



Because Early Experiences Last A Lifetime

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Numbers Matter	Qualified Administrators & Teachers Matter	Ongoing Professional Development Matters	Administrative Supports Matter	Children's Experiences Matter
<u>RATIO, GROUP SIZE</u> (Group size twice the ratio)	<u>STAFF EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS</u>	<u>SPECIALIZED TRAINING</u>	<u>ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES</u>	<u>EARLY LEARNING</u>
<p>STEP THREE</p> <p>At no time may group size for children 0 - 18 months exceed 10 children.</p> <p>Infants/Toddlers 0-12 months - 1:4 or 2:8 or 3:10 12-18 months – 1:5 18-36 months - 1:6</p> <p>Preschoolers 36-48 months - 1:9 48-60 months - 1:10</p> <p>Family or Mixed Age Groups 0-36 months - 1:4 36-60 months - 1:10</p> <p>School-Agers 5-15 years - 1:15</p> <p>* Alternate Pathway Available (National Accreditation or overall ERS score of 5)</p>	<p>Administrator has an AA in ECE or the Career Pathways Level 3</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Each classroom has a Lead Teacher with an AA in ECE or related field for school age teachers or Career Pathways Level 3</p> <p>AND</p> <p>50% of Classrooms have Assistant Teachers who have a CDA or Career Pathways Level 2</p>	<p>Administrators, Lead Teachers, and Assistant Teachers receive a minimum of 15 clock hours of specialized training annually.</p> <p>The specialized training must be approved and training hours must be job specific and/or related to the age group of children with which the teacher works.</p>	<p>Program Planning/Evaluation A program action plan is completed and implemented based on a PAS self-assessment and input from parents and staff.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Human Resource Development Administrator and all teachers must have a professional development plan that at a minimum includes a performance appraisal, goals, and a plan for completing specialized training.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Benefits/Compensation 3 of the following: Salary structure based on education and length of employment; employer offers and/or pays a portion of health insurance; 5 days of paid leave; Paid professional membership; Paid specialized training/tuition; Retirement fund; Discount on child care; T.E.A.C.H.</p>	<p>Program has an identified curriculum and planning is aligned with the Early Learning Content Standards, and/or Infant Toddler Guidelines, and/or Ohio's K-12 Standards, utilizing on-going child assessment data.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>All children (except school age) receive a developmental screening within 60 days of enrollment. Referrals, if needed, are completed within 90 days.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Program creates and implements an annual classroom action plan based on self-assessment results using the ITERS, ECERS-R, ELLCO, or SACERS.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Children's progress is formally communicated with parents.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>A formal transition process is utilized for when children enter, move within, and/or exit the program.</p>
<p>STEP TWO</p> <p>At no time may group size for children 0- 12 months exceed 10 children.</p> <p>Infants/Toddlers 0-12 months - 1:5 12-18 months – 1:6 18-36 months - 1:7</p> <p>Preschoolers 36-48 months - 1:10 48-60 months - 1:10</p> <p>Family or Mixed Age Groups 0-36 months - 1: 5 36-60 months - 1:10</p> <p>School-Agers 5-15 years – 1:16</p> <p>* Alternate Pathway Available (National Accreditation or overall ERS score of 5)</p>	<p>Administrator has an AA in ECE or Career Pathways Level 3</p> <p>AND</p> <p>50% of Lead Teachers have an AA in ECE or related field for school age teachers or Career Pathways Level 3</p>	<p>Administrators, Lead Teachers, and Assistant Teachers receive a minimum of 10 clock hours of specialized training annually.</p> <p>The specialized training must be approved and training hours must be job specific and/or related to the age group of children with which the teacher works.</p>	<p>Program Planning/Evaluation A program action plan is completed and implemented based on a PAS self-assessment.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Human Resource Development Administrator and all teachers must have a professional development plan that at a minimum includes a performance appraisal, goals, and a plan for completing specialized training.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Benefits/Compensation 2 of the following: Salary structure based on education and length of employment; employer offers and/or pays a portion of health insurance; 5 days of paid leave; Paid professional membership; Paid specialized training/tuition Retirement fund; Discount on child care; T.E.A.C.H.</p>	<p>Program has an identified curriculum and planning is aligned with the Infant/Toddler Guidelines and/or Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards and/or Ohio's K-12 Standards.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>All children (except school age) receive a developmental screening within 60 days of enrollment. Referrals, if needed, are completed within 90 days.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Each classroom conducts an annual self-assessment using a tool relevant to the age of children served (ITERS, ECERS-R, ELLCO, SACERS).</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Children's progress is formally communicated with parents.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>A formal transition process is utilized for when children enter, move within, and/or exit the program.</p>
<p>STEP ONE</p> <p>At no time may group size for children 0- 12 months exceed 10 children.</p> <p>Infants/Toddlers 0-12 months - 1:5 or 2:10 12-18 months - 1:6 18-36 months - 1:7 30-36 months – 1:8</p> <p>Preschoolers 36-48 months - 1:12 48-60 months - 1:14</p> <p>Family or Mixed Age Groups 0-36 months - 1:5 36-60 months - 1:12</p> <p>School-Agers 5-15 years - 1:18</p>	<p>Administrator has a CDA or Career Pathways Level 2</p> <p>AND</p> <p>One Lead Teacher with an AA in ECE or Career Pathways Level 3</p> <p>Stand alone school age programs must have one Lead Teacher with an AA in related field or Career Pathways Level 3</p>	<p>Administrators, Lead Teachers, and Assistant Teachers receive a minimum of 5 clock hours of specialized training annually.</p> <p>The specialized training must be approved and training hours must be job specific and/or related to the age group of children with which the teacher works.</p>	<p>Program Planning/Evaluation Administrator conducts a self-assessment using the PAS.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Human Resource Development Administrator and all teachers must have a professional development plan that at a minimum includes a performance appraisal and a plan for completing specialized training.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Benefits/Compensation 1 of the following: Salary structure based on education and length of employment; employer offers and/or pays a portion of health insurance; 5 days of paid leave; Paid professional membership; Paid specialized training/tuition; Retirement fund; Discount on child care; T.E.A.C.H.</p>	<p>Programs serving preschoolers must have a copy of Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines available for use.</p> <p>At a minimum one copy of Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards, and/or Ohio's Infant Toddler Guidelines, and/or Ohio's K-12 Standards are available for use in each classroom dependent on the age of children served.</p> <p>A formal transition process is utilized for when children enter, move within, and/or exit the program.</p>

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Questions & Answers



What is a quality rating system?

A quality rating system is a method to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings (NCCIC 2006). Quality rating systems generally have the following five components: Standards, Accountability, Program and Practitioner outreach and support, Financial incentives linked to compliance with quality standards and Parent and Consumer Education (Anne Mitchell).

How many states have quality rating systems?

12 states and the District of Columbia have quality rating systems. Ohio makes the 13th state to implement a quality rating system statewide.

What role does a quality rating system play in an early learning system?

A quality rating system is one component of an early learning system that links to other system components such as professional development, financing and accountability.

Why is quality important?

Because early experiences last a lifetime. The research is clear-high quality early care and education programs can help prepare children for success in school, work and life. James Heckman, Nobel Laureate and University of Chicago economics professor states "Learning starts in infancy, long before formal education begins, and continues throughout life. Recent research demonstrates how vitally important the early preschool years are for skill formation. Early learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success, just as early failure breeds later failure."

What is quality?

Research typically points to two dimensions of quality: early learning settings known as structural features, and process features. Structural features refer to the way in which the program is organized or structured, such as staff-to-child ratio and teacher qualifications. Process features refer to the positive interactions between children and others which support experiences that promote children's learning and development. (Catherine Scott-Little)

What factors promote quality?

There are a variety of program level supports and policy level supports that promote quality. Program level supports include the structural and process indicators listed above. In addition licensing compliance, enforcement and adequate funding are essential factors in supporting quality.

What is Step Up To Quality?

Step Up To Quality is a voluntary quality rating system which uses licensing as a foundation and sets a continuum of clearly defined levels (Steps) of increasing quality.

The benchmarks (Ratio/Group Size, Staff Education and Qualifications, Specialized Training, Administrative Practices and Early Learning) have indicators that must be achieved for each Step. These benchmarks and indicators have been selected as a result of a thorough review of the research literature and promising practices in other states. Current research confirms that early care and education programs that focus on improving the following benchmarks: ratios, the formal education and ongoing professional development of teaching staff, administrative policies and curriculum do yield positive outcomes for children. The indicators for each benchmark do not represent an exhaustive list but rather the essential list of what matters most as programs achieve higher levels of quality.

Step Up To Quality has three Steps (levels) above Ohio's licensing standards. Each Step builds upon the one before it, therefore a program must meet all the indicators for each benchmark at each Step before progressing to the next Step. Each Step equates to a star rating. Step Up To Quality awards either one, two, or three stars for each of the steps, similar to how restaurants and hotels are rated.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

Programs are assessed and monitored by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Step Up To Quality Licensing Specialists. Thorough on-site verification visits are conducted to insure consistency among programs which provides increased accountability for parents.

Why does Ohio need a quality rating system?

There are approximately 4,200 programs serving 300,000 children every day in licensed settings across the state. Currently, there is no systematic way to distinguish the level of quality in these programs which hinders parents ability to make informed choices on behalf of their children. The goal is not to influence parents choice, but to inform it.

What is the difference between licensing standards and Step Up To Quality?

Ohio's licensing requirements establish the foundation for operating child care programs. These regulations are the minimum health and safety standards that must be met to operate legally. Compliance with licensing requirements ensure that children are kept healthy and safe. Step Up To Quality builds upon this foundation to support children's development and learning.

Why do the benchmarks in Step Up To Quality matter?

Ratios and group size matter because lower ratios mean fewer children per teacher which allows for more positive interactions and more opportunities for individual attention.

Administrator and teacher qualifications matter because a teacher's knowledge and understanding of early childhood development is central to the quality of care children receive. Specialized training matters because research clearly shows that more education and training particularly with specialization in early childhood development are related to program quality and the sensitivity of interactions between teachers and children.

Administrative supports matter because good teachers work in good programs. Programs, policies and practices directly affect the overall work climate and can either support or undermine teacher efforts. Good teachers who are treated professionally and compensated adequately are essential if all children are going to be prepared for school and for life.

Children's experiences matter because children who are in programs where they are kept safe from harm, nurtured emotionally and socially, whose interests are considered and supported, learn because they want to and not because they have to.

What is the goal of Step Up To Quality?

Because early experiences last a lifetime, improving quality which leads to improved outcomes for children supports school readiness and life success. Additionally, Step Up To Quality provides an easy to use tool for parents so they can choose the best early care and education programs for their children. To recognize provider achievement and reward success with quality achievement awards to help offset the higher cost of quality especially for those programs that serve low income children.

How is Step Up To Quality funded?

States are required to set aside at least 4% of their total Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) block grant to improve quality. In Ohio, approximately one-third of the total 4% is allocated for licensing. Two thirds support quality initiatives at the state and local level. Ohio has never spent more than 4% until this past year, Governor Taft, through an executive order, allocated \$15 million of TANF funding over three years for statewide expansion of Step Up To Quality. This additional funding will be used to provide programs quality achievement awards to assist in supporting and/or sustaining quality programming.

What lessons were learned during the pilot?

The most significant lesson we learned was there is a tremendous gap between our licensing standards and the benchmark indicators in Step One. A majority of programs need technical assistance in implementing systems to be compliant with licensing regulations before they can begin to put systems in place to support quality.

With a take up rate of 49%, obviously, programs see value in participating. Therefore, all efforts to provide programs with the supports they need to achieve higher levels of quality should be a priority.

Another key learning was that alignment between state initiatives must occur in order to leverage efforts for improved child outcomes.

What lessons were learned from the pilot research?

The most significant lesson we learned was that all three Steps provide a good level of quality as measured by the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales-Revised (ECERS-R).

Another key learning was that teacher qualifications and specialized training were the benchmarks keeping programs from achieving a higher Star rating. Therefore, resources are necessary to provide the infrastructure supports for programs to achieve higher levels of quality.

Finally, a majority of programs need assistance in implementing systems to be compliant with licensing regulations before they can sustain quality.

How does Step Up To Quality align with state and national standards?

A thorough review of Ohio's Early Learning Program Standards, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation standards, Early Head Start and Head Start performance standards and the National Institute Early Education Research (NIEER) standards was conducted. Every opportunity to align benchmark indicators, terms and timeframes to state and national standards was incorporated.

Why is Step Up To Quality voluntary and not mandatory?

Of the 13 quality rating systems in the country, only one is mandatory. There is a fine line between what states can require legislatively, due to child care constituencies and what they can promote over and above minimum health and safety requirements. Therefore, a voluntary system is an effective strategy, which encourages programs to achieve higher standards. It should be noted that there is a significant increase in cost to sustain quality.

Who can participate?

ODJFS licensed programs.

Will other programs be able to participate?

Yes, in the future, Type A's, Type B's and Public Pre-school programs will be able to participate. It has always been in the original plan of Step Up To Quality to include all programs.

Why should a program participate?

Because quality matters. Programs have nothing to lose and everything to gain by participating. Regardless of where a program may be on the quality continuum, there is a Step that can accommodate their progress; from Emerging Stars all the way up to a Three Star rating. Step Up To Quality provides programs a roadmap to quality improvement. There are incentives and supports tied to each Step that can support movement to the next Step. Finally, it provides programs the community recognition they deserve for their continued commitment towards achieving higher quality standards.

Why are incentives and supports important?

Incentives and supports are important due to the increased expense to achieve quality and sustain it. Although incentives and supports can't underwrite the entire cost, they can be of great assistance.

What incentives and supports are available for Rated programs?

Rated programs are eligible to receive an annual quality achievement award as long as they have no serious risk non-compliances and maintain Step requirements. The amount of these awards are based Step and on program capacity and the ratio of enrollment to number of subsidized children. 25% of the annual award must be spent on one or more of the following: Critical Repair Grants; Quality Improvement Grants; Early Learning Resource Grants; Accreditation Grants

In addition, all participating programs have access to T.E.A.C.H. scholarships.

What are the conditions for program participation?

Programs are required to adhere to policies and procedures as set forth by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. In addition, programs may be asked to participate in evaluation and research efforts.

Why is research so important?

Research is important because it is the basis for continuous improvement. If the goals of Step Up To Quality are to be achieved then the implementation of the program needs to be evaluated, as well as the impact of the program.

Are there any reasons why a program would be ineligible to participate?

Yes. Programs that have received a notice of intent to revoke from the Director of ODJFS within 48 months prior to the date of the application are ineligible.

Are there any reasons why a program would be ineligible to apply for a Star Rating?

Yes. Programs with serious risk non-compliances for 12 months prior to the date of the application cannot apply for a Star Rating. ([Click here for the serious risk non-compliances](#))

Why is licensing compliance required in order to apply for a Rating?

Licensing compliance is the foundation that supports quality. States with quality rating systems all have licensing compliance requirements. In addition, the new National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation Standards requires programs to be in good standing in licensing over the past 12 months. Programs now must submit their licensing inspection reports with their application materials.

When can a program with a serious risk non-compliance participate in Step Up To Quality?

Programs who have had one regular licensing inspection without serious risk non-compliances may apply to be an Emerging Star.

What is an Emerging Star?

An Emerging Star is a program that has demonstrated a commitment, by having one regular licensing inspection without any serious risk non-compliances. Only full-time programs are eligible to be Emerging Stars, because part-time programs only have one visit per year.

What supports do Emerging Stars receive?

The goal of Emerging Stars is for them to achieve a Star Rating and to maintain it through renewal. Therefore, Emerging Stars will receive two technical assistance visits per month up to 12 months. It is expected that by this time Emerging Star programs become rated or they become ineligible. After Emerging Stars earn their Rating, they will continue to receive technical assistance quarterly until they successfully renew their Rating.

How does a program apply for a Star Rating?

Go to ODJFS website to complete the online application: ifs.ohio.gov/cdc/stepUpQuality

Go to the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA) website to complete the online Professional Registry Profiles: www.ohpdnetwork.org/

How does a program apply to be an Emerging Star?

The process is the same as programs applying for a Star Rating. The application has a box for Emerging Star.

When can a program who is an Emerging Star apply for a Star Rating?

An Emerging Star can apply for a Star Rating once they have had two consecutive regular licensing inspections without serious risk non-compliances.

Who completes the application?

The administrator for the program that is applying must complete the application. If an administrator is named on more than one license, the administrator must complete an application for each program that is applying.

How do programs decide for which Step they are eligible?

The program should begin at Step One and check off every indicator that the program meets. If the program meets all the indicators in Step One, proceed to Step Two and if appropriate, to Step Three. Apply for the highest Step in which all indicators are met. **Apply for the Step you qualify for today, not what you may be able to attain in the future.** Programs can request a change at the time of the verification visit, if they are able to meet the benchmark indicators.

Is there an alternate pathway for meeting the ratio group size benchmark?

Yes. For Steps Two and Three. Programs in Step One who cannot meet the ratios for Step Two but can meet all other benchmark indicators in Step Two can earn a Two Star Rating if they are either accredited or have an overall environmental rating score of five. The same is true for programs in Step Two who cannot meet the ratios in Step Three, but meet all the other benchmark indicators in Step Three, they too can earn a Three Star Rating if they are either accredited or have an overall environmental rating score of five.

Is there an alternate pathway for meeting the administrator and/or teacher qualification benchmark?

Yes. The career pathway levels are accepted in order to meet benchmark indicators. Information about career pathways can be found in the [appendix](#).

What happens after a program submits their application?

The program is screened to assure there have been no serious risk non-compliances in the past 12 months. If the program has had a serious risk non-compliance in the past 12 months, they will receive a letter stating they are ineligible for a Star Rating. If the program has not had a serious risk non-compliance in the past 12 months, they are considered pending until a registry report is generated stating that all required staff have submitted professional development profiles. Once the registry report is received, the program will receive a letter stating that an unannounced verification visit will occur within 90 days.

When will programs receive their Step verification visit?

An unannounced verification visit will occur within 90 days of the date of the Step verification visit letter.

Who conducts the verification visit?

There are dedicated staff in each licensing field office whose sole responsibility is Step Up To Quality. They are Step Up To Quality Licensing Specialists who have been trained to reliability and follow established protocols to ensure statewide consistency.

What happens if prior to the Step verification visit a licensing inspection or complaint investigation documents serious risk non-compliances?

The program could reapply once they have had two consecutive licensing inspections without serious risk non-compliances or apply to be an Emerging Star after they have one licensing inspection without serious risk non-compliances.

What happens if prior to the Step verification visit a change occurs and the program no longer meets one or more indicators, such as teacher qualifications, etc.?

The program must notify the Step Up Licensing Specialist by phone within three business days. The program can reapply when they are able to meet benchmark indicators.

What happens if prior to the Step verification visit a staffing change occurs but it does not interfere with meeting the indicators?

The program must notify the Step Up Licensing Specialist by phone, and submit a Professional Registry Profile for the new employee within three business days.

What happens if a part time program closes for the summer prior to their verification visit?

The verification visit will occur within 90 days after the program reopens.

What can a program expect during the Step verification visit?

The Step Up Licensing Specialist will verify benchmark indicators utilizing both direct observation and a documentation review. There is specific evidence that is required to verify benchmark indicators. Information regarding preparation for your verification visit can be found elsewhere in this document.

What happens if the administrator is not available when the unannounced verification visit takes place?

All licensed programs are required to have a designee. Therefore, the program's named designee will proceed with the verification visit in the absence of the administrator.

What happens if during the verification visit a serious risk non-compliance occurs?

The visit will come to an end and the Step Up To Quality Licensing Specialist will file a report with the program's regular licensing specialist. The program will be ineligible to apply for a Star Rating until they have had two consecutive regular licensing inspections without serious risk non-compliances.

What happens if some of the indicators can not be verified during the Step verification visit?

The program can choose either to accept a lesser Step if all the indicators for that Step can be verified, if applicable, if not, the visit will come to an end and the program can reapply after six months from the date of the visit.

Can a program request a Step increase at the time of the verification visit?

Yes, if between the time of application submission and verification visit, indicators for a higher Step can be verified, a Step increase can be requested.

How and when will a program be notified if they are awarded a rating?

Programs awarded a Star Rating will receive written notification and their Step Up To Quality Certificate within 30 days.

How long is the Star Rating valid?

The Star Rating is valid for one year from the date of the Star Rating award letter.

What is the ongoing monitoring for Star Rated programs?

Star rated programs are monitored twice a year, through regular licensing. In addition, indicator and or administrative changes may prompt an additional verification visit.

How does a program apply for a higher Rating?

Programs can apply for a higher rating six months after the date of their current rating award. Programs apply for a higher rating using the online application and checking the box marked "change".

How does a program renew their rating?

Programs renew their rating by using the online application and checking the box marked "renewal". **Renewals are not automatic.** The rating will expire if the program does not apply to have their rating renewed.

Will there be marketing and parent education materials available to Star Rated programs?

Yes, marketing materials, such as banners, posters, and media kits will be available to Star Rated programs. The local resource and referral agency is responsible for delivering marketing materials.

Can a program lose their Star Rating?

Yes. Programs that have achieved a Star Rating will have their rating either suspended or removed when any of the following occur:

- Receipt of Notice of Intent to Revoke
- Serious risk non-compliances
- Program fails to maintain compliance with Star Rating indicators.

What is the difference between suspension and removal?

A suspension is for a minimum of 45 days and requires an unannounced verification visit. Removals result in the program being ineligible for a Star Rating for a minimum of 12 months. A

matrix detailing the criteria for both suspensions and removals can be found online at: jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/docs/ConsequenceRiskRules.pdf .

How does a program appeal a serious risk non-compliance?

The procedure is listed on the [Who To Call List](#), contained within this document.

Can a program have their Rating suspended more than once?

No. If a program has had their Rating suspended, then the next action would be a Rating removal.

What if there is a change in administrator?

When there is a change in administrator, the Rating may remain, depending on the results of a new verification visit. The program must notify the Step Up Licensing Specialist by phone within 3 business days, and follow up in writing, within 10 days of the change in administration. The new administrator must complete a professional registry profile.

What if there is a location change?

When there is a change in location, the Rating may remain, depending on the results of a new verification visit. The program must notify the Step Up Licensing Specialist by phone within 3 business days, and follow up in writing, 10 days prior to a change in location.

What if there is a change in ownership location?

A change in ownership requires new application. The program must notify the Step Up Licensing Specialist by phone within 3 business days, and follow up in writing, 10 days prior to a change in ownership.

What if a program closes?

If a Star Rated program closes, they need to notify the Step Up Licensing Specialist by phone within 3 business days prior to closure, so that all Step Up To Quality materials can be retrieved.



Glossary

Administrator(s) – Person(s) responsible for the day to day operations of a child care program as named on the ODJFS Child Care License. If more than one name is on the license, requirements apply to them as well.

Alternate Pathway for Ratio and Group Size-- Programs that can meet the benchmark indicators for the next step except for ratio and group size can earn a higher rating if they are either accredited or if they have an overall environmental rating scale score of at least 5.

Annual Classroom Action Plan – This plan documents the action steps the classroom teachers have identified based on their annual self assessment.

Annual Self Assessment – A classroom self assessment that is conducted annually using one of the following: ITERS-R; ECERS-R or ELLCO; SACCERS based on the age of the children in the classroom.

Assistant Teacher – Are defined as adults who work under the direct supervision of a teacher. Assistant Teachers can work independently in a teachers absence, but for the vast majority of time the Assistant Teacher works directly with the teacher in the same space, with the same children. Not cooks, bus drivers, and family service workers.

Associates Degree – To be counted in the Career Pathways, this two year degree must be from an accredited college.

Benchmarks – The following: ratio, group size, staff education and qualifications, specialized training, administrative practices and early learning are identified in the research literature as essential elements of quality.

Build Ohio – An alliance of groups and individuals working collaboratively on behalf of young children and their families. Together, members work to design and implement a comprehensive, well-integrated early care and education system, available to all Ohio children, age birth to five years. www.build-ohio.org

Career Pathways – An assigned level calculated by data in the Professional Development Registry. Data used to calculate professional designation is based on a combination of formal education, experience and ongoing professional development.

CCR&R – (Child Care Resource & Referral) Local child care resource & referral agencies providing services to families, early childhood professionals and communities statewide.

CDA – (Child Development Associate Credential) - To count in meeting benchmark indicators, the CDA can not be expired. www.cdacouncil.org

CEU's – Continuing Education Units.

CLASS – Classroom Assessment Scoring System. E-Mail: contact@classobservation.com

Clock hours – Sixty minutes equals one clock hour.

College transcripts – Official record of coursework issued by institutions of higher learning.

Corrective Action Plan – A plan submitted to the Step Up Licensing Specialist outlining steps to be taken to meet benchmark indicators.

Critical Repair Grants – Grants to improve the health and safety of the physical environment.

Curriculum – Goals for children's development and learning; experiences through which they will achieve those goals; what staff and families do to help children achieve goals; materials needed to support the implementation of curriculum.

Curriculum Standards – Assessment Alignment Tool – This tool, created by the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, is required in Steps Two and Three, in order to verify the early learning benchmark indicators.

Denial Letter – Letter explaining that a program is not eligible to participate in Step Up To Quality as a result of having received a Notice of Intent to Revoke within the past 48 months.

Developmental Screening -- Is a process to identify children who may have or be at risk of a developmental delay or disability and may need further evaluation.

Discount on Child Care – A workplace characteristic that provides free or reduced child care costs for employee's children.

Early Childhood Degree – May include human ecology, child development or family studies.

Early Language and Literacy Specialist – A person employed at institutions of higher learning responsible for providing Ohio Department of Education approved language and literacy training. Language and literacy training delivered by a Literacy Specialist is approved specialized training for preschool teachers.

Early Learning Initiative – (ELI) The Early Learning Initiative is a partnership between the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Ohio Department of Education that supports Ohio's low income working families, while at the same time strengthens their children's development and learning, so they will be school-ready. This initiative replaced state-funded Head Start.

Early Learning Resource Grants – Grants for the sole purpose of purchasing curriculum and/or assessment tools.

ECERS-R – (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised) - An assessment tool that measures environmental indicators of quality in preschool classrooms.

http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/ecers_frame.html

ECERS-R Profile Report – The report given to programs after the ECERS-R has been completed identifying the score for each indicator on the scale.

ELLCO – (Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation) - An assessment tool used to assess environmental factors and instructional practices related to early literacy and language development. The SERRC's and CCR&R staff have been trained on this instrument.

<http://www.pbrookes.com/store/books/smith-ellco/>

Emerging Stars – Programs who have at least one regular licensing visit without serious risk non-compliances may apply to be an Emerging Star. Programs can only be Emerging Stars once.

Employee Handbook – A handbook for employees that includes personnel policies and procedures.

Family/Mixed Age Groupings – A group of mixed-aged children that adheres to staff:child ratios for the youngest child in the group.

Formal Orientation – A written, standardized plan for the orientation of new employees.

Formal Transition Process – A written plan that outlines how children are transitioned into a program, within a program, and when they leave a program.

High School Diploma – A staff person counted in meeting staff:child ratios must have a high school diploma. There must be evidence or documentation of the high school diploma. Documentation may include: a copy of the actual diploma or a college transcript, naming the employee's high school, or a copy of their degree.

Indicator – Specific item under each benchmark that must be verified in order to receive a Star Rating.

Infant – A child aged birth to 18 months.

Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) -- An assessment tool that measures environmental indicators of quality in infant and toddler classrooms.

http://www.fpg.unc.edu/products/product_detail.cfm?apubsID=530

Infant Toddler Guidelines Training – This is training specifically aligned to Ohio's Infant Toddler Guidelines. The training consists of seven modules for a total of 21 hours. This is the only training that meets the specialized training requirement for infant and toddler care teachers.

Infant Toddler Specialist -- Infant Toddler Specialists are available in each CCR&R. They are primarily responsible for providing Infant Toddler Guidelines Training.

Inservice Training – One quarter hour of college coursework translates into ten clock hours of inservice training. One semester hour of college coursework translates into fifteen clock hours of inservice training.

Kindergarten-Age Eligible – The date in which a child turns five years old and is eligible to enroll in kindergarten, based on school district of residence policy.

Language and Literacy Development Training – Evidence based language and literacy training that has been approved by ODJFS and has occurred after the creation of Ohio’s Early Learning Content Standards (2002) such as: QNet Literacy Series, ELLCO Training, Literacy Toolkit Training, Preschool Core Training, Get it, Got it, Go! Training. Sessions at either the ODE/OAEYC Conferences, and/or college coursework. To find out if training is approved that is not listed above, go to the [Who to Call When](#) listing in this document.

Lead Teacher – Lead Teachers are defined as those adults who have the primary responsibility. A group or classroom of children is defined as those children who are assigned for most of the day to a specific teacher and who occupy an individual classroom or well defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger group or area. The individual with the highest educational qualifications who is regularly assigned for a minimum of 3 ½ hours per day, to teach a specific group of children; who in addition, is counted in meeting the required staff:child ratios.

Lesson Plan – The detailed written plan of daily activities to support children’s development and learning.

NAEYC – (National Association for the Education of Young Children) – The largest member organization of early childhood educators dedicated to improving the quality of programs for children from birth to grade three. <http://www.naeyc.org/>

NAEYC Accreditation - A process that recognizes programs for meeting and maintaining higher quality standards.

New Administrator Rules Training – ODJFS developed training for administrators. This training is required in order to meet the specialized training benchmark indicators for the administrator.

Notice of Intent to Revoke – Proposed Adjudication Order (PAO) – A letter from the Director of ODJFS that puts the program on notice of the department’s intent to take action against the application or license.

OAEYC – (Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children) – A state affiliate of NAEYC. <http://oaeyc.org/>

OCCRRA – (Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association) - A statewide non-profit agency that promotes positive development of children, especially in out-of-home learning environments. The membership of OCCRRA consists of 12 local resource & referral agencies who provide services to families, early childhood professionals and communities. <http://www.occrra.org>
Oversees Incentives and Supports.

ODE – Ohio Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness. www.ode.state.oh.us

ODJFS -- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Develops and oversees programs that provide health care, employment, economic assistance, child support, and services to families and children. jfs.ohio.gov/cdc

ODJFS In-Service Training Form – The prescribed form (JFS 01307) that is used to document required training hours.

ODJFS Licensing Standards – Ohio's minimum health and safety requirements for licensed child care programs. jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/

Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards – A framework for curriculum and instructional planning for pre-kindergarten teachers. There are early learning content standards in English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies that align to the K-12 standards. www.ode.state.oh.us/

Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines – These are guidelines developed by the Ohio Department of Education, which define the program elements that public preschools and Early Learning Initiative programs must follow.

Ohio's Infant Toddler Guidelines – These are guidelines that outline the developmental milestones for infants and toddlers that were written with the support of WestEd's Program for Infant Toddler Care staff. <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/InfantToddler.pdf>

On-Going Child Assessment System – Regularly and continually observing and recording children's behavior and progress, such as: developmental checklists, anecdotal records, and portfolios, etc., in order to help in the design of instructional activities that support a range of developmental levels across all domains.

Paid Leave – Holiday, sick, vacation, maternity, etc. Five days annually, for full time staff; paid leave may be pro-rated for part time staff.

Pending Application – Applications are pending until Step Up Licensing Specialists receives the registry report stating that required staff have completed professional registry profiles.

Performance Appraisal – A standardized, written assessment tool used to identify strengths and areas for improvement that at a minimum, outlines goals for the next evaluation period.

Preschooler – A child who is at least three years old, but is not kindergarten age-eligible.

Professional Development Plan – A written, individualized plan used to document the ongoing training and professional development needs of staff, related to the meeting of specific performance goals which is updated at least annually. A sample form is available on the Bureau's website jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/stepUpQuality.stm

Professional Development Registry – A computer based system that compiles the profiles of individuals in the early care and education field and calculates, based on experience, training and/or credentials a career pathways level for each professional.

Professional Membership – Membership, paid for by the program, to organizations such as: NAEYC, and Zero to Three. This applies to full time teaching staff.

Professional Registry Profile – A profile that must be completed for all Lead and Assistant Teachers, including the administrator(s) that must be submitted with the application packet.

Program Action Plan – This is a plan developed by the administrator based on the results of their self-assessment using the Program Administrator Scale.

Program Administrator Scale (PAS) -- An instrument used to assess a program's administrative policies, procedures and practices.

Program Assessment Rating Scale (PARS) -- developed by WestEd for infant toddler programs.

Quality Improvement Grants -- To provide developmentally appropriate materials and furnishings to support child development across all domains.

Rating Verification Visit – The visit whereby the Step Up Licensing Specialist will validate information submitted on the Program Verification Form.

Rating Verification Visit Letter – Letter explaining that the program is eligible for a Step verification visit, as a result of meeting all eligibility requirements.

Related Field for School Age Teachers – Related fields may be elementary, middle or secondary education, physical education, counseling, etc.

R&R Step Up Specialist – The CCR&R staff person who is dedicated to working with programs in local communities.

Renewal Visit -- Ratings are valid for one year and programs need to apply to have their rating renewed. The renewal visit is the same as the original verification visit.

Research-based – Research that is based on the neuro-biological, behavioral and social sciences that has led to major advances in understanding the conditions that influence whether children get off to a promising or worrisome start in life.

Retirement Fund – The program provides employees the opportunity to contribute to a fund specifically set aside for retirement.

Re-verification Visit – The visit whereby the Step Up Licensing Specialist will verify indicator(s) that were not previously verified. In addition, staff:child ratios will be verified at any and all re-verification visits.

Salary Structure – A written process for compensating staff based on education and length of employment.

School Age Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACCERS) – An assessment tool that measures environmental indicators of quality in school age classrooms.

School-Ager – A child who is in school or is school-eligible based on the entry requirements for the school district of residence, but is less than 15 years old.

School Readiness Solutions Group – The State Board of Education convened the School Readiness Solutions Group, directing it to create a compelling road map that can be followed to ensure that any Ohio child has access to high-quality early learning opportunities.

<http://www.schoolreadiness.ohio.gov/>

Serious Risk Non-Compliances -- House Bill 11 required the Department of Job and Family Services to put forth recommendations for fines and sanctions for programs that fail to comply with licensing requirements. A new initiative called “Regulation for the 21st Century” was created to embrace this charge. In phase one, a workgroup of key stakeholders put forth the serious risk non-compliances that would lead to fines and sanctions. These became the initial eligibility requirements in order to become a Rated program. They are also the basis for either suspending or removing a Star Rating. jfs.ohio.gov/cdc

Special Education Regional Resource Program – (SERRC) Improves achievement of children & youth with disabilities by assisting educators & families in the development & delivery of specially designed instruction. <http://www.coserrc.org>

Specialized Training – Approved training for administrators, lead teachers and assistant teachers. This is an annual training requirement that is based on employee’s hire dates. [Specialized Training Guidance](#)

Star Rating Certificate – A certificate detailing the program’s achievement in meeting the indicators for the Step in which they applied.

Step 1 – Programs earn a 1 star rating for meeting all of the indicators in each of the benchmarks in this Step.

Step 2 - Programs earn a 2 star rating for meeting all of the indicators in each of the benchmarks in this Step.

Step 3 - Programs earn a 3 star rating for meeting all of the indicators in each of the benchmarks in this Step.

Step Up To Quality Licensing Specialist - ODJFS Child Care Licensing Specialist who is dedicated to working with programs in the Step Up To Quality program.

Step Up To Quality Evidence Binder – The evidence required by the program that must be available for review by the Step Up Licensing Specialist during the Rating verification visit.

T.E.A.C.H. -- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Ohio provides scholarships to teachers and family child care providers to earn degrees and credentials in Early Childhood Education. www.occrra.org/

Technical Assistance – CCR&Rs will assist programs with achieving higher benchmarks within the quality rating system through on-site coaching, mentoring and sharing. The goal is to eliminate barriers and to identify resources that can assist programs with achieving a higher quality rating.

Toddler – A child aged 18 to 36 months.

Tuition Reimbursement – The program provides at a minimum partial tuition reimbursement for college coursework for full time staff. T.E.A.C.H. support can be counted to meet this indicator.

Who To Call When

You have...	Contact	Timeframe
Questions about Licensing		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions regarding the Serious Risk Non-Compliances 	Step Up Licensing Specialist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I appeal licensing non-compliances? • See Rule 5101:2-12-07 (H) (1) & (2) 	Field Office Supervisor	In writing within 5 days of receipt of the licensing visit report
Questions about the Application Process	www.stepuptoquality.org OR Step Up Licensing Specialist	
Questions about completing the Professional Registry Profile	www.ohpdregistry.org OR OCCRRA staff	Professional Registry Profiles for administrators, lead teachers and assistant teachers must be completed in order for the application to be activated
How are Professional Registry profiles completed for new staff?	www.ohpdregistry.org OR OCCRRA staff	Within 30 days of hire
How are Professional Registry Profiles to be updated for current staff?	www.ohpdregistry.org OR OCCRRA staff	Ongoing – At least annually / prior to Quality Rating Renewal
Questions about Benchmarks Indicators		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of Benchmarks / Indicators 	Step Up Licensing Specialist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff changes at your program 	Step Up Licensing Specialist OR www.ohpdregistry.org	Contact within 3 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reporting of indicator changes 	Step Up Licensing Specialist	Contact within 3 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrective action plans for meeting the benchmarks / indicators 	Step Up Licensing Specialist	Submit in writing within 10 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence Binder Requirements 	Step Up Licensing Specialist	Must be complete at the time your application is submitted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where to access Infant Toddler Guidelines, Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards and/or Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines 	Local Resource & Referral Agency	
Questions regarding Specialized Training		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the required specialized trainings? 	www.stepuptoquality.org OR Step Up Licensing Specialist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I access required specialized trainings? 	Local Resource & Referral Agency	
Questions regarding quality achievement awards and/or quality improvement grants	www.occrra.org OR OCCRRA staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I apply for quality achievement awards and/or quality improvement grants 	www.occrra.org/ OR OCCRRA staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What items are allowable? 	www.occrra.org OR OCCRRA staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the status of my quality achievement awards and/or quality improvement grants 	www.occrra.org/ OR OCCRRA staff	
Questions regarding marketing materials	Local Resource & Referral Agency	



Statewide Contact List

County	Contact
All of Ohio	<p><u>Ohio Department of Job and Family Services</u> Bureau of Child Care and Development Terrie Hare, Chief E-mail: haret@odjfs.state.oh.us</p> <p>Jamie Gottesman, Assistant Chief E-mail: gottej@odjfs.state.oh.us</p> <p>Phone: (614) 466-1043 255 E. Main Street, 3rd Floor Columbus, OH 43215-5222 Web: jfs.ohio.gov/cdc</p>
All of Ohio	<p><u>Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association (OCCRRA)</u> Alicia Leatherman, Executive Director E-mail: aleatherman@occrra.org</p> <p>Elaine Fencl, Director of T.E.A.C.H. E-mail: efencl@occrra.org</p> <p>80 Jefferson Avenue Columbus, Ohio 43215 Phone:(614) 849-0500 877-547-6978 Fax: (614) 464-0386 Web: www.occrra.org</p>
All of Ohio	<p><u>Build Ohio</u> Chris Stoneburner, Build Ohio Project Director E-mail: chris@build-ohio.org</p> <p>2767 Chester Road Upper Arlington, OH 43221 Phone: 614-481-3108 Web: www.build-ohio.org/</p>

SDA	Counties	Contact Information
1	Defiance Henry Ottawa Williams Fulton Lucas Paulding Wood	YWCA of Greater Toledo/YW Child Care Connections Theresa Towner, CCR&R Director E-mail: cccdirector@ywcatoledo.org 1018 Jefferson Avenue Toledo, Ohio 43624 Phone: (419) 255-5519 800-632-3052 Fax: (419) 255-3349 Web: www.ywcatoledo.org CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Julie Malkoski E-mail: stepupspc@ywcatoledo.org Phone: (419) 255-5519 Fax: (419) 255-3349
2	Erie Lorain Seneca Huron Sandusky	Child Care Resource Program Jennifer Dodge, Executive Director E-mail: edirector@centurytel.net 5350 Oberlin Avenue Lorain, OH 44053 Phone: (440) 960-7187 Fax: (440) 960-7191 Web: www.ccrinc.com CCR&R Step Up Coordinator: Martha Deavers E-mail: marthad@centurytel.net Phone: (440) 960-7187 ext 28 Fax: (440) 960-7191
3	Ashtabula Geauga Cuyahoga Lake	Starting Point Billie Osborne-Fears, Executive Director E-mail: billie@starting-point.org 2000 East 9 th Street, Suite 1500 Cleveland, Ohio 44115-1301 Phone: (216) 575-0061 800-880-0971 Fax: (216) 575-0102 Web: www.starting-point.org CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Gloria Anderson E-mail: Gloria.anderson@starting-point.org Phone: (216) 575-0061 Fax: (216) 575-0102
4	Mahoning Portage Summit Medina Stark Trumbull	Child Care Connection Amy McLaughlin, Program Manager E-mail: amclaugh@infoinc.org 474 Grant Street Akron, Ohio 44311 Phone: (330) 376-7706 800-407-5437 Fax: (330) 253-1137 Web: www.infoinc.org/ CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Roxanne Lange E-mail: rlange@infoinc.org Phone: 800-407-5437 Fax: (330) 376-7706

SDA	Counties	Contact Information
5	Ashland Columbiana Harrison Jefferson Tuscarawas Carroll Coshocton Holmes Knox Wayne	<p>COAD Child Care Resource Network Maureen Boggs, Early Care & Education Division Director E-mail: mboggs@coadinc.org P.O. Box 787, 1 Pinchot Lane, Athens, Ohio 45701-0787 Phone: (740) 594-8499 ext. 225 Fax: (740) 592-5994</p> <p>Web: www.coadinc.org/</p> <p>CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Sherrie Guthrie E-mail: sguthrie@coadinc.org Phone: 330-364-8882 Fax: (330) 602-7569 Regional Office: COAD/CCRN 1243 Monroe Ave. NW. New Philadelphia, OH 44663</p>
6	Butler Clinton Warren Clermont Hamilton	<p>4C . . . for Children Sallie Westheimer, Executive Director E-mail: swestheimer@4cforchildren.org 1924 Dana Avenue Cincinnati, Ohio 45207 Phone: (513) 758-1200 Fax: (513) 221-0393</p> <p>Web: www.4cforchildren.org</p> <p>CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Debra Chin E-mail: dchin@4c-cinci.org Phone: (513) 221-0033 ext. 1230 Fax: (513) 221-0393</p>
7	Allen Hancock Mercer Van Wert Auglaize Hardin Putnam Wyandot	<p>YWCA of Greater Toledo/YW Child Care Connections Theresa Towner, CCR&R Director E-mail: cccdirector@ywcatoledo.org 616 S. Collett St., Suite 203 Lima, OH 45805 Phone:(419)225-5465 or 800-992-2916 Fax: (419)225-5313</p> <p>Web: www.ywcatoledo.org</p> <p>YW Child Care Connections-Lima 616 S. Collett St., Suite 203 Lima, OH 45805 Phone:(419)225-5465 or 800-992-2916 Fax: (419)225-5313</p>

SDA	Counties	Contact Information
8	Champaign Darke Greene Miami Preble	Clark Fayette Logan Montgomery Shelby
9	Delaware Franklin Madison Union	Fairfield Licking Pickaway
10	Athens Guernsey Monroe Muskingum Perry	Belmont Hocking Morgan Noble Washington

4C Miami Valley
Sallie Westheimer, Executive Director
E-mail: swestheimer@4cforchildren.org

1320 E. Fifth Street
Dayton, Ohio 45402
Phone: Phone: (937) 220-9660 **Fax:** (937) 220-9661

Web: www.4cforchildren.org

CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Tammy Vaughn
E-mail: tvaughn@4cforchildren.org
Phone: (937) 220-9660 **Fax:** (937) 220-9661

Action for Children
Diane Bennett, Executive Director
E-mail: dianeaforc@aol.com
78 Jefferson Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-224-0222, ext 149 **Fax:** 614-224-5437

Web: www.actionforchildren.org

CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Jana Lee Harris
E-mail: janaleeharris@actionforchildren.org
Phone: (614) 224-0222 ext. 137 **Fax:** (614) 224-5437

COAD Child Care Resource Network
Maureen Boggs, Early Care & Education Division Director
E-mail: mboggs@coadinc.org

P.O. Box 787, 1 Pinchot Lane
Athens, Ohio 45701-0787
Phone: (740) 594-8499 ext. 225 **Fax:** (740) 592-5994
Web: www.coadinc.org/

CCR&R Step Up Specialist: : Amy Beardmore
E-mail: abeardmore@coadinc.org
COAD/CCRN
1500 Greene Street
Marietta, OH 45750
Phone: (740)373-6996 or **800-577-2276** **Fax:**(740) 373-6829

SDA	Counties	Contact Information
11	Adams Gallia Jackson Meigs Ross Vinton Brown Highland Lawrence Pike Scioto	<p>COAD Child Care Resource Network Maureen Boggs, Early Care & Education Division Director E-mail: mboggs@coadinc.org P.O. Box 787, 1 Pinchot Lane, Athens, Ohio 45701-0787 Phone: (740) 594-8499 ext. 225 Fax: (740) 592-5994</p> <p>Web: www.coadinc.org/</p> <p>CCR&R Step Up Specialist: Carolyn Snively E-mail: csnively@coadinc.org P.O. Box 1756 500 Chillicothe Street, Suite 600 Portsmouth, Ohio 45662 Phone:(740)354-6527 or 800-577-2276 Fax (740) 353-1797</p>
12	Crawford Morrow Marion Richland	<p>Child Care Choices Michelle Moore, Executive Director E-mail : director@childcarechoices.org P.O. Box 246 Galion, OH 44833 Phone: (419) 468-7581 or 800-92CHILD Fax(419) 468-5764</p> <p>Web: www.childcarechoices.org</p> <p>CCR&R Step Up Coordinator: Michelle Moore E-mail: director@childcarechoices.org Phone: (419) 468-7581 or 800-92CHILD Fax(419) 468-5764</p>



Step Up Licensing Specialist Contact List

Licensing Field Offices are located in five regions of the state.
Please review this list to determine the region serving your county.

Counties Served	Regional Field Office	Contact Information
Belmont Columbiana Jefferson Stark Tuscarawas	Carroll Harrison Mahoning Summit Wayne	Canton Field Office 402 Second Street SE Suite 100 Canton, OH 44702-1108
Adams Butler Clinton Hamilton Montgomery Warren	Brown Clermont Greene Highland Preble	Cincinnati Field Office Pictoria Tower 1 225 Pictoria Drive Suite 500 Springdale, OH 45246
Ashtabula Geauga Lorain Portage	Cuyahoga Lake Medina Trumbull	Cleveland Field Office F.J. Lausche Bldg. 10 th Floor 615 West Superior Avenue Cleveland, OH 44113
Ashland Champaign Coshocton Darke Fairfield Franklin Guernsey Holmes Knox Licking Madison Meigs Monroe Morrow Noble Pickaway Richland Scioto Vinton	Athens Clark Crawford Delaware Fayette Gallia Hocking Jackson Lawrence Logan Marion Miami Morgan Muskingum Perry Pike Ross Union Washington	Columbus Field Office 255 E. Main Street, 1 st Floor Columbus, OH 43215
Allen Defiance Fulton Hardin Huron Mercer Paulding Sandusky Shelby Williams Wyandot	Auglaize Erie Hancock Henry Lucas Ottawa Putnam Seneca Van Wert Wood	Toledo Field Office One Government Program Room 913 Toledo, OH 43604

Field Office Supervisor Contact List

Counties Served	Regional Field Office	Supervisor Contact Information
Belmont Columbiana Jefferson Stark Tuscarawas	Carroll Harrison Mahoning Summit Wayne	Canton Field Office 402 Second Street SE Suite 100 Canton, OH 44702-1108
Adams Butler Clinton Hamilton Montgomery Warren	Brown Clermont Greene Highland Preble	Cincinnati Field Office Pictoria Tower 1 225 Pictoria Drive Suite 500 Springdale, OH 45246
Ashtabula Geauga Lorain Portage	Cuyahoga Lake Medina Trumbull	Cleveland Field Office F.J. Lausche Bldg. 10 th Floor 615 West Superior Avenue Cleveland, OH 44113
Ashland Champaign Coshocton Darke Fairfield Franklin Guernsey Holmes Knox Licking Madison Meigs Monroe Morrow Noble Pickaway Richland Scioto Vinton	Athens Clark Crawford Delaware Fayette Gallia Hocking Jackson Lawrence Logan Marion Miami Morgan Muskingum Perry Pike Ross Union Washington	Columbus Field Office 255 E. Main Street, 1 st Floor Columbus, OH 43215
Allen Defiance Fulton Hardin Huron Mercer Paulding Sandusky Shelby Williams Wyandot	Auglaize Erie Hancock Henry Lucas Ottawa Putnam Seneca Van Wert Wood	Toledo Field Office One Government Program Room 913 Toledo, OH 43604



Preparing For The Rating Verification Visit

The administrator, or designee, should be prepared to:

- Provide the Step Up Licensing Specialist with the Evidence Binder, a place to work, and a tour of the program.
- Be available to answer questions.

The Step Up Licensing Specialist will:

- Utilize both observation and a review of the required documentation in assessing benchmark indicators.
- Observe in the classroom to verify staff/child ratios, group size, lead teacher assignments and early learning indicators if applicable.
- Ask to speak with teachers regarding curriculum alignment and child assessment if the program has applied for a Step that includes these indicators.
- Review the completed report during an exit interview with the administrator.

Special Note: The Specialist will end the visit if:

- A serious risk non-compliance is observed. If this happens, the program may re-apply after they have had 2 consecutive regular licensing inspections without any serious risk non-compliances.
- The Evidence Binder is incomplete. If this happens, the program may re-apply after 6 months from the date of the visit.
- An indicator cannot be verified. If this happens, the program may re-apply after 6 months from the date of the visit.

After The Visit

After the visit, you will receive one of the following:

- Star Rating letter and certificate OR
- E-mail detailing the benchmark indicator(s) that could not be verified at the time of the visit.



step up to quality

Step One Evidence Binder Requirements

The following checklist defines what you are expected to demonstrate at the time of the verification visit. The checklist is to be used to ensure that your evidence binder is complete.

Copies of the following must be in the Evidence Binder

Ratios & Group Size

- Staff Schedule (current employee record chart or other schedule showing staff hours/assignments).
- Attendance sheet for each group of children reflecting accurate enrollment/attendance.
 - **Individual classrooms will be observed throughout the course of the visit.**

Staff Education & Qualifications

- For the administrator(s): Non-expired CDA Certificate or College Transcript documenting Early Childhood Associate Degree (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 2 (items used in calculating points must be included).
- For at least one lead teacher: College Transcript documenting Early Childhood Associate Degree (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).
- For stand alone school age programs, for at least one lead teacher: College Transcript documenting Associate Degree in Early Childhood or related field (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).

Specialized Training

- Inservice training forms/Certificates for specialized training documenting 5 clock hours annually for administrators/lead teachers/assistant teachers based on hire dates.

Administrative Practices

- Completed Program Administration Scale (PAS)
- Written description of the program's system for completing professional development plans for the administrator and all lead and assistant teachers. Include a sample of any forms that are used. (See the Guidance Document glossary for professional development plan requirements) **Examples of completed plans will be requested.**
- A copy of the program's benefits plan that includes at least one of the following: salary structure based on education and length of employment, employer offers and/or pays a portion of health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional membership, paid specialized training and/or tuition reimbursement, retirement fund, discount on child care, participation in T.E.A.C.H. program.

Early Learning

- While not required to be in the binder, the Step Up Licensing Specialist will ask to see that the following are in each classroom; Ohio's Infant/Toddler Guidelines (Infant & Toddler Classrooms), Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards & Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines (Preschool Classrooms), Ohio's K-12 Standards (Schoolage Classrooms).
- A written description of the program's process for: transitioning children into the program; transitioning children from one group to another within the program; transitioning children who are leaving the program. **Examples of completed transition plans will be requested.**



step up to quality

Step Two Evidence Binder Requirements

The following checklist defines what you are expected to demonstrate at the time of the verification visit. The checklist is to be used to ensure that your evidence binder is complete.

Copies of the following must be in the Evidence Binder

Staff/Child Ratios & Group Size

- Staff Schedule (current employee record chart or other schedule showing staff hours/assignments).
- Attendance sheet for each group of children reflecting accurate enrollment/attendance.
- Current program accreditation (if applying for the alternate pathway).
 - **Individual classrooms will be observed throughout the course of the visit.**

Staff Education & Qualifications

- For the administrator(s): College Transcript documenting Early Childhood Associate Degree (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).
- For 50% of lead teacher(s): College Transcript documenting Early Childhood Associate Degree (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).
- For stand alone schoolage programs, 50% of lead teachers: College Transcript documenting Associate Degree in Early Childhood or related field (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).

Specialized Training

- Inservice training forms/Certificates for specialized training documenting 10 clock hours annually for administrators/lead teachers/assistant teachers based on hire dates.

Administrative Practices

- Completed Program Administration Scale (PAS) and the program's action plan based on the PAS self-assessment.
- Written description of the program's system for completing professional development plans for the administrator and all lead and assistant teachers. Include a sample of any forms that are used. (See the Guidance Document glossary for professional development plan requirements) **Examples of completed plans will be requested.**
- A copy of the program's benefits plan that includes at least two of the following: salary structure based on education and length of employment, employer offers and/or pays a portion of health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional

membership, paid specialized training and/or tuition reimbursement, retirement fund, discount on child care, participation in T.E.A.C.H. program.

Early Learning

- Curriculum Alignment:
 - For children birth to three: Evidence of alignment with Ohio's Infant/Toddler Guidelines.
 - For children three to five: Completed copy of the Office for Early Learning & School Readiness Curriculum Alignment Tool. **Step Up Specialist will observe/review lesson plans in the classroom.**
 - For school age children: Evidence of alignment with Ohio's K-12 Standards as applicable to the age of children served and the hours the children are in attendance.

- A sample copy of the screening tool used by the program to carry out developmental screenings and a description of the program's process for making needed referrals. **Samples of actual completed screenings will be requested and reviewed to verify completion within the required timeframes.**
- Copies of completed, age appropriate, annual self-assessments, for each classroom, of the ITERS, ECERS-R and/or ELLCO, SACERS. (See Guidance Document for description of these self-assessment tools)
- Written description of the program's process for communicating child progress to parents/guardians. If a standard form is used for this communication, please include a sample. **Examples of completed copies will be requested.**
- Written description of the program's process for; transitioning children into the program, transitioning children from one group to another within the program, transitioning children who are leaving the program. **Examples of completed transition plans will be requested.**



Step Three Evidence Binder Requirements

The following checklist defines what you are expected to demonstrate at the time of the verification visit. The checklist is to be used to ensure that your evidence binder is complete.

Copies of the following must be in the Evidence Binder

Staff/Child Ratios & Group Size

- Staff Schedule (current employee record chart or other schedule showing staff hours/assignments).
- Attendance sheet for each group of children reflecting accurate enrollment/attendance.
- Current program accreditation (if applying for the alternate pathway).
 - **Individual classrooms will be observed throughout the course of the visit.**

Staff Education & Qualifications

- For the administrator(s): College Transcript documenting Early Childhood Associate Degree (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).
- For each classroom: Lead teachers; College Transcript documenting Early Childhood Associate Degree (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).
- For stand alone school age programs, each classroom: Lead teacher: College Transcript documenting Associate Degree in Early Childhood or related field (same for higher degree) or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 3 (items used in calculating points must be included).
- 50% of classrooms have an assistant teacher with a non-expired CDA or Career Pathways worksheet documenting achievement of Level 2 (items used in calculating points must be included).

Staff Training

- Inservice training forms/Certificates for specialized training documenting 15 clock hours annually for administrators/lead teachers/assistant teachers based on hire dates.

Administrative Practices

- Completed PAS (Program Administration Scale) and the program's action plan based on the PAS self-assessment and input from parents & staff. Include tools used to collect input from parents & staff. (See the Guidance Document glossary for action plan requirements)
- Written description of the program's system for completing professional development plans for the administrator and all lead and assistant teachers. Include a sample of any forms that are used. (See the Guidance Document

glossary for professional development plan requirements) **Examples of completed plans will be requested.**

- A copy of the program's benefits plan that includes at least three of the following: salary structure based on education and length of employment, employer offers and/or pays a portion of health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional membership, paid specialized training and/or tuition reimbursement, retirement fund, discount on child care, participation in T.E.A.C.H. program.

Early Learning

- Curriculum Alignment:
 - For children birth to three: Evidence of alignment with Ohio's Infant/Toddler Guidelines.
 - For children three to five: Completed copy of the Office for Early Learning & School Readiness Curriculum – Standards - Assessment Alignment Tool.
 - For school age children: Evidence of alignment with Ohio's K-12 Standards as applicable to the age of children served and the hours the children are in attendance.
 - **Step Up Specialist will: Interview teachers about their planning process, conduct an environmental scan in the classrooms, review lesson plans, look at child progress and, classroom action plans.**

- A sample copy of the screening tool used by the program to carry out developmental screenings and a description of the program's process for making needed referrals. **Samples of actual completed screenings will be requested and reviewed to verify completion within the required timeframes.**
- Copies of completed, age appropriate, annual self-assessments, for each classroom, of the ITERS, ECERS-R and/or ELLCO, SACERS. (See [Glossary](#) for description of these self-assessment tools)
- Copies of classroom action plans based on the self-assessment results of the ITERS, ECERS-R, ELLCO & SACERS. (See the [Glossary](#) for action plan requirements)
- Written description of the program's process for communicating child progress to parents/guardians. If a standard form is used for this communication, please include a sample. **Examples of completed copies will be requested**
- A description of the program's process for; transitioning children into the program, transitioning children from one group to another within the program, transitioning children who are leaving the program. **Examples of completed transition plans will be requested.**



Emerging Stars

Rationale: The pilot research demonstrated that close to 50% of the programs participating were not eligible for a Star rating due to serious licensing non-compliances. That is too many programs serving too many children that do not have systems in place to keep children from harm. Therefore the goal is to support programs first with licensing concerns and then work on improving quality.

The research also showed that Step One rated programs were more likely to have difficulty having their rating renewed. Therefore the goal is to support Emerging Stars through their first renewal.

Criteria:

- Full-time programs that have serious risk non-compliances may apply to be an Emerging Star after they demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement by having one licensing visit with no serious risk non-compliances.
- A center may only be an Emerging Star one time.
- Once the center applies to be an Emerging Star they will receive a technical assistance visit by a Step Up Licensing Specialist and a Resource and Referral Technical Assistance Specialist and an action plan will be developed.
- Environmental rating scales will be completed based on ages of children served.
- The center will have 12 months from the date of the application to become rated.
- The center will receive technical assistance visits twice a month until a rating is achieved.
- The center will receive quarterly technical assistance visits through their first Step Up To Quality rating renewal.

If at any time a serious risk rule non-compliance finding occurs the center will no longer be designated as an emerging star.



Infant Grouping Guidance

Why is group size important?

To ensure that infants become healthy, emotionally secure individuals, it is critical to establish intimate relationships between infants and caregivers. Group care that meets the intimacy needs of infants does so by caring for infants in small intimate groups.

Staff/Child ratios and Group Sizes for Infant Groups:

Step One	Step Two	Step Three
Infants: 0-12 months Ratio: 1:5 or 2:10 At no time may the group size for 0-12 month olds exceed 10	Infants: 0-12 months Ratio: 1:5 or 2:10 At no time may the group size for 0-12 month olds exceed 10	Infants: 0-18 months Ratio 1:4, 2:8 or 3:10 At no time may the group size of 0-18 months exceed 10
Infants: 12-18 months Ratio: 1:6 or 2:12	Infants: 12-18 months Ratio: 1:6 or 2:12	Infants: 12-18 months Ratio: 1:5 or 2:10

What will the Step Up specialist be looking for:

- Each group of 10 infants has a separate play space for the group's exclusive use;
- Cribs are arranged by group of infants but may be in a common area;
- Each group has a separate attendance sheet;
- Each group has a lead teacher.

Many current programs maintain a group size of 2:12 infants. In order to meet the Step Up to Quality requirements of not exceeding a group size of 10 infants programs can:

- Divide the group into two groups of six infants and maintain required staff/child ratios. This would require two teachers per group.
- Wait until two infants move to the next age group and then divide the group into two groups of five.

When creating separate play areas it is important to keep in mind how the program will maintain compliance with ratios while diapering infants. If hand washing facilities are located in another space staff/child ratios must be maintained at all times with the infants taken to be diapered and in the area from which they were removed. If more than one infant at a time is removed for diapering the infants must be engaged in safe, sanitary and age appropriate activities while diapers are being changed. They may not be placed directly on the restroom floor and have to remain within sight and hearing of a child care staff member who can intervene if unsafe or unsanitary conditions occur. Infants may not be left unattended on the changing table. The program could consider having a floater come into the area when a child needed to be diapered or if feasible additional hand washing facilities could be added.

Career Pathways Model for Ohio Early Childhood & Afterschool Professionals

Revised October 2006

I. Overview

The purpose of this model is to provide a common system for all Ohio early care and education professionals to document and quantify their professional growth and accomplishments, and by doing so to define and advance the profession. The model uses one framework to integrate the pathways of formal education, training, experience, and specialized credentials and certifications.

Individuals accumulate "Points" along each of four pathways-- formal education, inservice training and continuing education, experience, and credentials and certifications. Total points assign one of 6 professional designations.

II. Pathways

A. Formal Education

1. Degrees

Points are awarded for the **highest degree attained**, regardless of major course of study.

HS or GED = 5 points;

AA or AS degree = 10 points;

Bachelors degree = 20 points;

Masters degree = 30 points;

PhD, Ed.D. = 40 points.

2. Credit Hours

Points are awarded for all courses completed, including those completed for a degree.

Number points = 1 x # quarter hours; 1.5 x # semester hours.

3. Area of Study

a. Points are awarded to a professional that has majored in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or Family Studies. 30 points should be awarded for each degree in those specific areas of study.

b. 5 Points are awarded for the completion of the Career Technical Early Childhood Program.

B. Inservice Training and Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

One point is awarded for every 20 hours of inservice training.

One point is awarded for every 1.5 CEUs.

C. Experience

Experience awards three points for every year work in the field and three longevity points for every five years work in the field.

“Experience” for purposes of this model includes:

- 1) direct work* with young children (birth - 8) and families, includes field experiences;***
- 2) supervision, leadership, or management;***
- 3) program coordination, development, or regulation;***
- 4) training, instruction, or technical assistance;***
- 5) evaluation or research.***

**** must be 18 years of age or have senior standing in jvs program.***

D. Credentials and Certifications

Add points for all credentials and certifications attained.

1	Family Child Care PPI
2	Family Child Care Limited Certification
5	Family Child Care Professional Certification
5	Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers Module I
5	Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers Module II
5	Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers Module III
5	Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers Module IV
10	CDA (Family Child Care)
10	CDA (Infant Toddler)
10	CDA (Preschool)
10	CDA (Bilingual)
10	CDA (Home Visitor)
10	MR/DD Program Assistant Certification
10	MR/DD Supervisor
10	Help Me Grow Service Coordinator Credential
15	National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation
15	PreKindergarten Associates Teacher License
20	AMS I/T Credential
25	AMS Early Childhood Credential
25	AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) Certification
30	Early Childhood Teacher License
30	PreKindergarten Validation
30	Early Education of the Handicapped (EEH) Validation
30	Early Childhood Intervention Specialist (ECIS) Teacher License
30	MR/DD Early Intervention Specialist Certification

III. Early Childhood Professional Designations

“Points” are totaled across **Formal Education, Inservice Training and Continuing Education Units, Experience, and Credentials and Certifications**

Point ranges are determined for each of the following levels:

Early Childhood Professional Level I	(1-49 points)
Early Childhood Professional Level II	(50-149 points)
Early Childhood Professional Level III	(150-249 points)
Early Childhood Professional Level IV	(250-349 points)
Early Childhood Professional Level V	(350-449 points)
Early Childhood Professional Level VI	(450+ points)

IV. Advancement

Early childhood professionals will advance to higher levels as they obtain more education, training, experience, and credentials. The two Early Childhood Level III professionals described below emphasize the options for designing one's career advancement so that it meets individual goals:

Professional A) 23 years as a Professionally Certified Type B Home Provider, with National Accreditation. Taking at least 20 hours of in-service training each year, she has received both the Family Child Care and Preschool CDA credentials.

Professional B) Five years experience as a teacher, with AA in ECE, 45 hours in-service training, and a PreKindergarten Associate Teacher License.

Use the attached worksheet to find your place on the Career Pathway.

For more information, please contact registry@occrpa.org or visit www.ohpdregistry.org.

**Worksheet
Career Pathways Model
for Ohio Early Childhood & Afterschool Professionals**

Use this worksheet to find your current designation on the Career Pathways.

Formal Education

POINTS

A. Degree/Completion

- Enter points for highest degree attained
*High School or GED = 5 points; AA/AS = 10 points; BA/BS = 20 points
MA, MS, M.Ed. = 30 points; Ph.D., Ed. D. = 40 points*

B. Credit Hours

- Enter total number quarter hours completed x 1 =
- Enter total number semester hours completed x 1.5 =
*(Normally AA = 90 qtr/60 sem.hrs; BA = 180 qtr/120 sem.hrs
MA = 50 qtr/30 sem.hrs; PhD = 80 qtr/60 sem.hrs.)*

C. Area of Study

- Enter total number of completed degree with majors in ECE, CD and/or Family Studies x 30 =
- Completion of the Career Technical Early Childhood Program =
Enter 5 points for this completed program

Credentials

- Total all credentials and certifications currently held =

Training

- Enter total number in-service hours Divide by 20 =
- Enter total number CEUs Divide by 1.5 =

Experience

- Enter number of years worked in field Multiply by 3 =
- Longevity - Enter number of years worked in the field
Divide by 5, then multiply by 3 =

Total Points

Add all points in boxes together =

Early Childhood Professional Designation

Where are you now? Check the level that matches your total points.

- _____ Early Childhood Professional Level I (1-49 points)
- _____ Early Childhood Professional Level II (50-149 points)
- _____ Early Childhood Professional Level III (150-249 points)
- _____ Early Childhood Professional Level IV (250-349 points)
- _____ Early Childhood Professional Level V (350-449 points)
- _____ Early Childhood Professional Level VI (450+ points)



Specialized Training Guidance

	Step One	Step Two	Step Three
	5 Hours Annually	10 Hours Annually	15 Hours Annually
Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Administrator Rules Training (7 Hrs.) Available beginning 1/29/07 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Administrator Rules Training (7 Hrs.) Available beginning 1/29/07 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator Choice based on the administrators professional development plan
Infant/Toddler Care Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infant Toddler Guidelines Module 1 (2.5 Hours) Infant/Toddler Guideline Modules (3 hrs. each) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infant/Toddler Guideline Modules (3 hrs. each) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infant/Toddler Guideline Modules (3 hrs. each)
Preschool Lead & Assistant Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language & Literacy Content Standards Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Standards Training Curriculum Training Assessment Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator choice based on staff professional development needs as outlined on staff professional development plan
Schoolage Lead & Assistant Teachers	Topics Include:	Topics Include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator choice based on staff professional development needs as outlined on staff professional development plan

- Only approved trainings will meet training benchmark indicators.
- Approved trainings can be viewed at www.stepuptoquality.org
- Description of approved trainings may be found in the Guidance Document
- If you don't see a training listed, contact your Step Up Licensing Specialist ([See Who To Call When](#))



Specialized Training Timelines

Annual training is assessed based on staff members' hire date

Hire Date	Status	Required Documentation
New Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator, Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Development plan completed within 30 days of hire outlining plan to complete required number of specialized training hours within annual period based on hire date
Current Administrator, Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher Initial Applicant for Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a program <u>applying for a Rating for the first time</u>, staff training must be <u>complete</u> at the time of the initial Rating verification visit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ODJFS / ODE inservice training forms, CEU Certificates, other certificates for Administrator trainings Completed college coursework (transcripts or grade reports) <p>Note: Copies of training documentation to be included in the evidence binder.</p>
Current Administrator, Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher Currently Rated program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator, Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher complete required training during their annual period based on their hire date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ODJFS / ODE inservice training forms, CEU Certificates, Other certificates for Administrator trainings Completed college coursework (transcripts or grade reports) Must see progress of training as outlined on Professional Development plan and plan to complete required number of specialized training hours within annual period based on hire date Confirmation of staff signed up for upcoming trainings may be requested <p>Note: Copies of training documentation to be included in the evidence binder.</p>
After annual hire date [Ex. 9/1/05 to 9/1/06 – Verification visit on 10/15/06]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator, Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher has not completed required training <u>This is a non-verified indicator</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Applicant – Program does not receive Rating. May re-apply after 6 months Applicant for change in Rating – Take a lesser step or a one-time deferral Renewal Applicant - Take a lesser step or a one-time deferral

Certificates of Training must include: Topic, Date of Training, Number of Hours or CEU's, Agency (sponsoring training), Trainer signature.

Research Base Supporting Step Up To Quality

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