

THE CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM (QRS) ASSESSMENT



Virginia Star Quality Initiative

QRS Profile

April 2010



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Policy Research, Inc.



Virginia Star Quality Initiative

QRS Profile

Prepared for:**Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation**

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Child Care Quality Rating System (QRS) Assessment Study

PROFILE

Site:	Virginia
Program Name:	Virginia Star Quality Initiative
Respondents:	Kathy Glazer, Virginia Department of Social Services Zelda Boyd, Office of Early Childhood Development
Information Reviewed and Finalized:	March 12, 2010

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Virginia –Star Quality Initiative

Program Information

This section provides general information about the QRS including the location, numbers and types of programs participating in the QRS, funding amounts, funding sources and goals.

Site name:	Virginia
Program name:	Virginia Star Quality Initiative
Service area:	Other geographic area
Details about other geographic area:	<p>The Star Quality Initiative is located in 15 communities. There is a lead agency in each community/local coalition. This coalition is in charge of seeking funding and partners at the local level. The communities are made up of a general state area, usually encompassing several cities and counties. The following is a list of the 15 communities actively participating in the Star Quality Initiative.</p> <p>Alexandria/Arlington Smart Beginnings Smart Beginnings Historic Triangle Charlottesville/Albermarle Partnership for Children - Smart Beginnings Fairfax County School Readiness Collaborative Community Council Smart Beginnings Hopewell-Prince George Smart Beginnings Virginia Peninsula Prince William Area Quality Child Care Partnership Smart Beginnings Rappahannock Area Smart Beginnings South Hampton Roads Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater Smart Beginnings Central Virginia Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond Smart Beginnings of Greater Roanoke New River Valley Association for the Education of Young Children Shenandoah Valley Smart Beginnings</p>
Pilot:	Yes
Pilot time frame:	Fall 2007-present
Date full program launched:	N/A
Voluntary:	Yes
Website:	www.smartbeginnings.org/QRIS
Eligible programs:	Center-based programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, pre-kindergarten / comprehensive early childhood programs, faith-based providers and military settings.

Source of funds for eligible public program:	State
Total numbers of programs participating:	343
Number of participating child care centers:	343
Percent of total programs enrolled in QRS:	10% of licensed facilities. There are approximately 2,500 licensed facilities in the state.
Percent of programs at each rating level:	50% 3 Star 25% 2 Star 25% 4 Star 0% 1 & 5 Star
Goals:	The Virginia Star Quality Initiative not only defines standards for early childhood education and creates a framework for accountability, but it also establishes a network of support and outreach for programs and providers, provides incentives linked to achieving and maintaining quality standards, and improves information available to parents... Advancing the quality of early childhood programs available across the Commonwealth not only benefits the children who attend them by improving their school readiness, but also the public as a whole... Investing in quality early childhood programs may have a significant impact on Virginia's economic growth and opportunities for future development in a competitive global market.
Language from statute:	None

Rating Details

This section provides details about how the rating component is structured and the process that is used to rate programs.

Rating structure:	Points
Number of levels:	5
Length of time rating is valid:	2 years
Rating Process:	Programs that volunteer to participate are assessed by trained and experienced Star Quality Raters, who are regularly tested for consistency and reliability. A documentation review and on-site visits are conducted to determine which Star level a facility will receive. After a program has been rated, they work with Star Quality Mentors to draft and implement a quality improvement plan to help them improve their quality.
Method of combining points:	Programs receive a certain number of points for each indicator across each of the four performance standards. Standard Two,

	Interactions, is weighted 1.5 times greater than the other standards. Standard Three, Structure, is weighted slightly less. After accounting for these emphases, the total points earned for all indicators in all standards are summed. There is a specific point spread identified for each Star level.
Method used to assess programs for infants/toddlers:	The methods identified for addressing infants and toddlers include different requirements within the Structure standards for ratios and group size, the use of the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating-Revised (ITERS-R) and the Toddler Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Infant programs are not currently rated.
Method used to assess programs for school-aged children:	The method identified to address school-aged children is the use of the School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale. School-aged care programs are not currently rated.
Different process used to assess family child care:	No. Indicators for family child care are currently in development.
Different process used to assess Head Start/Early Head Start:	No
Different process used to assess accredited programs:	No
Events that trigger re-rating:	Licensing violation or change in location prompt portions of the scales to be reassessed.
Description of re-rating trigger:	Programs would be dropped from the Star Quality Initiative if there was a serious risk to children.
Appeal process:	Yes
Availability of technical assistance for rating process:	Yes
Description of technical assistance for rating process:	Local coalitions are responsible for providing technical assistance to aid participating programs throughout the rating process.
Availability of technical assistance for preparatory process:	Yes
Description of technical assistance for preparatory process:	Prior to rating, programs may receive assistance from mentors and their local coordinator.

Quality Indicators for Center-Based Programs

This section describes the indicators used in a QRS to assess the quality of center-based programs. The indicators are divided into the following categories: licensing compliance, ratio and group size, health and safety, curriculum, environment, child assessment, staff qualifications, family partnership, administration and management, cultural/linguistic diversity, accreditation, community involvement and provisions for children with special needs. A QRS may not have indicators in one or more of these categories, and the category labels used in the profile may differ from the site-specific category names

used in a QRS.

Number of site-specific indicator categories:	4
Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:	<p>Education, Qualifications, and Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Part 1: Staff Education and Qualifications -Part 2: Ongoing Training/Professional Development <p>Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Emotional Support (ES) -Classroom Organization (CO) -Instructional Support (IS) <p>Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff to Child Ratio And Group Size <p>Environment and Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Overall Learning Environment Subscales -Transition Practices

Licensing Compliance (centers)

Licensing requirements frequently serve as a minimal set of provisions to ensure that care and education environments are safe, healthy and provide for children's basic needs. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Licensing compliance included:	Yes
Licensing required for enrollment:	Yes
Licensing equivalent to the first level:	Yes
Licensing compliance referred to within:	N/A
Source of evidence:	Documentation submitted
Comments:	Licensing is required for Star Level 1 or higher, but not at the "Rising Star" preparatory level.

Ratio and Group Size (centers)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Ratio and group size indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>Star 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infants (Birth to 12 mos.)-1:4, max group size 8 Young Toddlers (12-24 mos.)-1:5, max group size 10 Toddlers (24-36 mos.)-1:6, max group size 12 Three year olds-1:9, max group size 18 Four year olds-1:10, max group size 20 Five year olds-1:12, max group size 24

Star 3:

Infants (Birth to 12 mos.)-1:4, max group size 8
 Young Toddlers (12-24 mos.)-1:5, max group size 10
 Toddlers (24-36 mos.)-1:6, max group size 12
 Three year olds-1:8, max group size 16
 Four year olds-1:9, max group size 18
 Five year olds-1:11, max group size 22

Star 4:

Infants (Birth to 12 mos.)-1:3, max group size 6
 Young Toddlers (12-24 mos.)-1:4, max group size 8
 Toddlers (24-36 mos.)-1:5, max group size 10
 Three year olds-1:7, max group size 14
 Four year olds-1:9, max group size 18
 Five year olds-1:10, max group size 20

Star 5:

Infants (Birth to 12 mos.)-1:3, max group size 6
 Young Toddlers (12-24 mos.)-1:4, max group size 6
 Toddlers (24-36 mos.)-1:4, max group size 8
 Three year olds-1:7, max group size 14
 Four year olds-1:8, max group size 16
 Five year olds-1:10, max group size 20

Ratio and group size referred to within:

"Staff-to-Child Ratio and Group Size" in Structure

Source of evidence:

Documentation submitted

Health and Safety (centers)

Provisions for health and safety are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Health and safety indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Health and safety indicators included:

Curriculum (centers)

A curriculum is a written document that provides a plan for intentional activities and interactions in an early childhood program. Indicators described in this section refer to requirements for the use of particular curricula or to demonstration that certain features of curriculum are in place. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Curriculum indicators included:

Environment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the classroom environment. Further details about Observational Measures included in the QRS are included in a section below. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Environment indicators included:	Yes
Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:	Yes
Range of recognized ERS scores:	3.0-6.0
Description:	<p>Star 2: Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 3 with no classroom scoring below 2</p> <p>Star 3: Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 4 with no classroom scoring below 3</p> <p>Star 4: Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 5 with no classroom scoring below 4</p> <p>Star 5: Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 6 with no classroom scoring below 5</p>
Range of recognized CLASS scores:	<p>3.0-6.0 (For each scale: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support)</p> <p>Star 2: CLASS score of 3 or higher in all scales</p> <p>Star 3: CLASS score of 4 or higher in all scales</p> <p>Star 4: CLASS score of 5 or higher in all scales</p> <p>Star 5: CLASS score of 6 or higher in all scales</p>
Additional indicators related to the environment (e.g. activities, interactions, specific features)	At Star 3, age appropriate activities to prepare children for transitions (sharing stories, reading books about transitions, visiting another classroom, visiting public school, etc)
Environment referred to within:	Interactions; Environment and Instruction
Environment source of evidence:	Documentation submitted; observation

Child Assessment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to processes in place to assess, observe or monitor children's development on a regular basis. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Child assessment indicators included:

Staff Qualifications (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to specific educational or training requirements for staff. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Staff qualification indicators included:	Yes
Indicators for teachers include:	Education, training, and years of experience
Indicators for directors include:	Education, training, and years of experience
Directors qualifications related to administration and management	No
Bachelors degree indicator for director:	Yes
Bachelors degree indicator for director at level:	Star 4
Bachelors degree indicator for teacher:	Yes
Bachelors degree indicator for teacher at level:	Star 4
Bachelors degree indicator for assistant teacher:	No
Description:	<u>Part 1: Staff Qualifications and Education</u>

Director

Star 2:

-At least 75% with a one-year community college certificate in a child-relevant field with a minimum of 30 total credit hours.

-Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment.

Star 3:

-At least 75% with an Associate degree or higher in relevant field w/minimum of 12 credit hours of child-related coursework.

-Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment.

Star 4:

-At least 75% with a B.S./B.A. degree or higher in relevant field w/minimum of 12 credit hours of child-related coursework.

-Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment.

Star 5:

-At least 75% with a Master's degree or higher in relevant field with a minimum of 12 credit hours of child-related coursework.

-Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment.

Teacher

Star 2:

-At least 75% with a Child Development Associate or equivalent 120-clock-hr credential.

-OR Community college certificate in child-related field with a minimum of 12 total credit hours.

Star 3:

-At least 75% with a one-year community college certificate in child-related field with a minimum of 30 total credit hours.

-At least 50% of these teachers with an Associate degree or higher in child-related field.

Star 4:

-At least 75% with an Associate degree or higher in child-related field

-At least 50% of these teachers with a B.S./B.A. degree or higher in child-related field.

Star 5:

-At least 75% with a B.S./B.A. degree or higher in child-related field.

Assistant Teacher

Star 2:

-At least 75% with a minimum high school program completion or equivalent.

-20 clock hours or more of approved training.

Star 3:

-At least 75% with a 48 clock hours or more of approved training.

-At least 50% of these assistant teachers with a: Child Development Associate or equivalent 120-clock-hour credential.

Star 4:

- At least 75% with a Child Development Associate or equivalent 120-clock-hour credential.
- OR Community college certificate in child-related field with a minimum of 12 total credit hours.

Star 5:

- At least 75% with a one-year community college certificate in child-related field w/minimum of 30 total credit hrs.
- At least 50% of these assistant teachers with an Associate degree or higher in a child-related field.

Part 2: Ongoing Training/Professional Development

All Staff (Directors, Teachers, and Asst. Teachers) Professional Development

Star 2:

- 28 annual clock hours of approved training.
- New Staff Orientation training completed by all new staff within 30 days of start of employment.
- Annual training plan is developed for the program and/or each staff member based on needs identified.

Star 3:

- 32 annual clock hours of approved training.

Star 4:

- 36 annual clock hours of approved training, including training.

Star 5:

- 40 annual clock hours of approved training.

Director Professional Development

Star 2:

- 30 points – Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 3:

- 60 points – Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 4:

- 90 points – Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 5:

- 120 points – Annual professional development

activities (see attached document)

All Instructional Staff (Teachers and Assistant Teachers) Professional Development

Star 2:

-One staff member in each classroom has current first aid and CPR certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care.

Star 3:

-All instructional staff have current CPR and First Aid certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care.

Star 4:

-All instructional staff have current CPR and First Aid certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care.

Star 5:

-All instructional staff have current CPR and First Aid certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care.

Teacher Professional Development

Star 2:

-30 points - Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 3:

-60 points - Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 4:

-90 points - Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 5:

-120 points – Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Assistant Teacher Professional Development

Star 2: No requirements beyond licensing

Star 3:

-30 points – Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 4:

-60 points - Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Star 5:

-90 points - Annual professional development activities (see attached document)

Staff qualifications referred to within:	Education, Qualifications, and Training (Part 1 and 2)
Staff qualifications source of evidence	Documentation submitted
Comments:	<p>Approved training topics include, but are not limited to: child development, interactions with children, behavior management, observation and assessment, developmentally-appropriate curriculum, inclusive practices, family involvement and communication, transition practices, health and safety (including medication administration, immunization requirements, daily health observation, and compliance with OSHA blood borne pathogens regulations, disease prevention, emergency preparedness), nutrition, and child abuse detection and prevention.</p> <p>Additional Requirement: At Star 5, Transition-related training for all teaching staff involved in child's transition</p>

Family Partnership (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to activities and strategies to involve and engage families. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Family partnership indicators included:	Yes
Description:	<p>The family partnership indicators focus on preparing children and families to deal with upcoming transitions (e.g. going to kindergarten).</p> <p>Star 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Orientation to the program for families -Written plan for supporting individual children with special needs (medical, educational, or behavioral) -General information to parents on transitioning children to another setting (information on kindergarten registration, school readiness activities, etc) <p>Star 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Group meeting for parents to provide information regarding a child's transition to another setting, including how parents can support this process -Age appropriate activities to prepare children for

transitions (sharing stories, reading books about transitions, visiting another classroom, visiting public school, etc)

Star 4:

-Individual meetings with families to share specific information regarding the child's transition to another setting
-Coordination with families and schools, programs, or agencies to transfer child records, including written information concerning child's abilities, learning styles, medical/safety concerns

Star 5:

-Transition-related training for all teaching staff involved in child's transition

Family partnership referred to within:

"Transition Practices" in Environment and Instruction

Family partnership source of evidence:

Documentation submitted

Administration and Management (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the administration and management of the program. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Administration and management indicators included:

Cultural/Linguistic Diversity (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to provisions for responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:

Accreditation (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to accreditation by a national accrediting body. Accreditation is a process in which programs demonstrate that they meet standards set forth by the accrediting body. The standards are determined by the accrediting body. There is not a common set of standards used for early childhood program accreditation. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA), the National Accreditation

Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC) and the Council on Accreditation (COA) are commonly included accreditation systems used in QRSs for center-based programs.

Accreditation included:

Community Involvement (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to the type or frequency of involvement in the community. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

Community involvement indicators included:

Provisions for Children with Special Needs (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to provisions for children with special needs and the extent to which programs meet standards for inclusion of children with disabilities or other limiting conditions. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Provisions for Children with Special Needs indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:

Yes

Comments:

Star 2:

-Programs must have a written plan for supporting individual children with special needs (medical, educational, or behavioral)

Star 3:

-Age appropriate activities to prepare children for transitions (sharing stories, reading books about transitions, visiting another classroom, visiting public school, etc)

Star 4:

-Coordination with families and schools, programs, or agencies to transfer child records, including written information concerning child's abilities, learning styles, medical/safety concerns.

Application Process

Information in this section describes specific features of the application process in the QRS.

Requires self-assessment tool:

No

Availability of preparatory process:

Yes

Describe preparatory process:

Each coalition employs a local coordinator who is responsible for holding general sessions and

presentations about Star Quality Initiative. Following, coordinators individually visit programs to talk about the application process, available supports, observations, etc. The particulars of this process are determined locally.

In addition, Virginia offers a preparatory rating called a Rising Star. A Rising Star program is a facility that has shown a commitment to improving quality and achieving a Star level rating. Typically, these programs are working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards). Like all other programs, Rising Star programs also receive technical assistance to aid throughout the application and rating process.

Requires orientation:	No
Describe orientation :	Similar to the preparatory process described above, orientations sessions are available (but not required) through the efforts of the local coordinator.
Time from application to rating:	3-6 months
Can apply for particular rating:	No

Outreach

This section describes the strategies that a QRS uses to disseminate information to parents, providers/programs, and the public.

Outreach to parents:	Yes
Method of outreach to parents:	Website
Outreach to providers:	Yes
Method of outreach to providers:	Website
Outreach to public:	Yes
Method of outreach to public:	Website, and some radio, print, and television (varying locally)
Percent of budget dedicated to marketing:	Information not available.

Use of Observational Tools

The information in this section provides further detail about observational tools used in the QRS.

Observational tools used:	CLASS, ECERS-R, ITERS-R, SACERS-R
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Describe how scores are used in the rating:	<p>Star 2: CLASS 3+, ERS average 3 (no classroom below 2)</p> <p>Star 3: CLASS 4+, ERS average 4 (no classroom below 3)</p> <p>Star 4: CLASS 5+, ERS average 5 (no classroom below 4)</p> <p>Star 5: CLASS 6+, ERS average 6 (no classroom below 5)</p>
Frequency of observational assessment:	2 years
Method for choosing classrooms to observe:	<p>A minimum of 1/3 of the total classrooms in the facility are assessed, including at least one classroom of each age group the program serves. Based on the information provided by programs, the Rater(s) assigns each potential classroom a number, and all numbers are entered into the random sample for assessment. The room(s) to be assessed on each day is randomly drawn from that sample (by either the provider or rater).</p>
Percent of classrooms observed in child care centers:	<p>One out of every three preschool and toddler classrooms at a site will be observed (33%). However, at least one classroom for each age group served at that program must be observed.</p>
Training for observers:	<p>Environment Rating Scales: The Raters and Mentors are trained in cohort groups by the scale authors from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina, when possible, or by a Master Star Quality Raters who received training in the Environment Rating Scales by the authors and is qualified to train other professionals and conduct and oversee inter-reliability checks.</p> <p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System: The Raters and Mentors are trained in cohort groups by either the CLASS authors at the University of Virginia or by a Master Star Quality Rater who attended the train-the-trainer workshop in CLASS from the source university. The Master Raters are able to train future Raters and Mentors and conduct and oversee reliability testing and inter-reliability checks.</p>
Initial reliability required:	<p>Raters must achieve 85% consistency for the Environment Rating Scale and 85% reliability for CLASS with a Master Rater.</p>

Ongoing reliability required:	Raters must be tested for inter-rater reliability once every 7 visits.
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Improvement Process

This section provides information about the strategies used to provide or support quality improvement in the QRS.

Training available that is linked to QRS:	Yes
Content of linked training:	The trainings are currently in a development phase. No specific information is available at this time.
Total duration of training:	Information not available
Trainer approval process:	Yes
Target population for training:	All providers
Onsite assistance available that is linked to QRS:	Yes
Content of linked onsite assistance:	Specific curriculum, language and literacy, business practices, child assessment, social and emotional development, safety, environment assessment, support and navigating QRS, staff training, and classroom layout suggestions.
Onsite assistance frequency	Varies
Length of onsite sessions	Varies
Total duration of onsite assistance:	Ongoing
Formal approval for onsite assistance provider:	No
Target population for onsite assistance:	All providers

Financial Incentives

A variety of strategies may be used to provide financial incentives to providers to participate in the QRS or to support quality improvement efforts. This section provides information about different financial incentives.

Tiered reimbursement:	No
Quality award/bonus:	No
Startup award:	No
Scholarship (T.E.A.C.H)	No
Wage enhancement	No
Retention bonus:	No
Improvement grants:	The Quality Improvement Resource Support funds go to the local coalitions working with the programs. The local coalition will make purchase of services (mentoring, training) or equipment and materials that are equivalent to \$1,500 per participating center based on their quality

improvement plan.

The Quality Incentive Fund is an incentive award for programs whose enrollment of subsidized children is 25% or more. This amount is a one-time incentive that is given to the early childhood program based on their star rating and the number of children served at the site. This amount varies from \$500 – 3250 per program.

Comments on financial incentives:

The financial incentives of the Star Quality Initiative are not directly given to programs. Instead, they are handled at the higher level of the local coalition, where it is then distributed to programs (by the discretion of the coalition) based on the needs of their quality improvement plan.

Administration Details

This section provides details about the QRS administration and funding.

QRS lead :	Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (non-profit) & Virginia Department of Social Services - Office of Early Childhood Development (State agency)
QRS lead type:	State government agency and non-profit organization
Overall funding amount for most recent fiscal year:	\$1.2 million
Overall funding sources:	Child Care Development Fund, Foundation (for observer trainings), State (stimulus funds), and local funds
	Note: Funding amounts and sources have changed over the past 3 years of pilot implementation.

Partners

This section provides information about the roles and responsibilities of partners in the QRS.

Partner 1 type :	University
Partner 1 name:	Training and Technical Assistance Center (T/TAC) at Virginia Commonwealth
Partner 1 function:	The other function includes providing coordination of trainings of raters and mentors (which focus on using inclusive practices for children with special needs).
Work plan in place:	No

Linkage of QRS with Other Systems

This section provides information about how the QRS is linked with other systems/standards including child care subsidies, professional development, state early learning guidelines, and core knowledge /competencies for providers.

Child care subsidies :	Yes
Description:	The Quality Incentive Fund is an award for programs whose enrollment of subsidized children is 25% or more.
Professional development:	No
Incorporation of other standards:	Yes
Description:	<p>Milestones of Child Development and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, Head Start and Licensing Standards</p> <p>The selection of observation tools and the quality indicators were developed based on the content of these documents. These documents are foundational for Early Childhood Education quality in Virginia and any tools or standards selected has to align with these documents. They must mirror or exceed expectation for quality.</p>

Evaluation

Status of evaluation :	Ongoing
List research questions for ongoing evaluation:	One community, the Smart Beginnings South Hampton Roads coalition, is working on an evaluation with the Educational Policy Institute and the University of Virginia's Center for the Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). They are conducting a child outcomes evaluation. The evaluation is examining the impact of Star Quality participation on children's school readiness. It is also evaluating the level of effectiveness of the mentoring and the intensity of mentoring on the children enrolled in their centers. This evaluation for the South Hampton Roads area is still in the development stage.
Evaluator type:	External
Evaluator name (if external)	Education Policy Institute, University of Virginia
If external, was RFP issued:	Yes

Published reports to date :	"Improving quality in early childhood education: Tiered reimbursement, quality ratings, and rated licenses" (2005) Voices for Virginia's Children: Richmond, VA. http://www.vakids.org/pubs/Archives/ECE/tiered_reimbursement_7_05.pdf
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Key Contacts

Category :	Overall management
Contact name:	Zelda Boyd
Organization:	Office of Early Childhood Development
Email:	Zelda.Boyd@dss.virginia.gov
Phone:	Note: Kathy Glazer has left her position and is no longer the contact for Star Quality Initiative. Zelda Boyd is now the main contact at the Office of Early Childhood Development.

References

Virginia Office of Early Childhood Development and the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (2009). Standards for Classroom Based Programs. http://www.smartbeginnings.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={56DE82A5-9F30-4390-B6CD-4C90C8D2D282}

Virginia Office of Early Childhood Development and the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (2009). Glossary of Terms. http://www.smartbeginnings.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={56DE82A5-9F30-4390-B6CD-4C90C8D2D282}.

Virginia Office of Early Childhood Development and the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (2009). Frequently Asked Questions. http://www.smartbeginnings.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={56DE82A5-9F30-4390-B6CD-4C90C8D2D282}.



Standards for Classroom-Based Programs

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

Standard 1: Education, Qualifications, and Training (*assessed by documentation*)

Standard 2: Interactions (*assessed by observation using CLASS*)

Standard 3: Structure (*assessed by documentation*)

Standard 4: Environment and Instruction (*assessed by observation using Environment Rating Scales- ERS and documentation*)

- ❖ In order to achieve Star Level 1 or higher, participating programs must be in good standing with all requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Licensing Standards, Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards) including, but not limited to, those set forth in this document. In good standing indicates that while there may be noncompliance with one or more standards that represent a minor or minimal risk or violation, compliance clearly and obviously exists with the standards as a whole.
- ❖ In all standard areas, if minimum requirements of the regulating authority are more stringent than those set forth by the Star Quality Initiative, those set forth by the regulating authority supersede the Star Quality Initiative requirements.
- ❖ Each Star level builds upon the previous level; unless otherwise specified, each successive level includes requirements listed in the previous level.

STANDARD 1: EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING (Assessed by documentation)

Part 1: Staff Education and Qualifications

	Rising Star	1 ★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆	2 ★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆	3 ★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆	4 ★ ★ ★ ★	5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Director Qualifications	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VA Board of Education Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-year community college certificate in a child-relevant field with a minimum of 30 total credit hours AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment 	At least 75% with an: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate degree or higher in relevant field w/minimum of 12 credit hours of child-related coursework AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment 	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B.S./B.A. degree or higher in relevant field w/minimum of 12 credit hours of child-related coursework AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment 	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master's degree or higher in relevant field with a minimum of 12 credit hours of child-related coursework AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 2 years programmatic experience with 1 year in a supervisory capacity in a child-related environment
Teacher Qualifications	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Development Associate or equivalent 120-clock-hr credential OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community college certificate in child-related field with a minimum of 12 total credit hours 	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-year community college certificate in child-related field with a minimum of 30 total credit hours AND at least 50% of these teachers with an: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate degree or higher in child-related field 	At least 75% with an: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate degree or higher in child-related field AND at least 50% of these teachers with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B.S./B.A. degree or higher in child-related field 	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B.S./B.A. degree or higher in child-related field
Assistant Teacher Qualifications	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum high school program completion or equivalent AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 clock hours or more of approved training 	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48 clock hours or more of approved training, AND at least 50% of these assistant teachers with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Development Associate or equivalent 120-clock-hour credential 	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Development Associate or equivalent 120-clock-hour credential OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community college certificate in child-related field with a minimum of 12 total credit hours 	At least 75% with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-year community college certificate in child-related field w/minimum of 30 total credit hrs, AND at least 50% of these assistant teachers with an: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate degree or higher in a child-related field

Part 2: Ongoing Training/Professional Development						
	Rising Star	1	2	3	4	5
		★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆	★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆	★ ★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
All Staff (Directors, Teachers, and Asst. Teachers) Professional Development	Working to comply with requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 annual clock hours of approved training¹ • New Staff Orientation training completed by all new staff within 30 days of start of employment • Annual training plan is developed for the program and/or each staff member based on needs identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 annual clock hours of approved training¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 annual clock hours of approved training, including training¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 annual clock hours of approved training¹
Director Professional Development	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 points – Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 points – Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 points – Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 points – Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A)
All Instructional Staff (Teachers and Assistant Teachers) Professional Development	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One staff member in each classroom has current first aid and CPR certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All instructional staff have current CPR and First Aid certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All instructional staff have current CPR and First Aid certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All instructional staff have current CPR and First Aid certification, appropriate for the ages of children in care
Teacher Professional Development	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 points - Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 points - Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 points - Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 points – Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A)
Assistant Teacher Professional Development	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 points – Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 points - Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 points - Annual professional development activities (outlined in Appendix A)

¹Approved training topics include, but are not limited to: child development, interactions with children, behavior management, observation and assessment, developmentally-appropriate curriculum, inclusive practices, family involvement and communication, transition practices, health and safety (including medication administration, immunization requirements, daily health observation, and compliance with OSHA blood borne pathogens regulations, disease prevention, emergency preparedness), nutrition, and child abuse detection and prevention.

STANDARD 2: INTERACTIONS (Assessed by observation using CLASS)						
	Rising Star	1	2	3	4	5
		★ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆	★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆	★ ★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Emotional Support (ES) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Climate (T, PreK-3) • Negative Climate (T, PreK-3) • Teacher Sensitivity (T, PreK-3) • Regard for Student Perspectives (T, PreK-3) 	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS ES Scale Score of 3 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS ES Scale Score of 4 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS ES Scale Score of 5 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS ES Scale Score of 6 or higher
Classroom Organization (CO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior Management (PreK-3), Behavior Guidance (T) • Productivity (PreK-3) • Instructional Learning Formats (PreK-3), Facilitation of Learning and Development (T) 	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS CO Scale Score of 3 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS CO Scale Score of 4 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS CO Scale Score of 5 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS CO Scale Score of 6 or higher
Instructional Support (IS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept Development (PreK-3) • Quality of Feedback (PreK-3) • Language Modeling (T, PreK-3) 	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS IS Score of 3 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS IS Score of 4 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS IS Score of 5 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLASS IS Score of 6 or higher

STANDARD 3: STRUCTURE (Assessed by documentation and observation)

	Rising Star	1	2	3	4	5
		★☆☆☆☆	★★☆☆☆	★★★☆☆	★★★★★	★★★★★
Staff to Child Ratio And Group Size	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	INFANTS Birth to 12 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:4 • Max group size of 8 YOUNG TODDLERS 12-24 mo. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:5 • Max group size of 10 TODDLERS 24-36 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:6 • Max group size of 12 THREE-YR- OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:9 • Max group size of 18 FOUR-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:10 • Max group size of 20 FIVE-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:12 • Max group size of 24 	INFANTS Birth to 12 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:4 • Max group size of 8 YOUNG TODDLERS 12-24 mo. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:5 • Max group size of 10 TODDLERS 24-36 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:6 • Max group size of 12 THREE-YR- OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:8 • Max group size of 16 FOUR-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:9 • Max group size of 18 FIVE-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:11 • Max group size of 22 	INFANTS Birth to 12 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:3 • Max group size of 6 YOUNG TODDLERS 12-24 mo. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:4 • Max group size of 8 TODDLERS 24-36 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:5 • Max group size of 10 THREE-YR- OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:7 • Max group size of 14 FOUR-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:9 • Max group size of 18 FIVE-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:10 • Max group size of 20 	INFANTS Birth to 12 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:3 • Max group size of 6 YOUNG TODDLERS 12-24 mo. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:4 • Max group size of 8 TODDLERS 24-36 mos. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:4 • Max group size 8 THREE-YR-Olds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:7 • Max group size of 14 FOUR-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:8 • Max group size of 16 FIVE-YR-OLDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:10 • Max group size of 20

STANDARD 4: ENVIRONMENT AND INSTRUCTION (Assessed by observation using ERS and documentation)

Overall Learning Environment Subscales: space & furnishings; personal care routines; activities; language-reasoning; interaction; program structure; and parents and staff	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 3 with no classroom scoring below 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 4 with no classroom scoring below 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 5 with no classroom scoring below 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum average Environmental Rating Scale score of 6 with no classroom scoring below 5
Transition Practices	Working to comply with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	In good standing with the requirements of the regulating authority (e.g., VDSS Licensing Standards, VBOE Regulations, Head Start Performance Standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to the program for families • Written plan for supporting individual children with special needs (medical, educational, or behavioral) • General information to parents on transitioning children to another setting (information on kindergarten registration, school readiness activities, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group meeting for parents to provide information regarding a child's transition to another setting, including how parents can support this process • Age appropriate activities to prepare children for transitions (sharing stories, reading books about transitions, visiting another classroom, visiting public school, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings with families to share specific information regarding the child's transition to another setting • Coordination with families and schools, programs, or agencies to transfer child records, including written information concerning child's abilities, learning styles, medical/safety concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition-related training for all teaching staff involved in child's transition

Annual Professional Development Options for Classroom-Based Providers

*Reference - Standard 1: Education, Qualifications, and Training
Part 2: Ongoing Training/Professional Development*

Option	Point Value Assignment
1. College Credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 points per credit hour
2. Professional Development Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For annual hours less than 28, 2.5 points per contact hour • For annual hours between 28 and 32, 32 and 36, or 36 and 40 <u>or</u> for annual hours over 40, 5 points per contact hour
3. Leadership Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching a College Level Course • Conducting Training • Mentorship or Peer Evaluation • Managing Lead Teachers' Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 points per credit hour taught • 5 points per contact hour of training • 5 points per contact hour spent mentoring or conducting peer evaluation • 5 points per hour of meeting
4. Professional Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation – 5 points per day • Presentation – 15 points per presentation
5. Early Childhood Professional Association Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership - 5 points per association • Association Officer – 25 points (e.g. President, Vice President) • Contribute article to association newsletter – 5 points per original article, up to 20 points
6. Professional Advisory or Task Force Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 points per membership
7. Personal and Professional Reflections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with a mentor • Completing a journal of observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 points per contact hour • 1 point per entry, up to 15 points
8. Publications: Article, Textbook Review, or Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 points per article, narrative, or report in a journal or other scholarly publication • 30 points per textbook review • 120 points per book