

#### NATIONAL CENTER ON

#### Early Childhood Quality Assurance

# QRIS 101: Everything You Want to Know About QRIS but Are Afraid to Ask

QRIS National Conference July 16, 2018

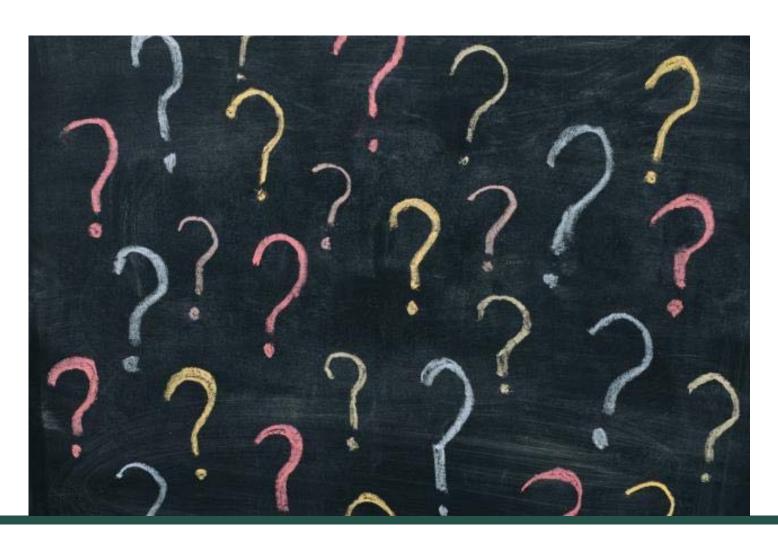
#### Welcome and Introductions



## Objectives

- Increase understanding of QRIS at the national and state levels
- Explore common QRIS elements and gain knowledge about state approaches
- Discuss QRIS trends and innovations

## Myth Busters!



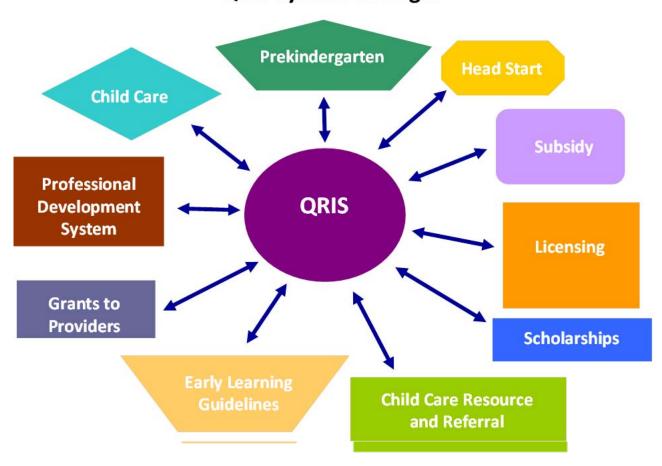
#### What Is a QRIS?



- Is a <u>systematic framework</u> for evaluating, improving, and communicating the level of quality in early and school-age care settings
- Builds on a foundation of licensing
- Has multiple steps or levels of increasing standards
- Offers support and incentives for reaching higher levels
- Provides easily recognizable symbols for consumer education

## System Alignment

#### **QRIS System Linkages**

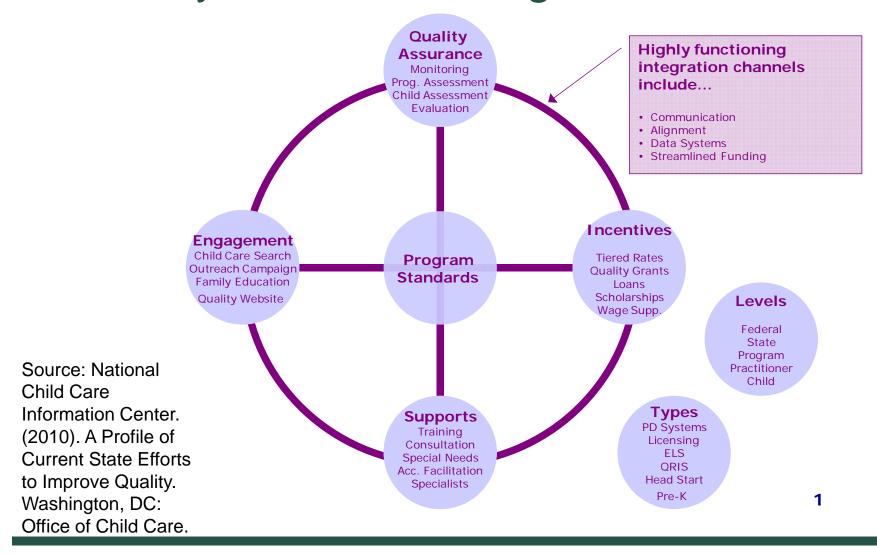


## Why Develop a QRIS?



- Creates alignment:
  - between licensing, subsidy, and quality; and
  - across child care, prekindergarten, and Head Start.
- Links supports and initiatives to a specific quality framework.
- Provides an accountability measure for funding and quality initiatives.

#### **Quality Elements Integration**

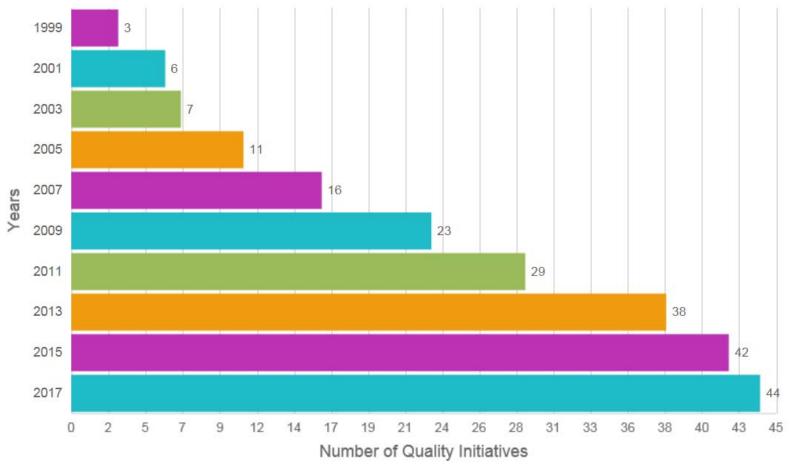


## Why Develop a QRIS?



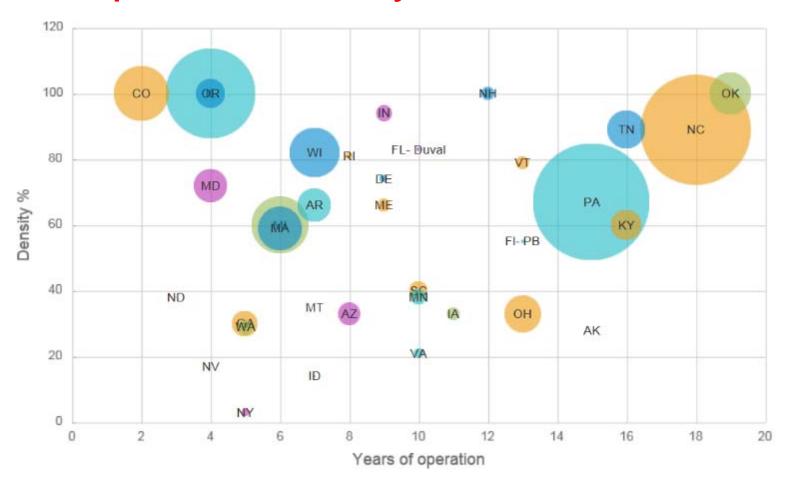
- The overall goal is to increase the quality of programs through system-wide improvements.
- A QRIS has the opportunity to do the following:
  - Increase quality of care for children;
  - Increase parents' understanding of and demand for higher-quality care; and
  - Increase professional development for child care providers.

#### QRIS Growth Over the Past 19 Years



Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). QRIS compendium: Top ten questions about QRIS: What is the pace of QRIS growth over the past 18 years? Retrieved June 3, 2018, from <a href="http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-1">http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-1</a>

## **Participation Density**

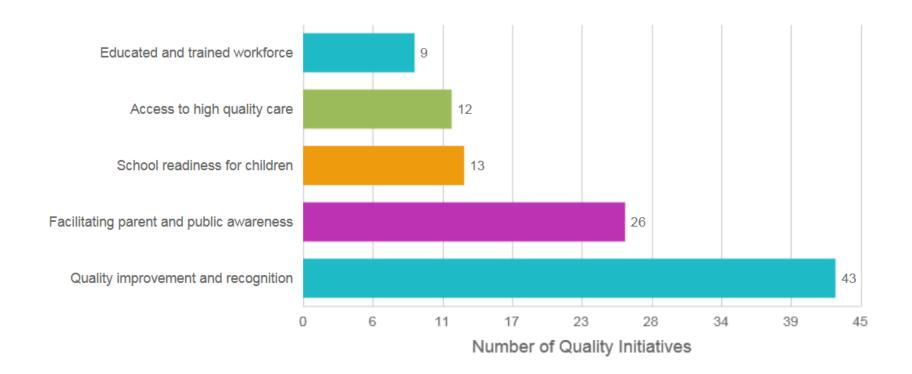


Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). QRIS compendium: Top ten questions about QRIS: What is the density and amount of center-based ECE program participation by years of QRIS operation? Retrieved June 3, 2018, from http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-6

#### Mission and Goals of QRIS

WHAT ARE THE MISSION AND GOALS OF QRIS?

+ Show



Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). QRIS compendium: Top ten questions about QRIS: What are the mission and goals of QRIS? Retrieved June 3, 2018, from

http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-8

## Foundation of Licensing

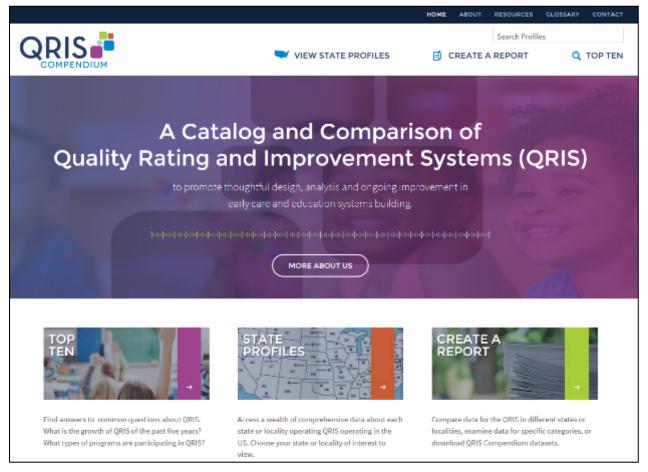
#### HOW DOES LICENSING DIFFER BY CENTERS AND HOMES?

Licensing data for Centers and Homes

Licensing indicators	Centers	Homes
Licensing required for enrollment	85%	88%
Process for license-exempt programs	41%	20%
Licensing equivalent to the first QRIS level	56%	44%

Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). QRIS compendium: Top ten questions about QRIS: How does licensing differ by centers and homes? Retrieved June 3, 2018, from <a href="http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-5">http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-5</a>

## **QRIS** Compendium



http://qriscompendium.org

#### **QRIS** Resource Guide



https://qrisguide.acf.hhs.gov/

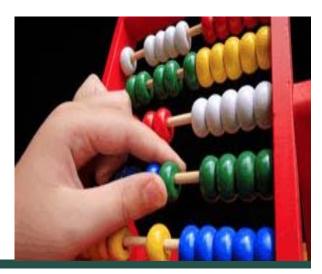
## **QRIS Structure and Participation**

- The QRIS structure determines the participation pathway.
  - The QRIS standards are what is measured or assessed.
- QRIS participation refers to who is eligible.
- Determined by the following:
  - Pilots and field tests;
  - Stakeholder feedback;
  - Legislative priorities;
  - Research; and
  - System capacity and infrastructure.

#### Approaches to QRIS Structure

- Building block approach: All standards in each level must be met for programs to move to the next level
- Point system: Every standard is assigned a number of points, and a combined score is used to determine the quality rating
- Hybrid/combination approach:
   Combination of the two approaches above, often with building blocks for lower levels and points for higher levels





#### Advantages and Disadvantages

#### **Building Block**

- Easy to see what standards a program has met
- Consistent standards for all
- May have fewer indicators
- If indicators at lower levels are difficult to reach, this can halt program movement up the levels

#### Point System

- Not as transparent; rating level alone doesn't reveal which indicators are met
- Programs may attain points with standards not as critical to program quality
- More flexibility for programs
- Often there are many indicators to verify

#### Combination/Hybrid

Combines advantages and disadvantages of both

## State Approaches

- ◆ Building block = 19 systems
- ◆ Point system = 7 systems
- ◆ Combination/hybrid approach = 18 systems

Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). A catalog and comparison of quality rating and improvement systems. Retrieved June 7, 2018, from <a href="http://qriscompendium.org/">http://qriscompendium.org/</a>



#### **Block Structure**

All standards in each level must be met for programs to move to the next level.



- Arkansas
- Alaska
- Florida Miami Dade
- Florida Palm Beach
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kentucky
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Montana
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Rhode Island
- Virginia

#### Example of a Block Structure: Maine

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Chwinnie	Step 19/registers — Words missions for using managers	Otep 2 Proglam  More kep 1 manually plot from land below	Sign 3 Freighart Sign I manifest give three below	Step 4 Program Top 1 mediate glas host balan
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Source: Maine Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). Quality for ME: Standards for center based child care programs. Retrieved April 5, 2017, from <a href="http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/quality\_cbc.pdf">http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/quality\_cbc.pdf</a>

#### Point Structure

Every standard is assigned a number of points, and a combined score is used to determine the quality rating.



- Georgia
- Louisiana
- Michigan
- New York
- North Carolina
- Vermont
- ◆ DC

#### Example of a Point Structure: New York

#### **QUALITYSTATISMY** Standards Guide & Resources

Center-Based Standards Select Different Standard						
Lear	rning Environment	Family Engagement	Qualifications and Experience		Management and Leadership	
Classroom Environment						
Code		Indicator	Points	Documentation		
CE-1	Program administrative Environment Rating S	ve staff attends training on the Scales (ERS).	2	☐ Evidence in Aspire that at least 1 administrator has attended the relevant training within the previous 15 months, verified with Training Certificate		
CE-2		in ERS self-assessment using the and writes an improvement plan to bres below 3.25.	8	☐ Completed ERS self-assessment report stating overall score and subscale scores. If applicable, include improvement plan		
CE-3	achieves an overall s	pendent ERS assessment and core of 4.25 - 4.99. Written subscale scores below 3.50.	30	☐ Completed ERS re QUALITYstarsNY	eport(s) is automatically sent to	
CE-4	appropriate scale(s)	pendent ERS assessment using the and achieves an overall score of 5.00 rement plan for subscale scores	40	☐ Completed ERS report(s) is automatically sent to QUALITYstarsNY		
CE-5	appropriate scale(s)	pendent ERS assessment using the and achieves an overall score of 5.50 provement plan for subscale scores	50	☐ Completed ERS report(s) is automatically sent to QUALITYstarsNY		

Source: New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute, QUALITYstarsNY Coordinating Agency. (n.d.). *Guide to the center-based standards*. Retrieved April 5, 2017, from <a href="http://qualitystarsny.org/standardsguide/std\_list.php?pop=722">http://qualitystarsny.org/standardsguide/std\_list.php?pop=722</a>

#### Hybrid/Combination Structure

Combination of the two approaches, often with building blocks for lower levels and points for higher levels. Some States have mandatory standards and standards with point values.



- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Delaware
- ◆ Florida Duval
- lowa
- Minnesota
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Washington
- Wisconsin

#### Example of a Hybrid Structure: Washington



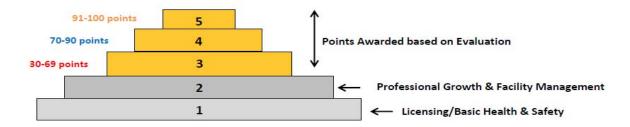
Washington's Quality Standards: An Overview

#### "Hybrid" Model

- Levels 1-2: All facilities meet the same foundational quality based on licensing/certification and Early Achievers readiness activities
- Levels 3-5: Facilities achieve points through evaluation; facilities have flexibility in how they earn points based on program strengths and philosophy

#### Levels 3-5 achieved through:

- Completion of Level 2 requirements
- On-site evaluation based on Quality Standards which includes:
  - Environment Rating Scales (ERS)
  - Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
  - Review of documentation & records
- Minimum threshold to achieve Level 3:
  - Minimum requirements for ERS and CLASS scores
  - o Facilities must earn at least 30 points



Source: Washington Early Achievers. (n.d.). Washington's quality standards: An overview. Retrieved April 5, 2017, from <a href="https://www.del.wa.gov/sites/default/files/imported/publications/elac-qris/docs/EA\_quality\_standards\_overview.pdf">https://www.del.wa.gov/sites/default/files/imported/publications/elac-qris/docs/EA\_quality\_standards\_overview.pdf</a>

#### Number of Levels in QRIS

- 6 QRIS have 3 levels
- 11 QRIS have 4 levels
- ◆ 25 QRIS have 5 levels
- ◆ 2 QRIS have 6 levels

Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). A catalog and comparison of quality rating and improvement systems. Retrieved June 3, 2018, from <a href="http://qriscompendium.org/">http://qriscompendium.org/</a>



## Voluntary vs. Mandatory Participation

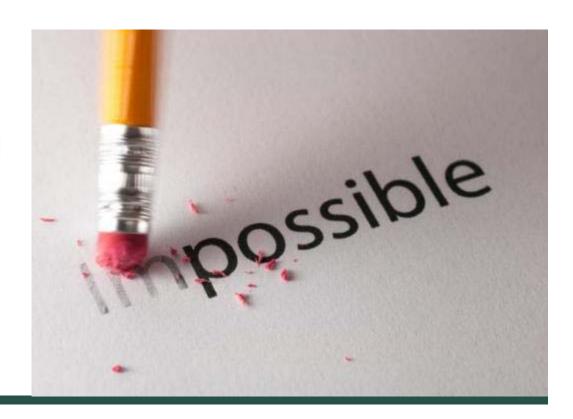
- Most systems are voluntary.
- Mandatory participation is becoming more common:
  - By funding stream;
  - By law; and
  - By regulation.



## Element 1: Quality Standards

#### Standards should be:

- achievable;
- measurable;
- evidence based; and
- understandable.



#### Standards Criteria: Achievable

Expense Time





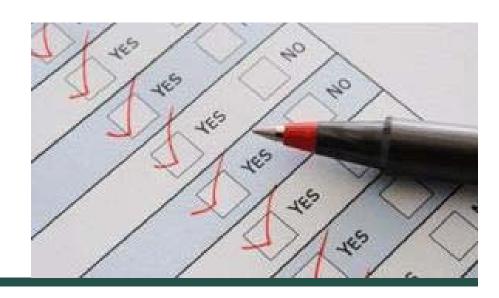
## Standards Criteria: Feasible to Measure and Manage

- Monitoring
- Technical assistance
- Financial supports
- Other supports



#### Standards Criteria: Other Considerations

- Be flexible and honor multiple approaches and pedagogies
- Measure universal elements of quality
- Align with other standards
- Align with state investments and priorities



## Quality Standards: A National Picture

Indicators	Center-Based ECE	Home-Based ECE
N=	40	39
Staff qualifications and training	95%	95%
Environment	90%	95%
Program administration, management, and leadership	83%	83%
Curriculum	81%	78%
Family partnerships and engagement	79%	78%
Interactions	71%	73%
Health and Safety	69%	66%
Child assessment	67%	68%
Ratio and group size	57%	59%
Community involvement	52%	49%
Provisions for children with special needs	50%	59%
Other	40%	34%
Accreditation	38%	27%
Staff compensation and benefits	21%	

Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). QRIS compendium: Top ten questions about QRIS: What are the most common types of indicators included in QRIS? Retrieved June 3, 2018, from <a href="http://griscompendium.org/top-ten/question-4">http://griscompendium.org/top-ten/question-4</a>

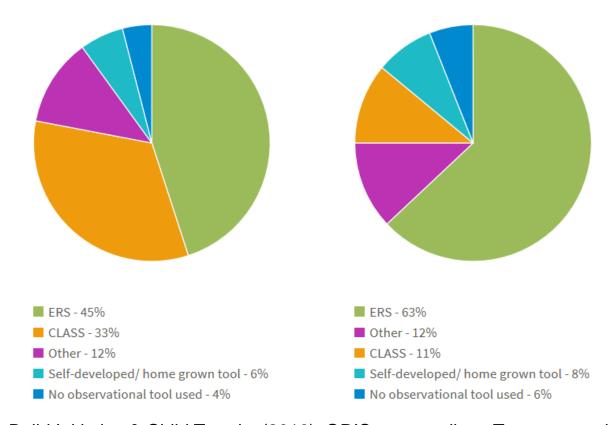
#### **National Observation Tools**

- Environment rating scales
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System
- Program Administration Scale/Business Administration Scale
- Program Quality Assessment
- Others



#### Most Commonly Used Observation Tools

WHAT WERE THE MOST COMMONLY USED TOOLS TO OBSERVE PROGRAM QUALITY?



Source: The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). QRIS compendium: Top ten questions about QRIS: What were the most commonly used tools to observe program quality? Retrieved June 3, 2018 from <a href="http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-3">http://qriscompendium.org/top-ten/question-3</a>

## Observation Tools: Key Considerations

- What does it measure and how well?
- Does it address cultural considerations?
- Does it align or enhance QRIS standards?
- Can the tool be used for self-assessment?
- What kind of training will participants need? Coaches?
  Technical assistance staff?
- What is the cost?
- What data are needed?

## Trends in Quality Standards

- More frequent revisions
- Cross-walking standards
- Research basis for selected standards; data-driven changes to standards
- Fewer QRIS standards: "The few and the powerful."
- Raising the bar on expectations (States melding lower levels into licensing and raising top levels)
- Hybrid or combination approaches



#### Operationalizing Quality Standards

- Providers need time to meet requirements
- QRIS partners and stakeholders need indepth understanding of the standards
- It is important to establish and maintain consistent interpretation of the standards
- Standards will change and evolve—This is OK!
- Communication is key



### Financing and Financial Supports

### Let's talk about financing.



## It costs a lot to implement a QRIS. But what exactly are we paying for?





### What kind of funding can support the system?





Provider support

What motivates you to understand the cost to provide child care?

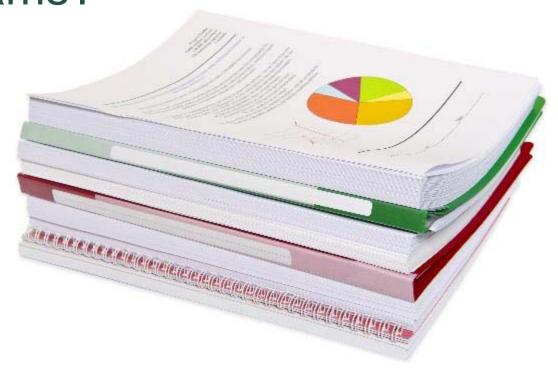
And what do we know about the costs to run a child care program?



What can child care providers do to improve the financial health of their programs?



What can policymakers do to improve the financial health of child care programs?



### What are your next steps?





#### NATIONAL CENTER ON

#### Early Childhood Quality Assurance

# Quality Assurance and Monitoring

#### Quality Assurance & Monitoring



#### Quality Assurance and Monitoring

- Objectively assessing program quality and assigning quality levels
- Using data to track program progress and children's participation by quality level
- Conducting classroom assessments
- Evaluating supports for effectiveness
- External reviewing and revising of standards and levels

## Quality Assurance: Valid and Reliable Standards and Rating

- Valid: The standard measures what you are trying to measure
- Reliable: The standard gives the same result on a successive trial

### Quality Assurance and Monitoring: Data Collectors and Raters

- Initially assessing program quality and assigning quality levels
- Conducting classroom assessments and program-level assessments
- Providing training and technical assistance
- Clarifying and communicating about how to apply standards
- Others

#### Efficiency in Monitoring



- Determining how many criteria or standards are needed
  - How are standards documented
- Determining how many onsite assessment tools will be used
  - At all levels or only higher levels
  - In all classrooms or some classrooms
  - In all settings or some settings
- Determining the length of rating
- Accepting status of programs from other systems or that have achieved accreditation

#### Efficiency in Monitoring



- For each QRIS standard or indicator, what is the source(s) of evidence?
  - Self-report
  - Self-assessment
  - Imported data from another system
  - Document submission (online or hard copy portfolio)
  - Observation

#### Trends in Quality Assurance and Monitoring

- Linkages with licensing
- Differential monitoring
- Coordinated monitoring
- Moving from 'rating' to 'recognition'
- Readiness tools or assistance
- Increased reliance on data systems
- Careful consideration of efficiencies
  - Staffing, number of criteria and assessments, reporting, automation



For more information see QRIS Resource Guide: Chapter 5 <a href="https://qrisguide.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?do=section&sid=4">https://qrisguide.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?do=section&sid=4</a>

#### **Key Consideration**

 Even a QRIS that appears simple can become complex and expensive to administer unless steps are taken to streamline documentation policies and onsite observation expectations for QRIS standards





### Continuous Quality Improvement

#### Continuous Quality Improvement

"One major purpose of a QRIS [quality rating and improvement system] is to recognize quality **and** promote a culture of continuous improvement among providers. ... The rating is not a destination; it is a set of benchmarks along a pathway of ongoing improvement."

Anne Mitchell

#### Definition: CQI Is ...

- Continuous: Part of the job; no end point
- Owned by the team in a program
- Proactive, not reactive
- A reflective, cyclical, and data-informed process

#### Basically

- The process of
  - identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and weaknesses (via multiple sources of evidence);
  - establishing a plan with benchmarks, timelines, assigned tasks, and responsibilities to improve;
  - testing and implementing solutions; and
  - evaluating the results and revising the plan

#### Why CQI

- It helps create compliance and a culture of improvement
- Not quality for a day
- It helps create a sustainable approach that raises the bar for early learning quality

Based on a shared vision of quality:

- Identify general goals and select team
- Analyze current condition using data
- Propose experiment; make plan
- Decide on measures of success

- Build staff capacity and carry out the plan
- Collect documentation and data

Plan

Do

Act

Study

- Adopt, modify, or abandon these practices
- Determine what more needs to be done and learned
- Set up next round

- Share and analyze impact, track results
- Consider adjustments
- Celebrate learning & successes

#### CQI in Existing QRIS

- Specific standards/criteria
- Part of technical assistance (TA) and program support
- Part of annual reporting/monitoring

#### Continuous Quality Improvement

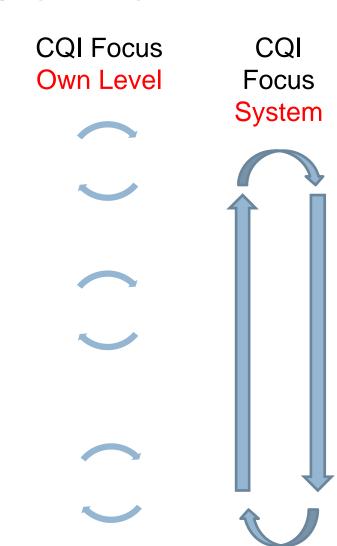
- CQI applies to three levels and different strategies are used at each level.
  - Program level program staff and leadership
  - Implementing partner level professional development and technical assistance practitioners
  - The state system level state agencies, statewide organizations, policymakers, private funders, and contracting entities

#### QRIS: Three 3 Levels of Work

State/Systems Level

Implementing Partner Level

**Program Level** 



#### CQI as a Standard in QRIS

- Program conducts a self-assessment or is assessed
- Quality improvement plans developed after an assessment
- Other sources of evidence and data are used to inform the QIP
- Quality improvement plans are used at all levels to track progress



#### How to Live CQI

- Use the continuous quality improvement model to make small, incremental changes
- CQI is most effective when it becomes a natural part of the way everyday work is done

"Change that lasts is slow and gradual." - Kaizen

改善

Kai=Change Zen=Good

#### Why Is Readiness for Change Important?

"A one-size-fits-all approach that ignores differences in readiness to change may result in a waste of resources, lower program retention, and worse outcomes for educators and children."

Peterson & Cairns 2012 p..2



#### What Are the Stages of Change?

- Stage 1: Precontemplation
- Stage 2: Contemplation
- Stage 3: Preparation
- Stage 4: Action
- Stage 5: Maintenance

Peterson & Cairns 2012 p..3

## What Strategies Can Be Used at Each Stage of Change?

- Stage 1: Raise awareness
- Stage 2: Raise confidence and identify obstacles
- Stage 3: Set goals and gain commitment
- Stage 4: Assist with problem solving and resource identification
- Stage 5: Support integration of changes and team building

Peterson & Cairns 2012 p..3

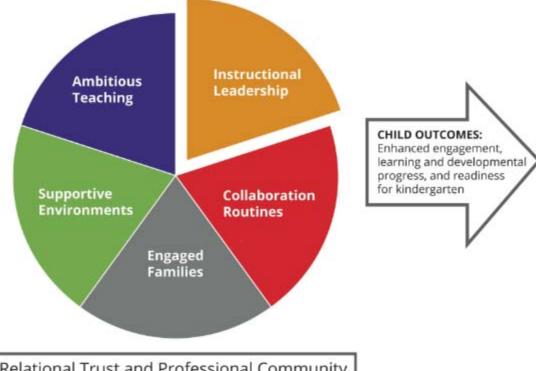


LEAD Ounce LEARN **EXCEL** 

Five Essential Supports Framework

for Continuous Learning and

**Improvement** 



Relational Trust and Professional Community

Definitions adapted with permission and collaboration from authors: Bryk, A., Sebring, P., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., and Easton, J. (2010). Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons From Chicago. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

#### Slide 71

**CL(1** Chun, Leatha (ACF), 6/4/2018

CL(2 This is a excellent slide and am interested in how you align/connect the 5 essential supports framework with the components/processes of CQI.

Chun, Leatha (ACF), 6/4/2018

#### Changing the Dynamic

 Externally driven and delivered professional development



 Internally driven and embedded continuous professional learning and improvement  Focus on individual's knowledge and capacity



 Facilitate learning and build organizational capacity for effective teaching through inquiry-based approaches and reflective practice

#### Indicators of a Culture of Continuous Improvement

- Curiosity
- Reflection
- ◆ Tolerance
- ◆ Feedback
- Systems thinking

#### Designing Professional Development and Technical Assistance that Builds Capacity of Continuous Learning and Improvement



#### Building a Learning Organization

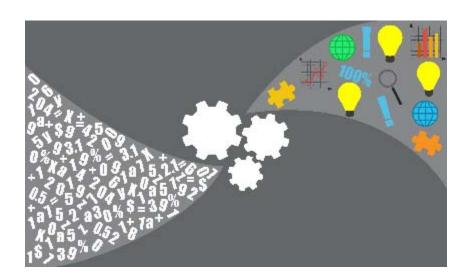
"The organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the organizations that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organization."

Senge, P. M. (2006). p.4



#### Measuring CQI

- What does the research tell us?
- How can we measure the success of a CQI approach?
- What data are we collecting?



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