



## Keystone STARS QRIS Revisioning Process Update

May 2016



**The Keystone STARS QRIS Revisioning Think Tank Team is charged with engaging a diverse group of early learning stakeholders in the creation of a new conceptual framework for Keystone STARS. This new framework will define the shared core principles of a quality rating and improvement system that is meaningful to and inclusive of all children, families and early learning professionals in Pennsylvania's diverse early learning settings.**

**Stakeholder Engagement Plan** — Stakeholders can participate in the revisioning process through in-person and virtual events. Regional partners (advocacy organizations, Regional Key, Certification, Technical Assistance, Child Care Information Services, Early Intervention) will reach out to providers and others not currently in STARS to encourage them to participate in the system redesign with a special eye to addressing issues of diversity and disproportionality in the current system.

### Background

Half a million young children in Pennsylvania need some type of child care. Pennsylvania has made it a priority to increase access to high-quality early learning so these children can enter school with the skills they need to succeed.

Keystone STARS, Pennsylvania's early learning quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), has been shown to improve quality in child care since its development in 2002. Now in its 14th year, Keystone STARS experiences new challenges and new opportunities. Participating providers appreciate having a statewide measure of quality; however, the complexity of the current system may be deterring others that could significantly benefit from quality improvement to better serve families, especially families of diverse cultures. Pennsylvania launched the Keystone STARS Revisioning process in February 2016 so that more providers will participate and provide higher quality services to more young children.

### Keystone STARS Revisioning Process Timeline

In 2015-16, Pennsylvania is engaging stakeholders to draft a STARS Framework of Shared Core Principles that can be used to guide revisions to the STARS standards and implementation process.

- **November 10, 2015**, OCDEL received the University of Pennsylvania STARS Inquiry at a Quality Talks event hosted by the William Penn Foundation. The report found that children participating in Keystone STAR 3 and 4 centers showed higher proficiencies than those children in Keystone STAR 1 and 2 centers. Pennsylvania is one of few, if not the only, state that can say this! The report includes recommendations on how Pennsylvania can refine STARS standards, sources of evidence to meet those standards and ensure that each STAR level is a meaningful progression to high quality.
- **February 26-27, 2016**, the Keystone STARS Think Tank Team initial meeting. The Keystone STARS Think Tank is a diverse group of **53** stakeholders chosen by an OCDEL selection team based on rigorous criteria to reflect geographic, racial, gender, and professional diversity. The goal of the two-day work session was to identify and draft the essential elements and core values for a new Keystone STARS framework. The Think Tank reviewed the "why and what of a QRIS" and looked at relevant national and state research to ground their thinking.

**Charge:**  
**Think about the system of early learning in Pennsylvania as a whole, inclusive of its diverse early learning programs and address the question "what is possible, for children, families, and providers?"**

**Wise words that guide the Think Tank Team**

*"Deep and simple is far more essential than shallow and complex."*

- Fred Rogers





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## Keystone STARS Revisioning Process Timeline Continued

- **March, April, May 2016**, the draft framework, called the Shared Core Principles, is shared with the statewide early learning community. Feedback is being collected to inform revisions.
  - More than **675 early childhood community members** participated on **three webinars** March 22, 24 and 30. Webinars provided an overview of the Revisioning Project opportunity for input on the draft Shared Core Principles. Webinar participants received the powerpoint and a web link to address a set of questions about the Shared Core Principles and provide additional input. A **fourth webinar** for Keys staff is being scheduled. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Recordings of the webinars and a link to the questionnaire is available at [http://www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=Refining\\_STARS](http://www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=Refining_STARS).
  - Over **50 regional town hall meetings** are being held across Pennsylvania in April and May 2016 to engage additional stakeholders and gather their input.
  - Think Tank members have been asked to hold small community-based meetings to ensure an intentional reach into the diversity of the early childhood community. Team members were provided a Communication Action Plan, the Revision Timeline and powerpoint to assist them in conducting such meetings.
- **June 10, 2016**, the Think Tank will come back together to review the input and refine the Shared Core Principles based on the input.



### Feedback from the Field

*"Thank you for the opportunity for providing our feedback!"*

*"Well organized and informative. Lots of work to be done moving forward."*

*"This meeting was very informative. It makes me want to work even harder as a provider. I have worked under the Keystone STARS program but I never really understood it."*

*"I believe you hit the nail on the head about why people are getting out. I can't wait to see/hear your solutions about these problems. I will also be giving input on this matter at a later time."*