



**KEYSTONE STARS:
CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
FOR LEARNING PROGRAMS**

Family Child Care Home Performance Standards for FY 2014-2015

REVISED

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Preamble

Keystone STARS: Reaching Higher for Quality Early Learning

The Keystone STARS program was initiated in 2002 as a multifaceted approach to improving programs that serve young children in Pennsylvania. Research-based Performance Standards form the bedrock of this quality improvement program. The standards are guided by the principle that quality early learning is a foundation for children's success, and investment in the early care and education of Pennsylvania's children is an investment in the future. Therefore, the Keystone STARS Performance Standards reflect research-based indicators to improve outcomes for children. The standards are organized into four STAR levels that build upon each other in order to support continuous quality improvement. When a provider meets the Performance Standards for a STAR level, they receive the mark of quality, a STAR designation. A Keystone STARS designation informs families that the director and staff are committed to enhancing quality for the children and families in their program.

Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality Vision and Mission

Vision: All Pennsylvania families will have access to high quality care and education for their children, fostering successful futures in school and in life.

Mission: To create a comprehensive quality improvement system in which all early learning programs and practitioners are encouraged and supported to improve child outcomes. Improvements in programming are designed to increase the capacity to support children's learning and development; increase educational attainment among practitioners; enhance professional skills and competencies in support of children's learning and development.

Acknowledgements

The Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare and Education, Office of Child Development & Early Learning, would like to thank the diverse group of programs, practitioners, Regional Keys staff and partners, and early learning stakeholders from across the State who continue to share their vision and constructive ideas in crafting an indicator based quality improvement system to improve outcomes for children in Pennsylvania. Their honest discussion of how the PA Early Learning Keys to Quality is working locally and their constructive feedback to proposed improvements continues to be invaluable to this process.

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How to Interpret the Performance Standards Grid

Each STAR level builds on the previous level. Unless otherwise specified, each successive level includes all items in the previous level. Please note that there is important information housed in the footnotes throughout the document and in the STARS Worksheets. For copies of the STARS Worksheets, please contact your Regional Key. Good, Better, Best: Pennsylvania’s Continuous Quality Improvement Guide to Best Practices is an optional tool that can be used by STARS Specialists/Managers, STARS Designators, and practitioners to determine at what quality point in the spectrum a program is meeting a Keystone STARS standard. Additional information is available at <http://www.pakeys.org/pages/starsDocs.aspx> or by contacting your Regional Key.

Enrollment in the Keystone STARS program

Providers that do not meet the STAR 1 Performance Standards, yet wish to begin the process of continuous quality improvement may enroll in Keystone STARS by contacting the Regional Key. By enrolling in Keystone STARS it affords providers access to resources that will assist in working toward a STAR level.





To enroll in Keystone STARS, a provider must meet the following STARS Performance Standards:

Facility holds and posts a current DPW Certificate of Registration.

Complete the Keystone STARS Site Environment Checklist.

Primary Staff Person completes the Family Child Care Home STARS Orientation.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES	 STAR 1 Performance Standards	 STAR 2 Performance Standards	 STAR 3 Performance Standards	 STAR 4 1. Performance Standards, or 2. NAEYC/NAA/NECPA Accreditation are to use bold/italicized Performance Standards
General	Must maintain Regular Certificate of Registration and/or meet program standards. ¹	Must meet all standards for STAR 1 and maintain Regular Certificate of Registration.	Must meet all standards for STAR 1 and 2 and maintain Regular Certificate of Registration.	Must meet all standards for STAR 1, 2, and 3 and maintain Regular Certificate of Registration.
Primary Staff Person/Owner Operator Qualifications²	1. Level I on the Career Lattice 2. Complete professional development on the Pennsylvania Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and School Age Professionals (CKC)/ Pennsylvania Big Ideas Framework (Big Ideas) and Individual Professional Development Plan for Early Childhood and School-Age Professionals (IPDP) and FCCERS. <i>*Note: PDR will remain in effect until June 30, 2015. Copies of the PDR will no longer be available for ordering or downloading as of July 1, 2014. During 7/1/14-7/1/15 will be the transition from PDR to using Big Ideas and IPDP.</i> 3. Current pediatric first aid certification. 4. Completes the Family Child Care Home STARS Orientation within 90 days of Enrollment in STARS	1. Level II or above on the Career Lattice. 2. Complete professional development on Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and the Learning Standards. 3. Attend child abuse mandated reporter professional development that reflects the most current laws in Pennsylvania.	1. Level III or above on the Career Lattice 2. Complete Family Child Care Home STARS Orientation Part 2.	Level IV or above on the Career Lattice by 7/1/2014. ³





¹* Pennsylvania Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and School Age Professionals (CKC) replaced Core Body of Knowledge

²* Pennsylvania Big Ideas Framework (Big Ideas) and

³* Individual Professional Development Plan for Early Childhood and School-Age Professionals (IPDP) transition from Professional Development Record (PDR)

July 1, 2014 to July 1, 2015 at which time it will be required for Keystone STARS providers. Copies of the PDR will no longer be available for ordering or downloading.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Primary Staff Person/Owner Operator Development⁴	1. Completion of Family Child Care Home Provider Self-Evaluation provided by DPW in the self-study packet. 2. All staff must have two hours of health and safety professional development annually. ⁵	1. Annual professional development plan is developed based on needs identified in the Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) documented on the professional development plan in the IPDP. 2. 12 annual clock hours of professional development based on the IPDP. 3. 3 annual clock hours in management, professionalism, supervision, leadership, and/or administration. 4. All staff must attend at least two hour of professional development annually on child observation and/or inclusive practices. ⁶	1. Annually participate in 1 professional growth and development activity. 2. 18 annual clock hours of professional development based on the IPDP. 3. All staff must attend at least two hours of professional development annually on curriculum, program or child assessment.	1. Annually participate in 2 professional growth and development activities. 2. 24 annual clock hours of professional development based on the Big Ideas and IPDP.
Secondary Staff/Substitutes and Assistants Qualifications	Current pediatric first aid certification.	High School Diploma or Generalized Education Development (GED) certification.		

¹ Facilities must maintain DPW Regulations and/or Head Start Performance Standards according to whichever apply to the site.

² Refer to the Career Lattice and the Optional Tool-- "Early Childhood Education Teacher Quality: Recognizing High Quality Core Content in Pennsylvania" documents on the PA Key website for clarifications regarding degrees types, related degrees, credit hours, etc..





³ Until this standard becomes effective on 7/1/2014, the previous standard (Current CDA/CCP or 9 college credits in ECE/CD or related field) continues to be in effect, if the Primary Staff Person/Owner Operator develops an action plan. The action plan will be reviewed annually at designation and it must be completed by 7/1/2014. In addition, the Primary Staff Person/ Owner Operator must take a minimum of 6 credits per year. Please refer to your Regional Key for further information.

⁴ Refer to the STARS Worksheets for additional information on professional growth and development activities, as well as clock hours.





⁵ Refer to the STARS Worksheets for courses that are acceptable.

⁶ Refer to the STARS Worksheets for more information on selecting appropriate professional development opportunities

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Secondary Staff/Substitutes and Assistants Development	6 annual clock hours of professional development, based on the Big Ideas and IPDP, taken by each staff member.	1. Annual professional development plan is developed based on needs identified in the Big Ideas and Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) 2. All staff must have two hours of health and safety professional development annually. 3. All staff must attend at least two hours of professional development annually on child observation, inclusive practices, and/or ERS.	1. 9 annual clock hours of professional development, based on the Big Ideas and IPDP, taken by each staff member. 2. All staff must attend at least two hours of professional development annually on curriculum, program or child assessment.	1. 12 annual clock hours of professional development based on the Big Ideas and IPDP, taken by each staff member. 2. Annually participate in 1 professional growth and development activity.

LEARNING PROGRAM

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Child Observation/ Curriculum Assessment	Site obtains and maintains copies of the appropriate Learning Standards for all age groups in the program.	1. Learning Standards are used as a resource for program planning. 2. Provider selects an OCDEL approved assessment tool. 3. A developmentally appropriate screening of the child is completed and shared with family within 45 days of program entry. ⁷ 4. All demographic information, including child, program and staff information, is recorded timely and accuracy is maintained in the Early Learning Network (ELN). ^{8, 9}	1. Based on ongoing child observations, developmentally appropriate authentic assessments of the child are completed and reported electronically into an OCDEL approved assessment tool following the tool's specified timeframes. 2. Results from authentic assessments are used for curriculum, individual child planning, and referral to community resources. 3. Implement a learning curriculum that incorporates the Learning Standards, including a written curriculum statement.	Program crosswalks curriculum and assessment tools to the Learning Standards.





⁷ For school-age children, no initial screening is required, however; an observation is completed and shared with family within 90 days of program entry.

⁸ While Family providers must meet STAR 3 Family Standards of participating in Authentic Assessments and ELN, they are not required to report into the Early Learning Outcomes Reporting system until July 1, 2013. Visit the PA Keys website www.pakeys.org for more information.





⁹ If the functionality of ELN does not allow for entry of the assessment information, demographic information should be collected and child assessments should be completed on paper until the program is able to enter the information online. Attempted compliance should be documented via a record of Help Desk call logs and copies of emails. Upon resolution of the issue, the provider will be responsible for entering all data into ELN.

¹⁰ A child assessment must be completed on school-age children although it is not reported through ELN.

LEARNING PROGRAM





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Environment Rating	1. Complete the Keystone STARS Family Child Care Home Learning Environment Checklist. 2. Provider attests that TV, video or DVD watching is limited to no more than 5 hours per week, is developmentally appropriate and supervised.	1. A FCCERS-R self-assessment and Reflection Tool completed 2. A written Improvement Plan is developed to address any score below a 3.0 on the FCCERS-R.	1. A FCCERS-R assessment by a STARS ERS assessor must average a score of 4.25 2. A written Improvement Plan is developed to address any ERS subscale score below a 3.5.	1.A FCCERS-R assessment by a STARS ERS assessor must average a score of 5.25 2. A written Improvement Plan is developed to address any ERS subscale score below a 4.25.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILY & COMMUNITY

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES	 STAR 1 Performance Standards	 STAR 2 Performance Standards	 STAR 3 Performance Standards	 STAR 4 1. Performance Standards, or 2. NAEYC/NAA/NECPA Accreditation are to use bold/italicized Performance Standards
Community Resources/ Family Involvement	1. At enrollment, families are provided with information regarding public, social and community services. ¹¹ 2. The program collects child-centered information at enrollment to facilitate responsive care that is	1. At a minimum of once per year, written information on topics including health and human services, wellness, nutrition and fitness, and/or child development is given and explained to families and staff. 2. If applicable to the child, provider requests from families copies of child's IEP	1. A plan is written and implemented describing procedures to refer families to appropriate social, mental health, educational, wellness, and medical services. 2. A minimum of one opportunity is offered for family involvement (e.g. volunteer opportunities, family play nights, family corner, picnics, lending library, monthly calendars). 3. A minimum of two family	1. If applicable to the child, provider, in conjunction with families and service providers from public social and community service organizations, implements activities appropriate to meet IEP or IFSP goals and/or special needs plans and objectives. 2. Program has policies that demonstrate engagement and





¹¹ Organizations include Early Intervention, Children and Youth Services, Mental Health and Intellectual Disability Services, County Assistance Office (CAO) and Child Care Information services (CCIS).

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILY & COMMUNITY





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	<p>mindful of the needs of individual children and families. A family meeting is offered within 45 days of enrollment to encourage program-family partnerships and share initial observations and goals for the child.</p> <p>3. Families are verbally informed of substitutes' and assistants' credentials and schedules.</p>	<p>or IFSP, written plans, and/or special needs assessments completed by professionals to inform developmentally appropriate practice.</p> <p>3. A written method whereby families and providers can exchange observations, concerns and comments (e.g. daily log, notebook message center, family-teacher journal, take-home envelopes).</p> <p>4. A minimum of one family conference is offered per year to discuss the child's progress and behavioral, social, and physical needs.</p> <p>5. Families are provided with information/application for publicly funded child care/health insurance programs, and tax credit information (Earned Income Tax Credit, PA TAX BACK).</p> <p>6. Families are given written letter introducing substitutes and assistants, explaining their credentials and schedules.</p>	<p>conferences are offered per year to discuss the child's progress and behavioral, social, and physical needs. Authentic assessments of the child are shared with the family a minimum of two times per year.¹²</p>	<p>partnership with families in program planning and decision-making.</p> <p>3. Families and school age children are asked, at least once per year, to evaluate the program's efforts to meet their needs (e.g. questionnaire, survey, suggestion box).</p> <p>4. A minimum of two opportunities are offered for family involvement, one of which is to coordinate opportunity for family group information activity to:</p> <p>a) Enhance knowledge and understanding of child development needs, or</p> <p>b) Enhance health education knowledge.</p>

¹² Best Practices will necessitate more frequent assessments for infants and toddlers.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILY & COMMUNITY





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Transition	Program provides general information to families regarding transitioning children to another educational setting.	1. Program transfers child records, at the request of the family, when the child transitions to another educational setting. 2. Program includes age-appropriate activities for children to prepare for transition.	1. Families are offered a group meeting to provide information regarding a child's transition to another educational setting and to encourage families and their children to connect to the school setting by visiting. 2. Program creates, with input from families, a list of community/school stakeholders regarding child transition.	1. Program sends letter of introduction to appropriate community/school stakeholders outlining goal to partner in child transitioning efforts from child care to school setting. 2. Program participates in community/school transition activities as available.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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Business Practices	1. Copies of inspection reports required by local ordinances such as fire, building, and health inspections are posted where families can easily see them. 2. Program develops and distributes a Family Handbook. 3. File appropriate tax forms. 4. Proof of liability insurance.	1. A financial record keeping system for revenue and expenses is in place. 2. Provider has a signed copy of an established professional Code of Ethics ¹³ .	1. Program creates a projected one-year operating budget, including a statement of income and expenditures. 2. Written job descriptions for substitutes and assistants, if applicable. 3. Review fire safety plan and emergency plan (including risk management) annually and update as necessary.	1. Current business plan. 2. Policy and procedure manual includes written health policies to cover topics per CFCO National Standards and found in published Model Child Care Health Policy booklet (ECLS/NAEYC/AAP) and is made available to staff at all times.

¹³Official codes of conduct from organizations, such as NAEYC, may be adopted.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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Continuous Quality Improvement	Program uses documents for tracking illnesses and injuries, including plans of action to prevent further occurrences.	1. Complete and provide the professional development plan in the Big ideas and IPDP. 2. System of site safety review including strategies for supervising children and corresponding plan of action are instituted.	<i>Provider develops and implements a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan using multiple sources¹⁴.</i>	
Employee Compensation	Providers make provisions for substitutes or designated qualified staff in emergency situations.	1. List of all staff by positions, salary, and tenure. 2. At least 1 employee benefit ¹⁵ given to staff.		

¹⁴Sources of information include surveys of families, staff and/or school-aged children, ERS, LIS, audits, FPDP, etc.

¹⁵ Refer to the STARS Worksheet for a list of acceptable employee benefits and for an explanation of prorating for part-time employees