scale (PAS) or the Business Administration Scale (BAS) can be used as the additional POI for the indicator. Additional information on the changes to the IAP can be found later in this document and in upcoming related Policy Announcements.

Updates and Edits to the Partnerships with Families and Communities (FC) Quality Indicators:

- **FC 3.4.2** – Additional information has been added to the quality indicator which further defines the concept of continuity of care.
- **FC 3.4.5** – Additional expectation for programs to routinely assess the educational workshops they offer to families in terms of participation and add additional goals to their CQI Plan when these activities as necessary.

Updates and Edits at the Leadership and Management (LM) Quality Indicators:

- **LM 3.4.1** - Clarification added to allow equivalency of a PA Director's Credential to meet the indicator.
- **LM 3.4.3** - Language added to ensure that classroom observations of teaching staff offer feedback on their instructional strategies in addition to job performance.
- **LM 3.4.4** – Language added to ensure that instructional observations can also be used to inform performance evaluations of teaching staff.
- **LM 3.4.9** – Language added to indicator to ensure that all elements of the IAP, as outlined in EC 3.4.5, are met when using PAS and/or BAS as a POI.

Other Updates to Supplementary Information of 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards:

- Concept of the “Three I’s” or Intent, Implementation, and Impact is now included in the Introduction
- Additional terms and definitions have been added or enhanced to the Glossary including:
 - Continuity of Care
 - Instructional Observation
 - Internal Assessment Team
 - Completed PD Registry Profile
 - Continuous Quality Improvement Plan

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- Internal Assessment
- Column has been renamed “Suggested, but Not Required, Evidence” to clarify that programs are not required to provide all evidence listed to show full implementation. Items listed under “Suggested, but Not Required, Evidence” have been further supplemented and clarified as needed.
- Questions listed under “Thoughtful Questions for Quality Coaches and Providers” have been supplemented and clarified as needed.
- Updated *PA Early Childhood Education Career Pathway for Educators and Qualifying Achievements* included in Standards.
- Updated chart of Program Observational Instruments (POI) included in Standards.

Additional Bonus Point Activity Added to Partnerships with Families and Communities

Beginning July 1, 2022, the Child and Adult Care Food Plan (CACFP) has been added as an OCDEL-approved Bonus Points quality initiative. Programs who demonstrate successful and active participation in CACFP will receive 2 Bonus Points in the FC Performance Standard area.

All Bonus Point Tip Sheets for Keystone STARS have been updated and are included in the 2022 Keystone STARS Program Manual as well as on the PA Keys website at www.pakeys.org

Implementation of 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards:

The updated Keystone STARS Performance Standards will become effective **July 1, 2022**. Programs who began submitting evidence to their Quality Coach to renew their current STAR level or move up in STAR levels using the 2020 Keystone STARS Performance Standards **prior to July 1, 2022**, must complete their designation **by July 31, 2022**.

After July 31, 2022, all programs, including those that began the designation process, but did not complete the process, will be required to use the 2022 Performance Standards for designation purposes moving forward.

The New Streamlined Keystone STARS Designation System and the 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards

On **July 1, 2022**, the new Streamlined Keystone STARS Designation System within the Professional Development (PD) Registry will go live. The new designation system will feature the updated 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards. As such, all

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designations that are initiated **after July 1, 2022**, will be required to use the 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards and the Streamlined Keystone STARS Designation System.

All programs who have either already begun working on a designation using the 2020 Keystone STARS Performance Standards or intend to begin working on a designation prior to July 1, 2022, using the 2020 Keystone STARS Standards:

- Must have completed or will complete a Request for STAR Designation (RFSD) via Provider Self Service (PSS) or paper prior to **May 31, 2022**. Completing a RFSD **by May 31, 2022**, signifies a program's intent to begin and complete a STARS designation, renewal or move up, using the 2020 Keystone STARS Performance Standards **by July 31, 2022**. Programs who are completing a paper RFSD and mailing to their ELRC via US Postal Service must ensure they allow sufficient time for the RFSD to be received by the ELRC by May 31, 2022.
- Must use the current STARS document uploader www.pastarsuploader.org to upload all evidence and attach to the 2020 Keystone STARS Performance Standards **by July 31, 2022**. After July 31, 2022, this document uploader will **no longer** be available.
- **Must submit all evidence to their Quality Coach and Designator by July 31, 2022**. This will allow 30 days for the program's Quality Coach and Designator to complete the designation by August 31, 2022.
- Programs who do not submit all evidence and documentation to their Quality Coach and Designator by **July 31, 2022**, will be required to start a new designation in the new Keystone STARS Designation System and will be required to use the 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards.

Programs who have **not** begun to and **do not** intend to begin a designation prior to **July 1, 2022**, will be required to use the 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards and the new Keystone STARS Designation System when they begin designation work on or after **July 1, 2022**.

NEXT STEPS

1. Child care programs
 - a. Review the 2022 Keystone STARS Performance Standards and Program Manual with staff.

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- b. Please direct any questions to your ELRC.
2. ELRC
- a. Review and share with appropriate staff.
 - b. Please direct any questions to your program representative.