Keystone STARS Performance Standards Update
July 2018
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Director, Bureau of Policy and Professional Development
Keystone STARS Core Principles

Keystone STARS is a responsive system to improve, support, and recognize the continuous quality improvement efforts of early learning programs in Pennsylvania. Our system is guided by three core principles:

• A whole child approach to education is essential to meeting the holistic and individual needs of each and every child and family.

• Knowledgeable and responsive early care and education professionals are essential to the development of children and the support of families.

• Building and sustaining ongoing positive relationships among children, families, early care and education professionals and community stakeholders is essential for the growth and development of every child.

We believe inclusion, diversity, equity and respect are foundational values embedded in these principles.
Keystone STARS:

- Focuses on a program’s strengths
- Meets programs where they are on their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) journey
- Allows providers the opportunity to identify and build upon their strengths
- Provides programs a quality benchmark for moving forward
- Provides families a way to identify quality early care and education programs
All updates to the STARS Standards:

- are reflective of stakeholder feedback received during the Pilot Year 2017-2018
- are intended to both clarify and streamline the process for providers
Review of Keystone STARS Indicator Revisions
STARS Updates Effective July 1, 2018:

• Combined duplicative indicators at STAR 3 and 4

• Eliminated indicators that are covered in Certification Regulations

• Added clarifying language to indicators for Family Child Care Homes and School Age Programs

• The Director’s Credential is now a stand-alone indicator
Quality Matters

- Re-weighted indicators to address challenges identified throughout the Pilot Year

- Added an indicator to support CQI tools above and beyond the required ERS or CLASS Assessment

- Updated Alternative Pathways to STARS Designation

- Updated the bonus point usage

- Clarified professional development indicators for those staff currently enrolled in a degree program
Updates for STAR 2
### Early Care and Education Program (example of clarifying language added for SACC and FCC)

| EC.2.3 | A research-based developmental screening tool is used within 45 days of enrollment to identify children who may need additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies. Additional screening is provided as needed and per protocol with the chosen screener. Results of screening are communicated with families, support for referrals are offered as needed. **Standard N/A for SACC only programs or for children enrolled in K-12 programs receiving SACC services at a Keystone STARS Program.** |

### Partnerships with Families & Communities (example of revised indicators that now include similar concepts that were previously separate indicators)

| FC.2.1 | Program has a written policy that states that IEP or IFSP written plans, and/or special needs assessments are appropriately utilized to inform individualized instruction. The policy also recommends that IEP/IFSP meetings include family members, the child’s teacher, specialists and director or administrator. **The written policy is shared with families.** |
Updates to STAR 3 & 4
Early Care and Education Program

Examples of revised indicators that were previously separate indicators

**EC.3.4.3**

Results from observation-based assessments of children’s development are used for curriculum planning and instruction, individual child planning, and referral to community resources. Teachers modify practices based on child assessment data. Accommodations are based on individual strengths/needs. **Observation-based assessment results are shared with families.**

**EC.3.4.4**

Program policies/practices are in place to support language development and academic achievement of children who are culturally and linguistically diverse. **Children whose first language is not English are supported in using home language, gestures, communication devices, sign language, etc. when needed.**
New Indicator was added to support the use of CQI tools above and beyond ERS and CLASS required Assessments

| EC.3.4.6 | A program is invested in Continuous Quality improvement and utilizes program observation instruments to inform their CQI plan and Technical Assistance Goals above and beyond their required ERS or CLASS assessments. A program thoughtfully chooses which POI may offer them the most valuable feedback and opportunities to grow. A list of suggested POIs that can be used to inform a program’s CQI plan is available on the following page as well as on the PA Keys website. |
Leadership and Management

A new indicator was added making the Director’s Credential a stand-alone category as a result of structural barriers reported from the field.

LM.3.4.1  A member of the program’s on-site leadership team is enrolled in or holds a current PA Director’s Credential. N/A for home-based programs.

This indicator was restructured to capture the amount of planning time offered rather than the frequency of planning times as a result of stakeholder feedback.

LM.3.4.2  Lead Teaching Staff are provided paid curriculum and lesson planning/preparation time away from children. 1 hour/month = 2 points. 2-3 hours/month = 3 points. 4+ hours/month = 4 points.
## Leadership and Management

The following three indicators were revised to include clarifying language for Family Child Care programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LM. 3.4.6</td>
<td>Staff meetings are held at least once per month. Agendas are focused on professional development activities and include discussions of quality and its impact on the program. FCCHs document how they use self-reflection and family engagement to consider program’s strengths and challenges to inform improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM.3.4.7</td>
<td>A salary scale based on level of education/training and experience is utilized. Home-based programs demonstrate budget considerations that support fair compensation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM.3.4.8</td>
<td>All staff members are offered regular personal breaks. FCC providers have a plan in place to ensure children are safe and supervised when taking care of personal needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Staff Qualifications and Professional Development**

- SQ 3.4.2 was revised and reweighted to outline clear and achievable benchmarks around staff qualifications

- An appendix was added to the standards to clearly outline the phase in of staff qualifications for STAR 3 & 4 over the next 10 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SQ.3.4.2</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOTE: This standard will change as of July 1, 2019 and will continue to raise the bar for teacher education through 2028. See Appendix A</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 25% or more of all teaching staff are enrolled in or have completed an academic program in child development, early care and education or related field to support achievement of their next education level.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 50% or more of all teaching staff are enrolled in or have completed an academic program in child development, early care and education or related field to support achievement of their next education level.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 25% of lead teachers have a minimum of an AA in ECE or related field and 50% of all additional teachers have or are enrolled in a CDA or higher ECE degree/credential and Leadership team has at least one staff AA in ECE or related field or higher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Director Qualifications / STARS Leadership Team Equivalent
A director shall have attained one of the following qualification levels:

1. A bachelor’s (BA/BS) degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education (ECE), child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 1 year of experience with children.
2. A BA/BS degree from an accredited college or university, including 30 credit hours in ECE, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 2 years of experience with children.
3. An associate’s (AA/AS) degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 3 years of experience with children.
4. An AA/AS degree from an accredited college or university, including 30 credit hours in ECE, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 4 years of experience with children.

### Group Supervisor / STARS Lead Teacher Equivalent
A group supervisor shall have attained one of the following qualification levels:

1. A BA/BS degree from an accredited college or university in ECE, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field.
2. A BA/BS degree from an accredited college or university, including 30 credit hours in ECE, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 1 year of experience with children.
3. An AA/AS degree from an accredited college or university in ECE, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 2 years of experience with children.
4. An AA/AS degree from an accredited college or university, including 30 credit hours in ECE, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 3 years of experience with children.

### Assistant Group Supervisor / STARS Asst Teacher Equivalent
An assistant group supervisor shall have attained one of the following qualification levels:

1. A high school diploma (HSD) or a general educational development (GED) certificate and 30 credit hours from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field.
2. A HSD or a GED certificate, 15 credit hours from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, child development, special education, elementary education or the human services field and 1 year of experience with children.
3. A HSD or a GED certificate and completion of a post-secondary training curriculum.
4. A HSD or a GED certificate and 2 years experience with children.

### STAR 3 (Points)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>STAR 3 (Points)</th>
<th>STAR 4 (REQUIRED)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/1/18</td>
<td>25% of lead teachers have a minimum of an AA in ECE or related field</td>
<td>100% of lead teachers hold a minimal BA/BS or AA/AAS in ECE or related field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% of all additional teachers have or are enrolled in a CDA or higher ECE degree/credential</td>
<td>25% of teachers have a CDA or higher in ECE or related field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership team has at least one staff AA in ECE or related field or higher</td>
<td>Leadership team has at least one staff with a BA or BS in ECE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person is enrolled in or holds a CDA or higher</td>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person holds a CDA or higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/2021</td>
<td>50% of lead teachers hold a BA or BS in ECE or related field</td>
<td>50% of lead teachers hold a minimal BA/BS in ECE or related field remainder have an AA/AAS in ECE or related field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All additional lead teachers have an AA/AAS in ECE or are enrolled in a ECE degree/credential</td>
<td>75% of teachers have a CDA or higher ECE or related field credential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% of all additional teachers have a CDA or higher ECE credential</td>
<td>Leadership team has at least 1 staff with a Admin Level A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% of leadership team has at least an AA in ECE or related field or Business and the rest are enrolled in attaining ECE or related field credentials</td>
<td>50% of leadership team has staff with a BA or BS in ECE the rest are enrolled in attaining ECE credentials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person holds a CDA or higher</td>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person enrolled in or holds a minimum of an AA/AAS in ECE or related field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/2024</td>
<td>50% of lead teachers hold a BA or BS in ECE and the remainder have an AA in ECE or related field</td>
<td>90% of lead teachers hold a BA/BS in ECE or related field and the remainder are enrolled in a minimal ECE or related field BA/BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All additional teaching staff have a minimum of CDA</td>
<td>All teaching staff have a minimum of CDA and 25% have an AA/AAS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% of leadership team has staff with a BA or BS in ECE or related field the rest are enrolled in attaining ECE or related field credentials</td>
<td>50% of leadership team has staff with a BA or BS in ECE the rest are enrolled in attaining ECE or related field credentials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership team has at least one staff with Administrator A or higher</td>
<td>Leadership team has at least one staff Administrator B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person enrolled in or holds a minimum of an AA/AAS in ECE or related field</td>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person holds a minimum of an AA/AAS in ECE or related field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/2023</td>
<td>75% of lead teachers hold a BA or BS in ECE or related field and the remainder of lead teachers have an AA in ECE or related field</td>
<td>All lead teachers have BA/BS in ECE or related field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All additional teaching staff have a minimum of CDA with at least 25% enrolled in an AA/AAS Program</td>
<td>All teaching staff have a minimum of CDA and 50% have an AA/AAS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% of leadership team has staff with a BA or BS in ECE or related field the rest are enrolled in attaining ECE credentials</td>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person holds a minimum of an AA/AAS in ECE or related field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Program’s Leadership team has at least one staff member with a BA/or higher in any field AND 9 college credits in business or program administration one staff member with a BA/BS or higher in ECE or related field.</td>
<td>All secondary staff are enrolled in or hold a minimum of a CDA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person holds a minimum of an AA/AAS in ECE or related field.</td>
<td>Home-based programs: Primary staff person holds a minimum of an AA/AAS in ECE or related field.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

For Quality Indicators SQ 3.4.3 through SQ 3.4.9, clarifying language has been added to honor those practitioners enrolled in an ECE degree program.

• These ECE Practitioners have unique needs around an Individual Professional Development Plan while actively taking coursework.

• The focus of the professional development indicators is on those staff NOT enrolled in a degree program.

Note regarding ongoing professional development topics addressed in SQ 3.4.3. through SQ 3.4.9: A member of the on-site leadership team and all staff members should engage in annual discussions of each staff person’s PD plan. Staff members actively enrolled in an academic program of study in Early Care and Education, or a related field are not required to take additional professional development courses UNLESS it is supportive of improving their practice. Calculating points for this indicator should be based on the # of staff who are NOT actively enrolled in an academic course of study and/or who have not completed foundational professional development.
Point Allocation for STAR 3 and 4 Performance Standards

While the overall possible points increased, program must still obtain a minimum of 70% of total points in each category to be designated a STAR 3 and a minimum of 85% of total points in each Standard category to be designated a STAR 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Standard</th>
<th>Total Points Available</th>
<th>Percentage Total Points Available</th>
<th>STAR 3 Minimum Pts Earned (70%)</th>
<th>STAR 4 Minimum Pts Earned (85%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Qualifications and Professional Development</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Care and Education Program</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships with Families and Communities</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and Management</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BONUS POINTS

Bonus points have been restructured to apply to certain categories. Programs may only apply bonus points to the identified categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bonus Points - 2 pts each (applicable ONLY to the specified Performance Standard Category)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership and Management</strong> - Program participates in an organized effort to promote environmental health improvements in their early learning program, making their facility and program healthier and less likely to negatively affect the health of children and early learning program staff. (example: PA Healthy and Green Child Care)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership and Management</strong> - Program utilizes the After-School Quality (ASQ) Team Approach to develop a CQI Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partnerships with Families and Communities</strong> - Program participates in an organized effort to promote nutritional health for children. (example: farm to early learning, obesity prevention activities, food security initiatives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Care and Education Program</strong> - Program participates in the implementation of PBIS and has been recognized for fidelity Implementation by the PA PBS Network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternate Pathways to STARS Designation

• Updated to reflect additional approved cross-walks provided by accrediting bodies

  • NECPA (National Early Childhood Program Accreditation) Accredited programs receive STAR 4 designation

  • ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International) Accredited programs receive STAR 3 designation

• Removed ASQ as Alternate Pathway based on recommendations of the SACC work group
Updates to Program Quality Assessment
Targeted Reassessment

STAR 3 and 4 Programs visited after July 1, 2018 for STARS Monitoring assessments not successful in meeting the ERS or CLASS thresholds for their current Designation, may be eligible for Targeted Reassessment if:

- No more than 25% of rooms assessed failed to meet the threshold scores
- The specific classrooms that failed to meet threshold scores have the same teaching staff in place that were there during initial assessment
- There has not been significant (50% or higher) staff turnover within the classrooms for other age groups

If the site is eligible for reassessment, their second round of assessments will occur using the same program observation instrument (ERS or CLASS)
Targeted Reassessment

• Eligible sites must request a Targeted Reassessment within 90 days of the date on the cover letter sent out with the Assessment Summary Feedback reports.

• The Targeted Reassessment window must be scheduled and completed no later than 6 months after the date on the cover letter sent out with the Assessment Summary Feedback reports.

• ELRC Staff will coordinate with the program and the PQA Assessor/Regional Supervisor to determine when within that timeframe the window will be scheduled and assessments conducted.

• If the targeted reassessment is successful, the program’s Assessment Scores will be renewed for a three year period beginning from the date on the cover letter of the first set of STARS Monitoring visits.
Program Quality Assessment Window Scheduling

End of Hold Harmless Period
• Transitioning all programs to the three year activity cycle as their current scores end.

STARS Monitoring Assessment Requests
• As the result of extensions of assessment scores during STARS Revisioning and transitioning to a three year activity cycle, STARS Monitoring visits are occurring closer to the effective end date than normal.
  • Our goal is to assess programs prior to the Assessment Effective End Date
    • If this is not possible, assessments will be scheduled before the STARS expiration date to support the Redesignation processes.
    • If scheduling before the STARS expiration date is not possible the PQA staff will coordinate with ELRC and OCDEL to coordinate extending assessment scores until an assessor is available to conduct the visits

STARS Movement Assessment Requests
• First available window is always offered to program
Quality Matters

Keystone STARS Supports

Tom Wolf, Governor
Pedro A. Rivera, Secretary of Education | Teresa D. Miller, Secretary of Human Services
Your Quality Coach at Your Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC)

• Supports your program through the evidence-gathering process to earn a STAR rating

• Supports your program in conducting a self-assessment using an evidence-based observation instrument that best meets your program’s needs and goals;

• Provides guidance in the creation of a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan with goals and action items to support program improvement

• Reviews evidence of meeting STAR standards prior to submission
What’s Next?

• Get to know the updated STARS performance standards

• Visit [www.raiseyourstar.org](http://www.raiseyourstar.org) to connect with your ELRC and Quality Coach

• Visit [www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org) for resources
Thank You