

Participant Guide
Fiscal Year 2020



Participant Guide Acknowledgement

Participant Name and Address:

Participant ID#:

Quality First is a voluntary program supporting child care and preschool programs across Arizona to improve the quality of early learning provided for children birth to age 5. The Quality First Participant Guide provides a central source of information about the policies and guidelines that support your participation in Quality First. The purpose of the Quality First Participant Guide is to assist you in understanding your responsibilities as a Quality First participant along with the roles and functions of the Quality First supports available to your program. Included with your Participant Guide are forms and resource documents that will provide you with additional guidance as you participate in Quality First. The information contained in the Participant Guide is updated annually. As a Quality First participant, it is your responsibility to review and agree to the policies and procedures described in the Participant Guide annually. If you have any questions related to the policies or procedures described in the Participant Guide, please consult with your Quality First coach or contact the Quality First team at 602.771.5000.

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the FY20 Quality First Participant Guide. I understand that this Participant Guide and the policies described within it replace any prior editions I have received.

- I have read, understand, and agree to the policies contained in the FY20 Quality First Participant Guide.
- I understand my role and responsibilities related to my participation in Quality First, including displaying my program's current star rating certificate in a location visible to families.
- I understand participation in Quality First is voluntary and I may elect to decline participation at any time.
- I have read, understand, and agree to the policies in the FY20 Quality First Points Scale Guidance Document.
- I have received an updated FY20 Resource Directory.
- I understand that before I gain access to incentive funds, I must review and agree to the terms contained in the FY20 Incentive Management Policy.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the Policies and Procedures contained in the FY20 Participant Guide, Points Scale Guidance Document and Resource Directory.

Signature, Participant Main Contact/Director

Printed Name

Date

Signature, Primary Program Designee

Printed Name

Date

Quality First Contact Page

CONTACT	NAME	AGENCY	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL
Quality First Coach				
Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC)				
Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant (Smart Support)				
Inclusion Coach				
College Scholarship Specialist				
ADE Early Childhood Program Specialist				
ADHS Licensing Surveyor or DES Certification Specialist				
Other				
Extranet User Name		Extranet Password		

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RESOURCES

- [Extranet User Guide](#)
- [National Accrediting Organizations](#)
- [Points Scale Guidance Document](#)

FORMS

- [Assessment Report Clarification Request](#)
- [Complaint Form](#)
- [E-Verify Form](#)
- [Enrollment Agreement](#)
- [Facility Projects Liability Release](#)
- [Incentives Payout Expenditure Report](#)
- [Informal Assessment Request Form](#)
- [Program Designation](#)
- [Quality Improvement Plan](#)
- [Request for Appeal](#)
- [Request for Assessment Deferment](#)
- [Request for Summer Assessment Deferment](#)
- [Request for Early Assessment](#)
- [Request for Public Rating](#)



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OVERVIEW OF QUALITY FIRST

FIRST THINGS FIRST

In November 2006, Arizona voters passed Proposition 203, a citizen's initiative that funds quality early childhood development and health programs. The Proposition created a new state level board, the Arizona Early Childhood Development & Health Board, also known as First Things First. First Things First was established to help provide greater opportunities for all children birth to age 5 in Arizona to grow up healthy and ready to succeed.

At First Things First, getting Arizona's children ready for kindergarten means a statewide financial commitment. Ninety cents of every tobacco tax dollar received by First Things First goes to programs like Quality First that benefit children birth to 5 years old. Volunteer councils decide the best ways to apply those funds for the children in their communities.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

OUR VISION

All Arizona's children are ready to succeed in school and in life.

OUR MISSION

First Things First is one of the critical partners in creating a family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative and high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, health and early education of all Arizona's children birth through age 5.

REGIONAL COUNCILS AND LOCAL FLEXIBILITY

First Things First's Regional Partnership Councils represent the richly diverse communities across Arizona. Members of each council are appointed by the Board and have direct responsibility to: collect information on the strengths and desires of their community, prioritize the specific needs, plan how to address those needs, choose whom to partner and collaborate with to ensure success for the children in their communities, and identify the funding necessary to carry out their plan.

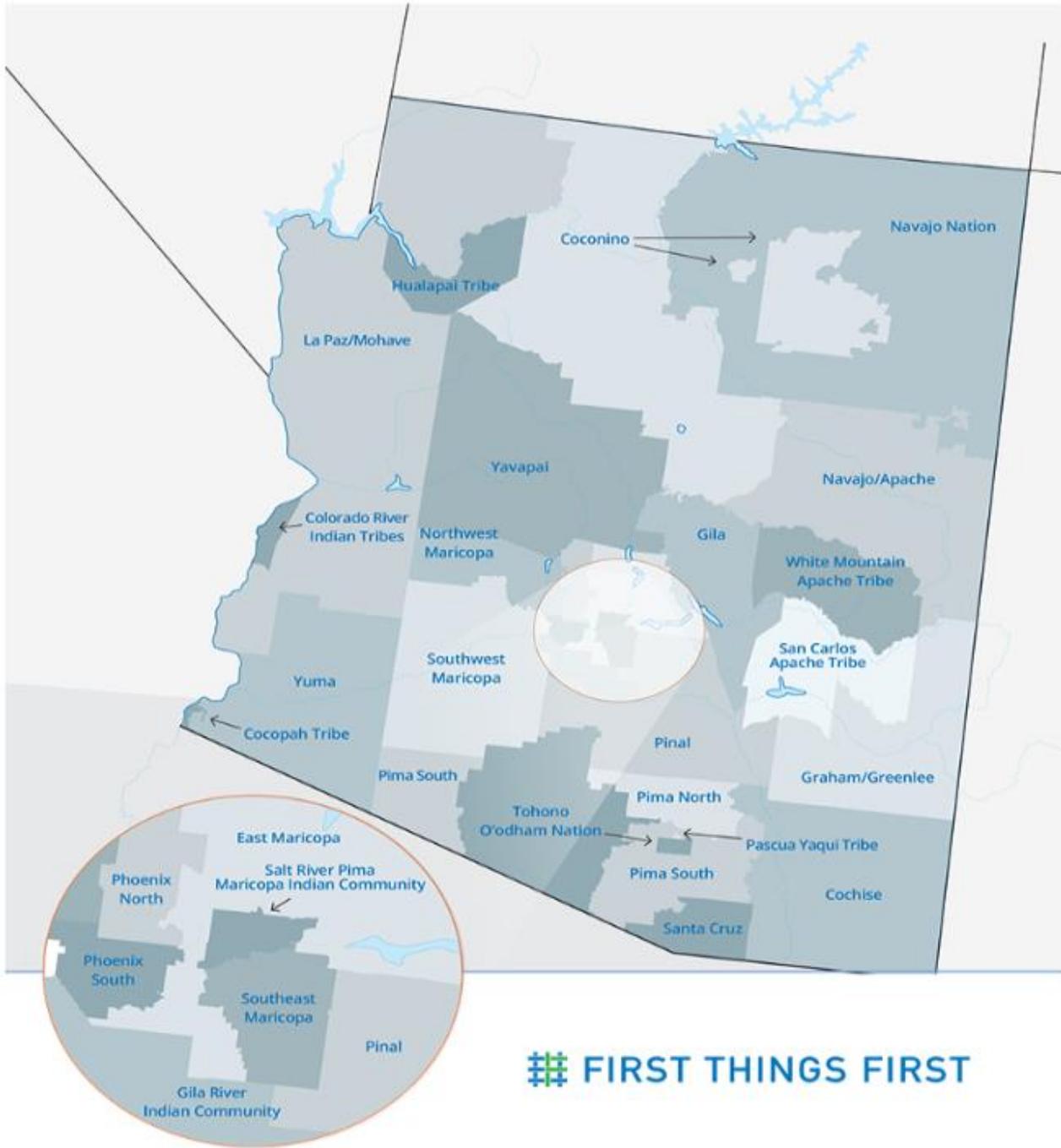
Regional Funding Policy: Each regional council creates an annual regional funding plan. As part of developing their funding plans, regional councils determine the number of Quality First programs they will be funding for the coming fiscal year. Some regions may choose to prioritize selecting programs into Quality First in high need areas to support the specific needs of the community. The selection schedule for enrolling new Quality First programs, although set annually, may change throughout the year based on the number of Quality First applicants in the system and changes in regional funding. First Things First reserves the right to alter or eliminate these benefits at any time in whole or in part for any reason, including available funding, the availability of third-party service partners, the cost of services, the effectiveness of the benefits or the changes in funding priorities.

For more information on regional councils and to find your local regional council, please visit: <http://www.firstthingsfirst.org/regions/find-your-region>. Contact information for all regional directors can be found at this website. Programs are encouraged to participate in their local regional council meetings and become an active participant in the process.

In addition to funding available through First Things First's regional councils, new opportunities for Quality First participation may be available through external partners. External partners may include, but are not limited to: the federal government, municipalities, school districts, corporate sponsors, non-profit organizations, and individual donors.

External Funding Policy: External partners may provide funding that supports Quality First participation by programs in addition to the programs supported by regional funding plans. Externally funded participants will have a finite period of funding determined at the time of enrollment. External funders pay for Quality First participation through a contract detailing the funding period, the terms of participation, and the participating early childhood program(s). At the end of the funding period identified in the contract, the external funder may choose to enter into a new contract or cease funding. Early childhood programs who have participated in Quality First through external funding are eligible to participate through regional funding after their external funding period is complete. The application is available online at QualityFirstAZ.com.

FIRST THINGS FIRST REGIONS



My region _____

WHAT IS QUALITY FIRST?

Quality First – a signature program of First Things First – partners with child care and preschool providers across Arizona to improve the quality of early learning for children birth to age 5. Quality First establishes a statewide standard of quality for early care and education programs and funds quality improvements that research proves help children thrive. This includes professional development for teachers and caregivers to expand their skills in working with young children, technical assistance and coaching to help programs provide learning environments that nurture the emotional, social, language and cognitive development of every child. There are forms of Quality First participation that do not include all services and benefits outlined in this guide. Please refer to your enrollment agreement and/or contract for details.

PHILOSOPHY

Research tells us that eighty-five percent of a child’s brain is fully developed by age three, and both in-home and out-of-home experiences can positively or negatively impact that development. The relationship between children and their caregivers profoundly impacts children’s learning and healthy development. That is why early childhood caregivers and teachers are so important to the future of young children. Participation in quality early care and education programs means children are engaged in activities with responsive, nurturing adults who stimulate development and learning and prepare children to successfully enter school.

QUALITY FIRST PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY

Child care providers who care for children ages five and under and are regulated by a monitoring agency are eligible for Quality First participation. Quality First participants are required to remain in good standing with their regulatory body while enrolled in Quality First. Regulatory bodies in Arizona include the Arizona Department of Health Services Office of Child Care Licensing (ADHS OCCL), the Arizona Department of Economic Security Child Care Administration (DES CCA), and tribal or military oversight entities.

Child care providers must provide care for children a minimum of 12 hours a week to be eligible for Quality First. Additional hours of operation may be required to be considered for child care scholarships.

WHAT DOES A QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

A high-quality child care or preschool setting has teachers and caregivers with expertise in working with children age 5 and younger, includes a learning environment that nurtures the emotional, social, and academic development of every child and prepares children for kindergarten.

Quality child care and preschool settings build on basic health and safety practices to include:

- Teachers and caregivers who know how to create positive, nurturing relationships with infants, toddlers and preschoolers

- Learning environments that are engaging and encourage creativity and imaginative play
- Hands-on activities and adult-child interactions that stimulate brain development and positive connections in children
- Caregivers who communicate regularly with families about the development of their child

All of these elements combined create a child care environment that promotes healthy development and prepares children for kindergarten.

QUALITY FIRST STAR RATINGS

An important component of Quality First is the assignment of your Star Rating. Your Quality First Star Rating identifies the level of quality of early care and education that your program is delivering to young children and their families based on your implementation of best practices as measured by the Quality First assessment process. The Quality First assessments use valid and reliable tools that focus on what research shows are the key components of quality early care, including adult-child interactions, learning environments and administrative practices. Based on these assessments, your program is noted on a continuum of quality, ranging from Rising Star (1 star) to Highest Quality (5 stars).

WHAT QUALITY FIRST STAR RATINGS MEAN

Quality early learning environments build on basic health and safety regulatory standards. Quality settings include teachers and staff who know how to work with young children, create learning environments that nurture the development of every child, and provide positive, consistent relationships and interactions that give children the individual attention they need. Your Star Rating represents where along the continuum of quality (1 to 5 stars) your program was rated and how you are implementing early childhood best practices. Your initial star rating provides you with baseline information regarding your program's implementation of best practices as assessed by the assessment tools. Your initial star rating will not be publicly posted unless you submit a completed Request for Public Rating form. (A copy of the Request for Public Rating form is included at the end of this guide in the Forms section.)

After at least one year of Quality First participation, your program will enter your second assessment cycle. All Quality First participants will have their star rating posted on the Quality First website following their second assessment cycle. Publicly posted star ratings are available for families and other members of the public to view on the Quality First website as well as on your program's extranet page. This information is also shared with Child Care Resource & Referral and regional councils.

QUALITY FIRST STAR RATING SCALE

The Quality First Star Rating Scale details the necessary scores required on each assessment to achieve a specific Quality First Star Rating. For each star rating level, a participant must meet the scores indicated for all required assessments. Rising Star (1) and Progressing Star (2) star ratings only require the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Average Program Score. Quality (3), Quality Plus (4), and Highest Quality (5) star ratings require the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Average Program Score, the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Average Program Score and the Quality First Points Scale Assessment Scores.

QUALITY FIRST WEBSITE

QualityFirstAZ.com gives families information about why quality matters in child care and preschool and what quality looks like. It also gives families tools they can use to find a quality child care and preschool setting that meets their needs.

At **QualityFirstAZ.com**, information about your program will be listed according to the information that you have provided on the Quality First extranet. This information includes your program name, physical address, main contact, phone, website address, email and ages of the children served. It is important that you keep your program's information current in the extranet since it is publicly available.

The website is available for families to search Quality First participating programs based on the specific name, address or zip code. A map will display programs in a particular area based on the search parameters. Home providers will be listed by city and zip code only, without a designated street address. **QualityFirstAZ.com** offers information for parents and families regarding quality care as well as information for all providers about Quality First and supplemental resources that support quality care for young children.

Your program's star rating will be posted on the website after the second assessment unless your program has chosen to post the initial rating. If your program has a specific website, **QualityFirstAZ.com** will provide a link to the site for further information.

PROMOTING YOUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Quality is an extremely important factor for families in choosing a child care setting for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Participation in Quality First is a clear sign to families in your community that you are committed to improving the quality of your program to best serve the children in your care.

Promoting Your Commitment to Quality Policy: For the purpose of identifying active participation in Quality First and the achieved Star Rating, participants must visibly display their Star Rating Certificate. Participants will receive a new certificate each time the program's star rating is updated.

Once your Quality First enrollment is complete, your program will be provided with a marketing toolkit, including signs and website graphics, to promote your participation in Quality First. These items are sure to catch the eyes of visiting families and start conversations about quality early care and education and your participation in Quality First. The Quality First marketing toolkit includes talking points and key messages to make it easy for you and your staff to have these conversations and spread the word about the great things happening in your program. The digital marketing tools are available on the Quality First extranet and signage will be mailed directly to your program.



Component Overview*

SECTION ONE COACHING

- Individualized guidance and support
- Targeted professional development and technical assistance
- Support of goal development and implementation
- On-site visits

SECTION TWO ASSESSMENT

- Environment Rating Scales (ERS)
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
- Quality First Points Scale Assessment
- Quality Star Rating calculated from assessments

Participant

SECTION THREE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

- Financial Incentives
- ADHS Licensing Fees

SECTION FIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Arizona Early Childhood Career and Professional Development Network
- College Scholarships for Early Childhood Professionals
- Arizona Workforce Registry Professional Development Website

SECTION FOUR SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE

- Birth to Five Helpline 1.877.705.5437
- Child Care Health Consultation on-site
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (regional funding)
- Inclusion Coaching (regional funding)
- Department of Education Early Childhood Program Specialist (regional funding)

* Depending on the model of Quality First you participate in, all services and benefits may not be available to you. Please refer to your enrollment agreement and/or contract for details.



STAR RATINGS

RISING STAR	PROGRESSING STAR	QUALITY	QUALITY PLUS	HIGHEST QUALITY
Committed to quality improvement	Approaching quality standards	Meets quality standards	Exceeds quality standards	Far exceeds quality standards
ERS Average Program Score 1.0 – 1.99	ERS Average Program Score 2.0 – 2.99	ERS Average Program Score 3.0 – 3.99 <i>No classroom score below 2.5</i>	ERS Average Program Score 4.0 – 4.99 <i>No classroom score below 3.0</i>	ERS Average Program Score 5.0 and above <i>No classroom score below 3.0</i>
CLASS™ Average Program Score N/A	CLASS™ Average Program Score N/A	CLASS™ Average Program Score (ES* 4.5) (CO 4.5) (IS* 2.0)	CLASS™ Average Program Score (ES* 5.0) (CO 5.0) (IS* 2.5)	CLASS™ Average Program Score (ES* 6.0) (CO 6.0) (IS* 3.0)
Quality First Points Scale N/A	Quality First Points Scale N/A	Quality First Points Scale <i>6-point minimum</i> (SQ 2) (AP 2) (CA 2)	Quality First Points Scale <i>10-point minimum</i> (SQ 2) (AP 2) (CA 2)	Quality First Points Scale <i>12-point minimum</i> (SQ 4) (AP 4) (CA 4)

ERS = Environment Rating Scales
 ECERS: Early Childhood Environment
 ITERS: Infant/Toddler Environment
 FCCERS: Family Child Care Environment

CLASS™ = Classroom Assessment Scoring System™
 ES*: Emotional Support Domain (Pre-K) and Emotional and Behavioral Support Domain (Toddler)
 CO: Classroom Organizational Domain (Pre-K)
 IS*: Instructional Support Domain (Pre-K) and Engaged Support for Learning Domain (Toddler)

Quality First Points Scale
 SQ: Staff Qualifications
 AP: Administrative Practices
 CA: Curriculum and Assessment

SECTION ONE:

Quality First Participant

THE ROLE OF THE QUALITY FIRST PARTICIPANT

As a Quality First participant, you are the leader of your quality improvement process. Your vision for your program will drive the process of improvement within your site, as well as determine the guidance needed from your coach and technical assistance professionals. It is critical for all of your support team to understand the unique perspective that you bring to the quality improvement process and your desired outcomes for your specific quality improvement plan.

Leader of the Process: Your improvement process will be based on the values, culture, vision and goals that you determine to be central to your program's success. Your coach and technical assistance professionals can help you determine what these priorities are and how you can implement them using best practices. Your vision for your program will lead your quality improvement process.

Program Expert: As the program's leader, you know your program best. You understand your program's history, successes and challenges. It will be important to share this information when planning and strategizing with your coach and technical assistance professionals. All goals and strategies should align with what you as the participant are comfortable with implementing and confident in trying.

Director of Quality Improvement Efforts: With the guidance of your coach and technical assistance professionals, you will be the catalyst for change within your program. As the leader in your program, you will review the practices of your program, staff, and other resources on an ongoing basis to ensure that quality services are being implemented consistently and effectively. When questions arise, reference your Quality First Participant Guide and resources. If you are unable to locate the information you need, your Quality First coach or other technical assistance professionals can act as a secondary resource. Your leadership of this process is essential to success.

PARTICIPANT CONFIRMATION

Participant Confirmation Policy: For the purpose of confirming agreement with all Quality First requirements and responsibilities, enrolled participants must sign the Participant Roles and Responsibilities Agreement form. This form must be reviewed and signed by the site director or owner each fiscal year of participation. Failure to comply with the signed roles and responsibilities may result in a Targeted Support Plan and/or disenrollment.

You will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the Participant Guide's policies and

procedures to ensure your understanding. This ensures your continued participation and allows for ongoing dialogue about the expectations of Quality First participation. Additional forms are required to access Quality First financial incentives. (See Quality First Incentives Policy in section four of this guide.)

PROGRAM DESIGNATION

Program Designation Policy: For the purpose of supporting clear communication and engagement in the quality improvement process, all Quality First participants must identify the key personnel who will be responsible for leading and coordinating quality improvement. Select a consistent individual onsite to be the Quality First main contact. This individual will meet with the Quality First support team on a regular basis and act as a bridge for information from the coach and technical assistance professionals to staff members. It is also beneficial to identify a backup person (primary program designee) to meet with the Quality First support team in the event that the main contact is not available.

Upon enrollment, your coach will ask you to complete a Program Designation form (available in the Forms section of this guide). To make changes to your program's designated individual(s), you must submit a new Program Designation form to your coach and update your contact information in the extranet.

THE COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Planning for change is an important part of the improvement process. Working to improve quality alongside your staff will take time, effort and adjustments. Some of this work will include identifying goals and action steps, motivating your staff, and creating an environment where practicing new strategies is encouraged and supported. Remember—mistakes are a part of the learning process! As you and your staff make changes to your practices and program policies as a part of your continuous quality improvement plan, it is important for you to plan time to monitor and reflect on the changes you have made to ensure that they become a part of your regular practice. The goal of quality improvement is long-term, sustainable change. A commitment to quality is crucial to supporting improved outcomes for all children that are cared for in your early care environment.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SUPPORTS

Quality improvement supports are provided by First Things First once a program has been assessed, rated, and enrolled. These supports help participants remove barriers to increasing and maintaining quality within their program. Quality First participant supports include:

- Quality First coaching services to assist programs in developing quality improvement goals and identifying action steps to achieve those goals. Coaching services can include but are not limited to providing informational resources, facilitating professional development and

trainings, modeling instructional practices, reviewing program policies and providing feedback to support programs in achieving their quality improvement goals.

- Financial incentives to purchase materials and supplies that will enhance the learning environment, to offset costs of facility improvements that will enhance the environment, and to support professional development opportunities for program staff.
- Formal assessment reports that provide programs with an impartial, reliable outside look at the environment, interactions, and administrative practices based on standardized program assessment tools.
- Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC), either on-site or over the phone, to ensure best practices in health and safety are incorporated in the program.
- College Scholarships to support the attainment of a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential or associate's degree in Early Childhood Education.
- Free membership in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry, which has many benefits for everyone in the early childhood field in Arizona. The Registry provides a secure place for you and your staff to keep a record of staff professional development and credentials in one place. It allows for employers and/or licensing agencies to verify staff's credentials. The Registry gives administrator access to a report listing all your staff's education and professional development. There is even a job bank there where you can post job opportunities for early childhood professionals. To learn more about any of these benefits or to complete your registration, please visit <http://www.azearlychildhood.org>.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION

Having the ability to engage with Quality First coaches and other technical assistance professionals is a benefit of Quality First participation. These individuals are available to support you in your quality improvement efforts. The following strategies will assist you in making the most of your Quality First participation:

- Select a consistent individual onsite to be your Quality First main contact. This individual will meet with the Quality First support team on a regular basis and act as a bridge for information from your coach and technical assistance professionals to your onsite staff members. It is also beneficial to identify a backup person (primary program designee) to meet with the Quality First support team in the event that the main contact is not available. (A copy of the Program Designation form is included at the end of this guide in the Forms section.)
- Identify and request program supports that will assist you in your quality improvement efforts. Coaches and other technical assistance professionals are knowledgeable experts in their fields; however, you are the expert on your program and staff. Let the Quality First support team know if there are specific practices, policies, or resources you would like them to assist you with.
- Schedule time in your calendar to work with your staff on your quality improvement efforts and to monitor and reflect on new policies and practices you have put into place. Sustained quality improvements take time and focused efforts.
- Plan to allow staff members time outside of the classroom if possible, away from the responsibilities of caring for children, so that they can work with coaches and other technical assistance professionals. This will allow them to really focus on their work with the coach or technical assistance professional. Depending on the time of day, this may require you to schedule a floating staff member or a director who is able to cover for the staff member while they meet with the coach or technical assistance professional.
- Actively plan and monitor your goals with the guidance of your coach and technical assistance professionals on a regular basis. The goals that you identify for your Quality Improvement Plan will serve as a map for your quality improvement process. By identifying and monitoring your goals from visit to visit, you will be able to determine whether you are reaching your desired outcomes, if strategies need to be varied, or if you need to modify the program supports you are receiving.
- All participants are required to create an organizational system, such as a Quality First communication binder, that is easy to access by staff and Quality First technical assistance professionals. Your organizational system will include all of your Quality First contacts, forms, reports and resources you may want to share with your staff.
- Schedule time in your calendar to review and update information about your program, staff, and contact information in the extranet and Registry on a quarterly basis.

- Work with your staff to align your administrative practices, staff handbook, and parent handbook with any new practices you have identified as a part of your Quality Improvement Plan. Well-defined and implemented administrative practices will help to ensure that your quality improvements are sustainable over time. For more information about high quality administrative practices, refer to the Quality First Points Scale Guidance Document provided in the Resources section of this guide.

Estimated Timeline

WEEK 1

Selection notification

When your program is selected for Quality First participation, you will receive an email notification. Programs are selected for participation every five weeks, from July through March, based on Quality First openings and regional funding.

WEEK 2-3

Contact from a Quality First coach

Within 15 calendar days from your selection notification, a coach will contact you to explain the next steps in the enrollment process and to schedule an initial visit at your program.

WEEK 4-6

Assessment contact and scheduled visit

You will receive a phone call from an assessor to schedule your initial assessment visit.

WEEK 14-16

Assessment results available

The timing of the availability of these results depends on the number of assessments to be completed and the size of your program.

WEEK 15-19

Sign enrollment agreement

A Quality First coach will meet with you to review your assessment results and discuss how they are related to your own quality improvement ideas. You will sign the Enrollment Agreement and your star rating will be available for your own review but not posted on the public website unless you choose to request a public posting. Once enrolled, financial incentives and Child Care Health Consultation services become available.

WEEK 20 AND ONGOING

Goal development; Quality improvement plan

Goals with action steps will be established in collaboration with a Quality First coach and any other technical assistance providers supporting your program. These goals will be uploaded to the extranet.

SECTION TWO: Quality First Coaching

Quality First coaching services are provided to your program to offer focused support in the form of regular and ongoing visits, communication and technical assistance. Participating in the coaching process supports you in providing high quality early learning experiences to the children in your care, so they are ready to succeed in school and in life.

Quality First Coaching Policy: For the purpose of providing support to facilitate quality improvement efforts, coaching services are a required part of participation. This includes the development of quality improvement goals and identifying action steps to achieve those goals. All Quality First participants will be assigned support services through a coach at the time of selection to participate. Once officially enrolled, participants are required to meet regularly with their coach as part of the Quality First program.

THE ROLE OF THE QUALITY FIRST COACH

The role of a Quality First coach is to act as a quality improvement consultant for your program. As knowledgeable consultants, they can work alongside you and your staff in creating a vision for your program, supporting your identified quality improvement goals, pinpointing productive action steps, and monitoring your progress. While your program's quality improvement process is driven by you, a Quality First coach can bring additional insights to your program's practice and support your vision and movement toward quality goals.

Quality First coaches are selected based on their knowledge and experience in the field of early childhood education with a focus on promoting adult learning and positive interactions. Coaches receive initial and ongoing training in the quality improvement process, all assessment tools, early learning standards and development guidelines to ensure that they have the skills to support you and your program in creating quality environments for young children. Every effort is made to create positive connections between participants and coaches, and the Quality First team will work diligently to make sure that a good fit is established. The Quality First coach makes it a priority to respect your program, its practices and its culture and create a trusting relationship with an emphasis on confidentiality. Coaching assignments may change periodically based on program enrollments, star rating changes, and regional needs.

QUALITY FIRST COACH ACTIVITIES

Quality First coaches are knowledgeable and skilled consultants that you and your program access as a supportive resource as you work through your Quality Improvement Plan. A Quality First coach will

regularly visit your program to support you in accessing all Quality First resources in an effort to answer any questions you might have regarding Quality First, your assessments, and information contained in this guide

Quality First coaches act as your primary contact in Quality First. Once an initial contact has been made and the coach has had the opportunity to visit your program and meet your staff, the coach will review your program's assessment results with you and support you in identifying your program's strengths and areas where you believe meaningful quality improvement opportunities exist. After reviewing your assessment results, you will discuss your vision for your program and create goals and action steps with the support of a Quality First coach and any other technical assistance providers with whom you are working. The goals will address areas identified for growth and include action steps with corresponding timelines, which determine how you choose to utilize coaching services to support the outcomes of your identified goals. Once you have established your Quality Improvement Plan, the Quality First coach will assist you in determining how your incentive funds can be utilized to support your quality improvement efforts.

QUALITY FIRST COACH VISITS

Your Quality First coach will schedule regular visits to your program based on your assigned star rating level. Participants at the Rising Star (1 star) and Progressing Star (2 star) levels will engage in six hours of on-site coaching each month to support their quality improvement process. Participants in the Quality (3 star), Quality Plus (4 Star), and Highest Quality (5 Star) levels will receive four hours of on-site coaching each month to support their quality improvement process. You will work with your coach to plan the agenda in advance for these visits to ensure a common understanding of what activities will occur during your on-site coaching hours. In the event you are unavailable or unable to meet for a planned visit, it is your responsibility to notify your coach in advance and make plans for a follow up visit to be scheduled. This will provide a more consistent relationship between the coach and your program and allow more time for shared work toward achieving your goals.

A Rating Only program has access to 24 hours of coaching services per year. This time can be scheduled as needed throughout the span of the cycle in order to best meet the needs of your program and staff. Coaching support can be used for extranet updates, training, professional development, assessment review and goal planning.

Coaching visits may include but are not limited to meeting with the program director/administrators for planning and reviewing progress, observing and modeling in classrooms, and providing feedback, opportunities for reflection, and resource materials. Virtual on-site hours, through telecoaching or other mutually agreed-upon platforms, may be utilized. Coaches may use videotaping equipment with permission from the participant to highlight staff successes and to provide staff with an opportunity to reflect on their practice and interactions with children. Coaches may work with identified staff to act as an on-site quality improvement mentor. Flexibility and adaptability are key to making the most of coaching visits; it is your responsibility to provide the coach with information and feedback on what you think the primary needs of your program are when it comes to implementing appropriate coaching

strategies in your program.

After each visit, the Quality First coach will write a summary of the activities accomplished and any plans for upcoming visits. After you and the coach sign the document, a copy will be given to you to keep in your Quality First communication binder and a copy will be kept with the coach for your program file. The information will also be uploaded in the Quality First extranet to track visits and improvement efforts in the First Things First system database.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Quality Improvement Planning Policy: For the purpose of documenting goals and action steps to promote high quality standards, Quality Improvement Plans are part of program participation. Quality Improvement Plans are goals created by synthesizing information from assessment reports, technical assistance professional observations and additional information regarding the program's specific needs and vision. For each assessment cycle, goals must be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely (S.M.A.R.T.).

A Quality First coach will assist you in documenting these goals and your progress towards achievement. With coach and other technical assistance support, you will use the Quality Improvement Plan form to document your goals (see the Quality Improvement Plan form in the Resources section at the end of this guide), and monitor progress on action steps regularly. This goal document will also be uploaded to your program profile in the First Things First database (Quality First extranet) where progress will be noted monthly as action steps are completed and goals accomplished.

As you accomplish your goals, consider how to sustain the quality improvements you have worked to achieve within your program. Your coach can assist you in developing plans for sustainability so that new practices become a regular part of your program's operations. Consider who will be responsible for ongoing implementation and monitoring, how the new practices will be incorporated into staff training and development, and what written policies and procedures should be updated. Share these goals and plans for sustainability with your staff to ensure a lasting impact.

STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL COACHING RELATIONSHIP

Working with a Quality First coach and other assigned technical assistance professionals requires a commitment to a strong professional, working relationship. Here are some tips to make the most of this consultative relationship:

- Talk with your coach about the type of communication that works best for you. If you prefer to meet at a certain time or would appreciate regular emails, let your coach know so that he or she is able to best work within your preferences.
- Introduce your coach to your entire staff at the beginning of your participation. This will help to establish a familiarity and a comfort level for coaching activities within your program. Be sure that the children are introduced to your coach as well to alleviate any stranger anxieties.
- Let your families know that your program is participating in Quality First and that you will have regular visits from a coach and potentially other technical assistance professionals to provide ongoing support for your program. Families will appreciate knowing who will be working in your program and how your improvement efforts can benefit their children.
- Plan ahead for your visits with your coach with questions, needs, clarifications or plans. This will save time during your on-site meetings so that you and your coach are ready to accomplish any activities you have planned for each visit.
- Communicate with your coach and other technical assistance professionals regarding your preferences for support, your plans for implementing change, your program's philosophy and how you want your staff involved in the process. Your commitment to the process creates ongoing sustainability.

SECTION THREE:

Quality First Assessment

Quality First assessment is a valuable support for your program in the improvement process. The purpose of receiving ongoing assessments is to offer objective and reliable measures of the everyday experiences of the children in your program and to provide a guide for achieving best practices.

Quality First Assessment Policy: Quality First assessments are a required component of participation. Assessment is designed based on high quality standards using valid and reliable tools and conducted by highly trained objective observers. All Quality First participants will be assessed initially to establish a baseline, non-public rating and will receive subsequent regular assessments to establish a Star Rating.

THE ROLE OF THE QUALITY FIRST ASSESSOR

Quality First assessors are trained professionals in the field of early childhood and receive extensive training on the assessment tools to ensure they are measuring program practices accurately.

The assessment reports you receive provide important information for you to build upon your strengths as well as to identify areas where improvements can be made.

A Quality First assessor will visit your program to complete an assessment at the very beginning of your participation. This assessment provides a baseline of information that is the foundation for you to build on in establishing program improvements. During your assessment observation, the assessor will focus on maintaining a professional stance at all times. The assessor will remain objectively removed from social interactions with staff in order to gather as much information as possible according to the tools that are being used. While the assessor is in your program, they will not initiate or extend an interaction with a child but will never ignore a question, curiosity or a request for attention.

Quality First assessors are dedicated to the same measures of confidentiality as coaches and other technical assistance providers and will show respect in a professional manner.

Although the assessor will be collecting information during the visit, no feedback will be provided at that time. Your program's assessment results will be available for your review in the extranet once reports have been completed and approved.

QUALITY FIRST ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

The Quality First process begins with your initial assessment, which will provide objective information to guide your quality improvement efforts. This is the beginning stage and will provide information to help you move forward – setting a starting point for quality improvement efforts. This baseline Star Rating will not be posted publicly on the Quality First website unless you choose to have it posted.

The following represents some general activities related to your Quality First assessment:

- **Accreditation** - As an accredited or Head Start program, if your program’s CLASS assessment results are at the Quality Level (3, 4, or 5 star levels), your program will be assessed using the Quality First Points Scale Assessment. Your program will be given six months to prepare for the Points Scale Assessment during the first assessment cycle your program qualifies. Future Points Scale Assessments will be conducted within the same timeframe as your CLASS assessment. (For a list of accreditations recognized by Quality First, see National Accrediting Organizations in the Resources section of this guide.)
- **Assessor Objectivity** - Whenever possible, an assessor who conducts the ERS assessments should not be the same assessor who conducts the CLASS assessments. This is to ensure objectivity for each observation.
- **Blackout Dates** - You will have an opportunity to inform the assessor of dates that would preclude an assessment visit. For instance, days that your program is closed, planned field trips, special events such as picture day, scheduled emergency drills, scheduled Quality First support team visits (including coaches and other technical assistance professionals), and days when you will typically have low attendance may all interfere with a proper assessment.
- **Children with Special Needs** - Prior to assessing a classroom, the assessor will ask you if there are any enrolled children with an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan), IEP (Individualized Education Plan), documented gifted needs, and/or medically diagnosed conditions (i.e., asthma, diabetes, severe allergies) to determine if accommodations that are observed need to be taken into account. As this information is confidential, assessors will not need to view the individual plans.
- **Classrooms/Care Groups** - It is your responsibility to note individual classrooms/groups in the extranet. For assessment purposes, Quality First considers a unique roster of children assigned to a specific lead teacher or classroom space as an individual classroom/group. For example, a program may have a single lead teacher with an a.m. class roster and a p.m. class roster. Each of these roster groups is considered an individual classroom/group. To assist the assessor in identifying the number of assessments as well as age-appropriate tools for your program, it is important that you discuss with the assessor how many classroom/child groupings your program contains.

- **Eligibility for Assessment** - In center-based programs, if a majority of children in a classroom (51 percent) had their 5th birthday after September 1 of the current school year, the classroom is included in the random draw for assessment.
- **Extranet Data** - Before conducting the assessment, the assessor will review your information from the extranet to determine how many classrooms/groups of children to assess and which tools to use during the assessment based on the age groups you serve. The classrooms/groups identified on the first day of assessment will be utilized throughout the assessment process. Assessors will verify this information over the phone and also in person on the first day of assessment at your program.
- **Initial Phone Call** - An assessor will contact your program to schedule the date of your initial assessment. It is your responsibility to contact the assessor within 72 hours of a phone call or email message. Your initial assessment will be scheduled for a mutually agreed-upon date and timeframe. In subsequent years, you will be provided a three-week time frame in which the assessment will be conducted. The assessor can come at any time within these three weeks other than specified blackout dates.
- **Moving/Relocation** - If your program moves to a new location in the middle of the assessment process, the assessment team will re-complete all of the assessments at the new location. Rescheduling of the assessments will be done on a case by case basis. If a program moves after the rating is final, it will remain in its current assessment cycle.
- **Multiple Assessors** - More than one assessor may attend a program assessment during an observation visit for the purpose of training, reliability testing and/or to accommodate the size of your program. You will be notified in advance if this is a possibility for your program.
- **Random Draw** - If your program has more than one classroom or grouping of children, the assessor will conduct a random draw to determine which classrooms/groups to assess upon arrival. The assessor will ask that the random draw be witnessed to ensure accuracy and also have a program designee signature at the time.
- **Special Considerations** - When you are contacted by an assessor to schedule your initial assessment or set up your three-week assessment window, you should discuss any special considerations or specific educational philosophies that your program practices that you would like taken into consideration as the assessment team prepares for your visit. Topics you may want to discuss with the assessor when they call include but are not limited to languages spoken in your program, children with special needs, and programmatic philosophies or practices such as Montessori, Parent Cooperative, Student Teaching or Primary Caregiving. Programmatic philosophies or practices that you would like the assessment team to be aware of must be identified in your Parent/Family Handbook or in written policies and procedure information that

you share with families. The assessor may request to view this documentation.

- **Staff Verification** - The assessor will ask you to verify the staff assigned to each classroom based on the current staff you have listed in the extranet. Please identify the regular teaching staff and their roles in each classroom or child care group and share any staffing considerations such as new staff or substitute teachers. This information guides the assessor in determining whether or not a classroom is eligible for assessment. (For more information, see the Quality First Staffing Guide included in the Resources section at the end of this guide.)
- **Summer Closures** - If your program is closed for the summer and your next assessment cycle is scheduled to begin during your summer break, your assessment window will be opened no earlier than October 1. Nine-month programs with an assessment cycle scheduled to begin after April 30 will have their assessment deferred until on or after October 1. The assessment team uses the information from your program's extranet profile summary to determine your dates of operation.

QUALITY FIRST ASSESSMENT TOOLS

A variety of assessment tools are used to collect information about the average experience of the children in your program. Research indicates that gathering meaningful big picture information to establish the level of quality practices that an early childhood program is implementing requires an in-depth look at the program's environment, interactions, and administrative practices. Quality First assessors will select the appropriate assessment tool(s) to be used in your program's assessment based on Quality First policies and procedures.

ENVIRONMENT RATING SCALES (ERS; Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford and Debby Cryer) - measuring elements of a quality environment.

Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Assessment Policy: ERS assessments will be conducted to assess early care and education environments. The ERS assessment will be conducted on-site for approximately three hours by a qualified assessor. Quality First participants that are Head Start or nationally accredited will not have an ERS conducted initially unless CLASS threshold scores are not achieved (a list of National Accrediting Organizations is included in the Resources section at the end of this guide).

Establishing high quality learning environments has been shown to positively support the development of young children and their early education. The ERS are observational tools used to assess the quality of the environment in early care settings. Observations using the ERS provide a brief snapshot of the classroom environment, as well as the children's experiences in that classroom. There are three versions of the ERS utilized by Quality First, each designed to assess a specific age group and early care setting.

1. Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)

This scale is designed to assess the quality of preschool environments (children 2 ½ - 5 years of age) located in center-based child care settings.

2. Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)

This scale is designed to assess the quality of care environments serving children birth to 30 months of age and is used in infant and toddler center-based child care settings.

3. Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS)

This scale is designed to assess the quality of the environment in family child care settings with mixed-age groups. More information can be found at <http://ersi.info/>

THE DAY OF AN ERS ASSESSMENT

For your initial assessment, the assessor will call to schedule your program's assessment. In subsequent years, you will receive a three-week window for assessment. For centers, the assessor will assess your classrooms/care groups based on the charts below. If you care for infant/toddlers and preschoolers, both an ITERS and ECERS will be completed.

If your program serves multiple age groups, infants/toddlers (0-30 months) AND preschool age children (30 months to 5 years):

- 1 classroom = 1 classroom assessment
- 2-6 classrooms = 2 classroom assessments
- 7-9 classrooms = 3 classroom assessments
- 10-12 classrooms = 4 classroom assessments
- 13 + classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms

If your program serves only one age group, infants/toddlers (0-30 months) OR preschool age children (30 months to 5 years):

- 1-3 classrooms = 1 classroom assessment
- 4-6 classrooms = 2 classroom assessments
- 7-9 classrooms = 3 classroom assessments
- 10-12 classrooms = 4 classroom assessments
- 13+ classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms

In center-based programs, if the majority of the children in a classroom/care group (51 percent) had their 5th birthday after September 1 of the current school year, the classroom/care group will be included in the random draw for assessment.

Family child care homes will have the areas assessed that are part of the child care program.

When the assessor arrives, they will need to gather some initial information regarding the total number of children enrolled, the number of children in attendance that day, children with special needs, the birthdates of the youngest and oldest child enrolled in the classroom selected, and the staff assigned to each classroom/child care group.

If more than one classroom/care group is being assessed, the assessor will ask you to randomly draw which classroom will be assessed that day. Each assessor will only assess one classroom per day. In order to maintain the integrity of the assessment, the participants cannot choose which classrooms will be assessed in multi-room programs.

The assessor will remain at your program for at least three hours when conducting the ERS assessment. An assessor may stay longer if the assessor needs to gather information the assessor was unable to collect during the first three hours. The assessor will not talk to the staff during the assessment. An assessor is unable to answer questions or provide information during the assessment. An assessor will move around the classroom, collect data on materials, watch interactions and routines, and write notes. After an assessor has completed collecting the data, the assessor will request an interview with the lead teacher from the classroom. The interview may be arranged (time and location) before the assessment begins.

It is required that the lead teacher be allowed to participate in the interview process, as this is a part of the assessment. The assessor will ask questions relating to things the assessor did or did not see during the assessment and a series of other questions relating to the program. In some cases, the assessor may ask for clarification from program administration. The lead teacher may also use the interview as an opportunity to share information about the classroom, routines and teaching practices with the assessor.

Once the interview is complete, the assessor will leave the site and begin scoring and report writing using the notes the assessor collected at your program. Once the report is complete, you and your Quality First coach will receive notice that the assessment is ready for review. You and the coach will review the results and move forward with the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

If you have questions or concerns about the assessment, please contact the Assessment Program Manager, Katie Romero, at 602.633.8652 or kromero@swhd.org. The assessor is not permitted to share any results or information about the assessment with the program, nor are they allowed to provide technical assistance.

It is important to prepare the classroom staff for the assessment. Your coach can facilitate a meeting to discuss further the assessment process with the teaching staff. It is important to inform them that an assessment will occur as part of your participation in Quality First.

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM (CLASS; Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2005) measuring quality interactions.

(Classroom Assessment Scoring System) (CLASS) Policy: CLASS assessment will be conducted to assess adult-child interactions. Quality First programs must achieve a level of 3.0 or higher on the ERS assessment with no individual classroom score below 2.5 to have a CLASS assessment conducted (Head Start and nationally accredited programs will begin with a CLASS assessment). A CLASS assessment will be conducted by a trained assessor who will observe the classroom in four back-to-back 20 minute observation cycles with a designated scoring time in between. Programs that operate 4 hours or less will have modified observation cycles. In these programs, the assessor will complete four back-to-back 15 minute observation cycles with designated scoring time in between.

Research shows that positive adult-child interactions in early care and education settings are a vital part of supporting children’s learning and development. The CLASS is a system for observing and assessing the quality of interactions between teachers and students in infant, toddler and preschool classrooms. The CLASS examines social-emotional and instructional interactions that contribute to children’s social competence and academic achievement in center and home-based programs serving children from birth to 5 years of age.

There are three versions of the CLASS. Quality First currently uses the CLASS Pre-K and CLASS Toddler in the Rating Scale, each designed to assess a specific age group and early care setting. The CLASS Infant is being conducted for data collection purposes only and is anticipated to be included in the Rating Scale in FY21.

1. CLASS Pre-K

This scale is designed to assess the quality of interactions within preschool environments (children 3 - 5 years of age) located in center-based and family child care settings.

2. CLASS Toddler

This scale is designed to assess the quality of interactions within toddler environments (children 15 - 36 months of age) located in center-based and family child care settings.

3. CLASS Infant

This scale is designed to assess the quality of interactions within infant environments (children 0 - 18 months of age) located in center-based and family child care settings. Participants providing care to infants may have a CLASS Infant assessment conducted in their program. Infant CLASS scores are not yet utilized when calculating a participant’s Star Rating. It is currently anticipated that infant CLASS scores will be included in Star Rating calculations beginning July 1, 2021.

The most appropriate assessment tool for each age range will be determined using classroom rosters of enrolled children. The CLASS assessment will not be conducted during the same visit as the ERS assessment; you will be contacted to schedule the CLASS assessment if it is required. More information can be found at teachstone.com/class.

THE DAY OF A CLASS ASSESSMENT

For your initial assessment, the assessor will call to schedule your program's assessment. In subsequent years, you will receive a three-week window for assessment. For centers, the assessor will assess one-third of your preschool classrooms/care groups (ages 3-5) using the Pre-K CLASS and one-third of your infant/toddler classrooms/care groups using the Infant (birth to 18 months) or Toddler CLASS (15 to 36 months). The assessor will use the assessment tool designed to best capture the age range in a classroom, based on the ages of the children included on the classroom rosters.

In each age group (Infant/Toddler or Preschool) your program serves, the assessor will determine the number of classrooms/care groups in that age group (based on classroom rosters) to be assessed based on the chart below.

- 1-3 classrooms = 1 classroom assessment
- 4-6 classrooms = 2 classroom assessments
- 7-9 classrooms = 3 classroom assessments
- 10-12 classrooms = 4 classroom assessments
- 13+ classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms

For family child care homes, the assessor will look at the ages of the children birth to five to determine which CLASS tool is appropriate in the setting using the following guidelines:

- If the majority of the expected attendance at the family child care home on the day of the assessment is made up of children between the ages of 3-5, the Pre-K CLASS will be conducted.
- If the majority of the expected attendance at the family child care home on the day of the assessment is made up of children between the ages of 15-36 months, the Toddler CLASS will be conducted.
- If the majority of the expected attendance at the family child care home on the day of the assessment is made up of children between the ages birth to 18 months, the Infant CLASS will be conducted.
- In cases when the expected attendance on the day of the assessment is split evenly between age groups, the Toddler CLASS will be conducted if there are children between the ages of 15-36 months present, otherwise the Pre-K CLASS will be conducted.

When the assessor arrives, the assessor will need to gather some initial information regarding the total number of children enrolled, the number of children in attendance that day, the age composition of the classroom, and the teaching staff assigned to each classroom/ child care group.

If more than one classroom is being assessed, the assessor will ask you to randomly draw which classroom will be assessed that

day. Each assessor will only assess one classroom per day. In order to maintain the integrity of the assessment, the participants cannot choose which classrooms will be assessed in multi-room programs.

The assessor will remain at your program for approximately two to three hours for a CLASS assessment. The assessor will complete four CLASS cycles during the assessment. One cycle includes a 20 minute observation period immediately followed by a 10 minute coding period. The assessor will conduct another cycle if any of the four cycles are less than 20 minutes in length, making the observation incomplete. Programs that operate four hours or less will have modified observation cycles. In these programs, the assessor will complete four back-to-back 15 minute observation cycles with designated scoring time in between. At the end of the CLASS assessment, the assessor will ask the staff in the classroom if there are any children with an IEP/ISFP present in the classroom just assessed.

Infant CLASS data will be collected and reports will be available for programs to review in the extranet, but the data will not count toward a program's final star rating. If the Infant CLASS is conducted in your center-based program, the assessor will re-draw an additional toddler classroom. The randomly selected toddler room will be used in calculating your program's star rating. If an Infant CLASS is conducted in your home-based program, another CLASS assessment will not be completed.

If you have questions or concerns about the assessment, please contact the Assessment Program Manager Katie Romero at 602.633.8652 or kromero@swhd.org. The assessor is not permitted to share any results or information about the assessment with the program, nor are they allowed to provide technical assistance.

It is important to prepare the classroom staff for the assessment. Your coach can facilitate a meeting to discuss further the assessment process with the teaching staff. It is important to inform them that an assessment will occur as part of your participation with Quality First.

QUALITY FIRST POINTS SCALE – measuring program administrative practices.

Points Scale Assessment Policy: Points Scale assessment will be conducted to assess administrative practices. A Quality First participating program must achieve the ERS and CLASS threshold scores at the Quality levels (3, 4, or 5 star) to receive a Points Scale Assessment. (See the Quality First Star Rating scale on page 16 of this guide.) This assessment will be scored using both on-site observation and review of documentation presented to the assessor during the on-site visit, and offsite review of documentation available in the extranet and the Registry.

Administrative practices are an important part of high quality early care and education programs. The Quality First Points Scale is a tool designed by First Things First that provides evidence of the quality levels of your program's administrative practices.

The Quality First Points Scale was developed by First Things First to measure three additional areas of quality:

1. Staff Qualifications, which includes staff education and experience working with young children. Official transcripts must be submitted to document staff education. (For more information, see the Points Scale Guidance Document.)
2. Administrative Practices, which includes ratios, group sizes and staff retention.
3. Curriculum and Child Assessment, which includes the use of the Arizona Early Learning Standards and Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines, Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education, curriculum plans, and ongoing progress monitoring of individual children.

Transcript and Education Documentation Policy: For the purpose of collecting educational documentation and official transcripts to document the status of Quality First staff members, transcripts must be submitted by Quality First participants. All education documentation, including official transcripts, Child Development Associate (CDA) Credentials and teaching certificates, will be verified using the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. Quality First participants are required to create a registry account to submit this documentation.

(For more information about the process of submitting education documentation, please see the FY20 Transcript and Education Documentation document in the Resources section of this guide.)

THE DAY OF A POINTS SCALE ASSESSMENT

Your program's initial Points Scale Assessment will be scheduled ahead of time and will take place at your program. For all subsequent Points Scale Assessments, you will be given a three week window to notify you of the upcoming Points Scale Assessment. On the day of the Points Scale Assessment, the assessor will review the documentation that you have collected and provided to them as well as conduct a count of the children in each classroom/group to identify the ratios and group sizes that your program has in place that day.

The assessor will review curriculum and child assessment documentation for one-third of your preschool classrooms/care groups (ages 3 -5 years) and for one-third of your infant/toddler classrooms/care groups (birth to 36 months). In each age group (Infant/Toddler or Preschool) your program serves, the assessor will determine the number of classrooms/care groups in that age group (based on classroom rosters) to review documentation, based on the chart below.

- 1-3 classrooms = 1 classroom documentation review
- 4-6 classrooms = 2 classroom documentation reviews
- 7-9 classrooms = 3 classroom documentation reviews
- 10-12 classrooms = 4 classroom documentation reviews
- 13 + classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms documentation reviews

The assessor will not verbally share if documentation is missing. It is the participant's responsibility to provide the assessor with all of the documentation you would like reviewed as part of the Points Scale Assessment. In the event the assessor does not find the required documentation, you will be given a Points Scale Documentation Review form and allowed 30 minutes to collect the documentation for assessor review. The Points Scale Documentation Review form will state if entire pieces of documentation are missing; for example, you will be notified if a lesson plan was not observed or if the assessor did not receive one of the child assessment portfolios. The Points Scale Documentation Review form does not capture if elements inside of a piece of documentation are missing; for example, if specific learning objectives for children are not included with a lesson plan or if a child assessment portfolio does not include family input.

It is the participant's responsibility to review the Points Scale Assessment Guidance Document and to ensure that all documentation provided to the assessor is complete and sufficient to meet the documentation requirements. Only documentation provided to the assessor on the day of the Points Scale Assessment will be considered for your program's star rating. It is important that you check your extranet page and your program's Registry page for accuracy and review the Points Scale Guidance Document well before your Points Scale Assessment to ensure that your program is as successful as possible. More information can be found in the Points Scale Guidance Document at the end of this guide or by viewing the Quality First Points Scale. (A copy of the Quality First Points Scale is available on the extranet Quality First Dashboard under Quality First Resources.)

If you have questions or concerns about the assessment, please contact the Assessment Program Manager Katie Romero at 602.633.8652 or kromero@swhd.org.

QUALITY FIRST ASSESSMENT REPORTS

You will not receive direct feedback from the assessor on the observations or any assessment data collected during the assessment visit. An assessment report will be available online through the Quality First extranet (Assessment Summary tab) and can be printed. Each tool that is used to conduct an assessment has a unique report with specific scores related to the indicators identified in each tool. You will find areas designated as strengths in your program as well as areas that can be used to focus your efforts in making improvements. Quality First coaches can help you review the information contained in these assessment reports and assist you in highlighting specific areas for goal setting.

Assessment Report Clarification Policy: For the purpose of clarifying content contained in an assessment report, assessment clarification is offered to Quality First participants. The Assessment Report Clarification Request must be submitted within 45 days of the assessment results being approved. A response will be provided within 21 days as possible. All Assessment Report Clarification Requests must be sent via Word document to allow for timely response. PDF or scanned documents may require extra time to process. If the clarification warrants a change in scores, this will be noted in the extranet and the assessment report will be updated. Video or audio recordings or photographs will not be considered in the Assessment Report Clarification Process. The assessment process is conducted using live, on-site observations to capture the entire context of the classroom learning environment and interactions.

In the event that you have a question about your assessment report or if you find any information that seems inconsistent based on your program specifics, you have the opportunity to submit an Assessment Report Clarification Request (see forms). Your request will be submitted to either the assessment team or to First Things First depending on the content of your question (see the Assessment Report Clarification Request form for guidance).

In the event you are having difficulty reviewing your assessment reports online, please contact the extranet Help Desk for assistance at extranet@firstthingsfirst.org.

QUALITY FIRST STAR RATING

- Once all of the assessment reports have been completed and approved, you will have the opportunity to review this information on the Quality First extranet. Your program's assessment reports will remain confidential and are only available for review by you and the Quality First team.
- Your new Quality First Star Rating will be available for viewing on your extranet page 24 to 48 hours after you receive the email notification that your assessment reports are available for viewing.
- You may find your current assessment cycle end date on your program's extranet page.

- Your program will receive ongoing assessments on a regular basis:
 - At the Rising Star (1) and Progressing Star (2) level, and for all initial ratings, your program will be contacted for assessment every 12 to 14 months.
 - At the Quality Levels (3, 4, and 5 star), your program will be contacted for assessment every 24 to 26 months.

Request for Public Rating Policy: Participants who achieve a Star Rating of 3, 4 or 5 in their initial rating cycle have an option to publicly post the star rating at that time rather than waiting for the Rating Assessment. A public rating of 3, 4, or 5 stars will move your program into an assessment cycle of 24- 26 months. A Request for Public Rating Form must be submitted to First Things First within three months of your assessment results.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT POLICIES

Early Assessment Policy: Participants may request to have an assessment conducted prior to the regular cycle. An Early Assessment Request must be submitted no later than 90 days prior to a program's assessment cycle end date. The request will be reviewed to determine if this option is available, and you will be notified by the assessment team whether or not your request is approved. A response will be provided within five business days as possible. An early assessment may not be conducted if the assessment cycle is less than 10 months and for participants at the Rising Star and Progressing Star levels may not be approved two assessment cycles in a row.

Assessment Deferment Policy: Participants may request to have an assessment deferred due to unforeseen circumstances. A Request for Assessment Deferment must be submitted to the Assessment Program Manager in advance of the anticipated assessment window opening. Deferment requests will be reviewed to determine eligibility, and notification will be sent by email to the main contact and/or primary program designee in the extranet whether or not the request is approved. Deferment requests are not guaranteed and will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Informal Assessment Policy: Informal assessments are offered to provide informal feedback in the form of a narrative report through the Quality First Assessment team outside of the standard assessment cycle. An informal assessment includes a classroom observation using a CLASS or ERS tool, based on request. Informal assessment is offered based on the schedule and availability of the Quality First Assessment team and is not guaranteed. The formal Quality First assessment process cannot be delayed or deferred due to a delay in informal assessment. Following the classroom observation, a summary will be provided including feedback about strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Copies of the Request for Public Rating, Request for Early Assessment, Assessment Deferment Request, and Informal Assessment Request forms are available in the Forms section at the end of this guide. Instructions for submittal are included on the forms.

STRATEGIES TO HELP PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL ASSESSMENT

In order to make the most of your Quality First participation and to help prepare your program for successful assessments, here are some considerations:

- Review the assessment tools, including the Points Scale Guidance Document. A Quality First coach is available to support you to ensure that you have a complete understanding of how your program's practices will be measured.
- Share information about the Quality First assessment tools with your staff, potentially through a staff meeting prior to the assessment.
- Talk to your staff about what to expect during the assessment – how the assessor will be in the classroom, how long the assessor will be there, what the assessor will be observing, and how to maintain a natural environment for the children.
- Be sure that your program information is up to date in the extranet and Registry and that all class rosters are updated accurately in advance. Gathering all of the birthdates of the children in the classroom is helpful in planning ahead.
- Although assessors will not need to look at the individual plans for children with special needs, it is helpful to make them aware so that they are able to focus on the environment in terms of the child's unique needs.
- Prepare your families for the assessment so they understand your program's involvement in Quality First and your commitment to improvement.
- Consider the unique needs of your program in planning for your assessment. You will be asked by the assessor about your program's specifics, such as language of instruction or a unique population served in order to support individual requirements.
- Plan your time so that you are available if the assessor may need additional information. Sometimes, a lead teacher may be asked for supporting information and need to have substitute coverage.
- Have the teachers talk to the children about the role of the assessor to alleviate any fears and to help them to feel comfortable with the assessor's presence. You have the option of introducing the Quality First assessor to the children when he or she is ready to assess the classroom.
- If you are unsure about any part of the process before, during, or after the assessment is complete, be sure to ask questions of the assessor or your Quality First coach or seek clarification using the Assessment Report Clarification Request form (see forms).

- Understand that the assessment report is a valuable piece of information to help guide your quality improvement efforts. Share this information with staff to support their understanding of your program's strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- All assessment information finalized prior to April 1 will be used to determine a program's incentives allocation and child care scholarship eligibility for the next fiscal year.

SECTION FOUR: Quality First Financial Incentives

Programs enrolled in Quality First have access to different forms of financial incentives to support the improvement process. Regional councils budget an allotted amount for each Quality First participant in their region per fiscal year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020). The amount budgeted supports the different components of the Quality First initiative including coaching, assessment, financial incentives, specialized technical assistance and professional development. It is important to plan for the sustainability of quality improvement efforts by making investments that will stand the test of time.

There are forms of Quality First participation that do not include the financial incentives outlined in this section. Please refer to your enrollment agreement and/or contract for details.

There are two different types of financial incentives offered to Quality First participants:

- **Licensing fee assistance** – for participants licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS)
- **Quality First Incentives** – for eligible participants to overcome barriers in support of improvement efforts

LICENSING FEE ASSISTANCE

Quality First provides assistance with paying ADHS licensing renewal fees to support programs in covering the administrative costs associated with operating a regulated program in Arizona.

Licensing Fee Assistance Policy: Licensing fee assistance is provided to regionally funded Quality First participants with an ADHS license. Fifty percent (50 percent) of licensing fees will be covered by First Things First with the additional fifty percent (50 percent) paid by the participant when the license is renewed every three years. It is the responsibility of each Quality First participant to provide their coaching agency with updated licensing information within two weeks of the previous license expiring. The licensing fee assistance does not apply to family child care programs certified by the Department of Economic Security (DES) or tribal programs not licensed by ADHS.

Once you have signed your enrollment agreement and are actively enrolled in Quality First, you will receive assistance with payment of licensing fees if you are regulated by ADHS. Quality First licensing fee assistance is paid directly to ADHS by First Things First.

The chart below shows Quality First’s definitions of program size, based on licensed capacity. Your licensing fees and incentives are based on your program size as defined in the chart. (For more information about licensed capacity, see the Licensed Capacity Verification policy in section 7 of this guide.)

SMALL CENTER (0-5 licensed capacity = 50 or less)
MEDIUM CENTER (0-5 licensed capacity = 51-150)
LARGE CENTER (0-5 licensed capacity = 151 +)
GROUP HOME (DHS licensed capacity = 10)
FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME (DES certified for four children or less)

The chart below shows the 50 percent amount you will be responsible for paying to the Arizona Department of Health Services every three years, upon renewal of your license:

SMALL CENTER	MEDIUM CENTER	LARGE CENTER	GROUP HOME
\$500	\$2,000	\$3,900	\$500

QUALITY FIRST INCENTIVES

Making improvements in your program can be challenging due to the associated costs, which may become a barrier in the process toward providing high quality care. To assist you in overcoming these challenges, Quality First Incentives are available to enrolled, eligible Quality First participants, including Rating Only programs, to make program improvements.

Quality First Incentives Policy: Financial incentives are available to eligible Quality First participants to overcome barriers to establishing and sustaining high quality practices. Financial incentives will be accessible once enrollment in Quality First is finalized. Incentives may be used to purchase materials and supplies that will enhance the learning environment, to offset costs of facility improvements that will enhance the environment, and to support professional development opportunities for program staff. E-Verify documentation and/or Lawful Presence documentation must be completed and submitted (if applicable) as a requirement for Quality First participation and to be eligible for incentives. Each year, you will need to complete and submit the Incentives Management Policy, Incentives Payout Agreement (if applicable), Participant Guide Signature Form, and Participant Role and Responsibilities Agreement to gain access to the Quality First financial incentives.

Once you have signed the required forms as outlined in the Enrollment Policy and Incentives Management Policy, financial incentives will be available to your program. Your coach will assist you in accessing your incentives through the coaching agency ordering and/or incentives payout process, as applicable. The following represents the total incentive amount that will be available to you for the fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020). Quality First Incentive funds are available to you each fiscal year and cannot be carried over from year to year if the full amount is unused. Your program’s Star Rating as of April 1 will determine your financial incentives for the upcoming year.

The table below represents the incentive levels based on Quality Star Rating and program size:

PROVIDERTYPE	1 & 2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
LARGE CENTER 151+ CHILDREN	\$8,400	\$9,400	\$10,400	\$11,400
MEDIUM CENTER 51–150 CHILDREN	\$5,250	\$5,875	\$6,500	\$7,125
SMALL CENTER 0 – 50 CHILDREN	\$3,675	\$4,125	\$4,575	\$5,025
GROUP HOME ADHS LICENSED	\$2,100	\$2,350	\$2,600	\$2,850
FAMILY HOME DES CERTIFIED	\$1,050	\$1,175	\$1,300	\$1,425

The implementation of financial incentives in Fiscal Year 2020 will be as follows:

- 1 - 2 star programs have access to financial incentives to purchase materials, equipment, and professional development tied to a program's Quality Improvement Plan. Materials will be purchased through the coaching agency and delivered to your program.
- 3 - 5 star programs receive financial incentives through a check to use at their discretion or through purchasing offered by the coaching agency. Participants must use these incentives to focus on continuation of efforts to maintain the quality of their program through facility improvements, professional development, staff salaries, or materials and resources.

Incentives Payout Expenditure Report Policy: For the purpose of documenting all purchases for Quality First participants receiving an incentive check, the Incentives Payout Expenditure Report is required. Participants are required to provide details about expenditures and maintain records documenting those expenditures. The Incentives Payout Expenditure Report must be submitted to the Quality First coach no later than July 31 of each year. If the Incentives Payout Expenditure Report is not submitted by a participant, future incentives may not be accessible to that participant.

Incentive funds may not be used for religious purposes or activities, such as faith-based curriculum, religious children's books, faith-based program accreditation, attendance at faith-based conferences, staff salaries for program time spent on religious instruction or worship, bonuses for staff whose predominant or sole purpose is religious, or facility improvements to buildings or rooms used for religious purposes unless necessary to comply with governmental health and safety requirements. Quality First participants will be required to repay any incentive funds determined to have been used for religious purposes or activities.

Some examples of how the Quality First Incentive funds can be used include:

Materials and Equipment: If your program has a specific need for additional learning materials and equipment or furnishings, incentive funds can be used to purchase these items through an approved vendor.

Consultation and Specialized Services: Incentive funds can be used for consultation and specialized services. Payment for these services will be provided through the coaching agency based on a quote from the vendor. An example might be to hire a trainer for specialized needs unique to your program.

Facility Improvements: Examples of facility improvement projects might include shelving, cement slabs, fencing, painting or carpet installation. You will work with your coach to complete a Facility Projects Liability release for approval of these types of projects. (A copy of the Facility Projects Liability Release is included at the end of this guide in the Forms section.) Incentive checks will be made payable and mailed to the vendor delivering the service after it has been provided. Incentive funding requests for

facility improvement projects cannot exceed 30% of a participant's total incentive funds. Supportive documentation for these projects will be required for payment; your coach will provide the needed forms for your completion.

Transcript Payment: Incentive funds may be used to cover the cost of requesting transcripts, credentials, or certificates for staff during the Quality First Points Scale preparation process. Please work with your Quality First coach to request reimbursement for the cost of education documentation using your program's incentive funds.

Professional Development: Incentive funds may be set aside to provide professional development opportunities for staff including: regional and national conferences, online trainings, professional development materials to be kept in classrooms or onsite, or payment for professional membership in early childhood organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or the Family Child Care Association (FCCA).

QUALITY FIRST CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS

To better serve the needs of the communities, Quality First Scholarships are funded directly by regional councils. The regional councils identify priorities through a strategic planning process that includes reviewing the needs and assets of the community. If selected as a priority, the number of Quality First Scholarships funded will be determined by the regional council and will be allocated to programs achieving Quality, Quality Plus and Highest Quality levels as of April 1, 2019.

A participant's tuition rates do not affect the Quality First Scholarship reimbursement rate.

If the Quality First Scholarships reimbursement rate is less than the amount your program charges for tuition and fees, you may decide to charge a copayment to families. Families may be responsible for paying the amount by which your tuition rate plus fees exceeds all scholarships, subsidies, and discounts paid on the families' behalf, including the Quality First Scholarships reimbursement rate. The tuition and fees for Quality First Scholarship families may not exceed the tuition and fees that are charged to families not receiving a Quality First Scholarship. If you choose to charge a copayment to families, it is the recommendation of First Things First that families receiving scholarships pay no more than 10 percent of their gross monthly income on any co-payments that would be charged to the family.

If the Quality First Scholarships reimbursement rate is more than the amount your program charges for tuition and fees, then the family should not be charged a co-pay. Fees include all costs above and beyond the program's tuition rate. It is recommended that these additional scholarship funds above and beyond the tuition be used to support your ongoing quality improvement efforts.

Scholarship reimbursement is based on a child's scheduled hours of instruction. Programs must be open for children to attend at least 400 hours over the course of a year and at least 34 hours in a month to be eligible for part-time scholarship reimbursement. Programs must be open for children to attend at least

1,120 hours over the course of a year and at least 93 hours in a month to be eligible for full-time reimbursement. Full-time scholarships are most often used for full-time care, but a full-time scholarship can be split into two part-time scholarships, subject to the program minimum hours requirements. Part-time scholarships could be considered if a part-time model best meets the needs of the families.

The annual amount you will be reimbursed for scholarships per child is noted below. If your program does not operate for twelve months out of the year or meet the minimum monthly hours, this amount will be reduced:

TYPE	AGE	2STAR	3-5STAR
CENTER	0-2 years	\$7,970	\$11,300
	3- 5 years	\$6,000	\$7,300
HOME	0-2 years	\$5,625	\$7,600
	3- 5 years	\$4,875	\$6,200

Generally, only programs that receive a star rating at the Quality level and above (3, 4, and 5) will be allocated child care scholarships. Programs at the Rising and Progressing star levels (1 & 2) will continue to receive Quality First Incentives for program improvements. Some regional councils may approve funding for additional scholarships at the Progressing Star (2) level if a specific community need has been identified.

Scholarships allocated to a program that includes religious instruction or worship as part of the program’s activities will be transferable scholarships, meaning the scholarship will follow a child receiving a scholarship under certain conditions.

The number of scholarships your program receives can be found on the Quality First extranet under the Scholarships tab. Participants receiving scholarships are required to maintain compliance with the Quality First Scholarships Policies and Procedures identified through the contract with Valley of the Sun United Way. Failure to comply with the policies and procedures may result in termination from both the Quality First Scholarships program and Quality First.

For more information about Quality First Scholarships, please visit qfscholarshipsreporting.org or contact the Valley of the Sun United Way Scholarships Team using the contact information noted below:

Valley of the Sun United Way - Scholarships Team

3200 E. Camelback Road, Suite 375

Phoenix, AZ 85018

Participant helpline: 602.240.6325

Parent helpline: 602.240.6324 or 866.973.0012

regionalscholarships@vsuw.org

SECTION FIVE: Quality First Specialized Assistance

During your ongoing participation in Quality First, you will have the opportunity to receive additional specialized assistance to support the individual needs of your program as you work toward quality improvement. Specialized assistance gives you the chance to consider the unique needs of your program to determine what services would be most beneficial.

Quality First Specialized Assistance provides an opportunity for collaboration with technical assistance professionals and coaches. Collaboration is the act of working together to coordinate service efforts to meet a common goal. The process involves teams that partner with one another to obtain greater resources, share knowledge, learn together and build consensus. Collaboration does not imply any type of authority or hierarchy, but a group of people with similar interests and complementary areas of expertise participating equally.

You and your Quality First coach have the opportunity to collaborate with other early childhood education technical assistance professionals including, but not limited to, Child Care Health Consultants, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants, Inclusion Coaches, ADE Early Childhood Specialists, ADHS Licensing Surveyors, DES Certification Specialists and College Scholarship Specialists as they are available to help with goal setting and quality improvement planning. In addition to collaboration during on-site visits with you and your staff, your coach and other early childhood education technical assistance professionals may meet outside of these visits for planning and coordination of services to support your improvement efforts.

Joint collaboration activities may include:

- Joint visits with you, the Quality First coach and other consultants/technical assistance professionals
- Collaboration on goal setting, identifying action steps, and planning visits
- Feedback and input on your program's strengths and opportunities for growth
- Sharing of training resources and materials
- Joint trainings, Communities of Practice, Professional Learning Communities and other group events focused on quality improvement goals

Collaboration Meeting Policy: Collaboration meetings are a part of participation in Quality First, to coordinate services efforts to meet a common goal. Collaboration meetings are required at least quarterly, and will include the on-site director or owner, the Quality First coach, CCHC and any additional technical support professionals serving the site (such as Inclusion, Smart Support, and ADE). Documentation of the collaboration meeting will be shared with all participating members and input into the extranet activity log as well as put into the Collaboration Binder.

The coach will work with you to schedule a collaboration meeting with you and the Quality First collaboration team that works within your schedule each quarter. During the meeting, you will discuss your quality improvement plans with the collaboration team. One member of the team will keep notes of discussion and decisions made and provide you with a copy.

Quality First Communication Binder Policy: A Quality First communication binder is required in order to establish a system of documentation related to Quality First participation. All Quality First participants are required to maintain a communication binder on-site to collect documentation including copies of the enrollment agreement, assessment reports, coaching logs, and quality improvement plans. This binder must be accessible to all Quality First technical assistance professionals providing services to the program.

TYPES OF SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE

Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC)

Since 1987, CCHCs have been working side by side with early childhood programs to support their efforts in providing a healthy and safe environment for the children, staff, and families they care for every day. In Arizona, a CCHC is a nurse or professional health educator who has completed specialized training based on the most currently established best practice standards. CCHCs provide health and safety trainings and are familiar with licensing requirements and local resources to link early care providers to their community.

Child Care Health Consultation Policy: To support high quality health and safety practices, each full participation model Quality First participant will be assigned a Child Care Health Consultant once officially enrolled. Participants have the option of requesting the level of service needed from Tier 1 – phone and email consultation as needed, Tier 2 – responsive consultation based on an outstanding critical health need, or Tier 3 – regular consultation on a set schedule to support health and safety practices. All Rising Star or Progressing Star must receive a Health and Safety Checklist assessment annually as part of their Quality First participation.

The CCHC assigned to your program will be identified on your program's extranet home page. Your CCHC will contact you to schedule a Health and Safety Checklist, a free service which provides an in-depth look at the health and safety practices at your program.

You and your CCHC can work as a collaborative team to develop a customized plan for health and safety for your unique environment and the specific needs of your program. A few examples of topics you might collaborate on include: development of health and safety policies to support your staff and children's well-being, development of an oral health program and how to incorporate tooth brushing with young children, education and training on nutrition through family style meals, and how to promote daily physical activity both inside and outdoors. You can seek more information on working with a CCHC by contacting the CCHC designated on your Quality First extranet home page.

The Empower program, provided by the Arizona Department of Health Services, provides guidance toward effective health practices in the early care and education setting.

Empower Policy: To help children and families lead healthier lives, participation in Empower is required of all Quality First participants. Participants are required to sign an Empower agreement and have a written policy and implementation for each standard. Empower standards support program health and wellness including nutrition, breastfeeding, physical activity and screen time, tobacco, oral health, sun safety and staff training. Quality First

Your child care health consultant may also provide training and technical assistance on Empower topics. For support, guidance and further information on the Empower program, please visit <https://azADHS.gov/prevention/nutrition-physical-activity/empower/index.php>.

Additional Specialized Assistance

There are a number of additional support services that may be available to your program depending on the region where you are located. Please understand that not all specialized assistance services are available in all regions; therefore, the Birth to Five Helpline offers assistance via the phone for *all* participants who may need support in a specific area.

- The **Birth to Five Helpline** links Quality First participants to experts who will provide telephone consultation in the areas of child care health, early childhood mental health and inclusion of children with special needs.

Reach the Birth to Five Helpline at **877.705. KIDS (5437)**

An example of a how you could use the Helpline would be in the event a child is exhibiting concerning behaviors and a teacher is looking for guidance in how to respond appropriately or to offer valuable resources to the family.

- **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation System (Smart Support)** – Smart Support is an evidence-based strategy proven to support the social and emotional development of all children in care and help providers respond to children with behavioral challenges. In regions that offer this support, consultants are available to work directly with teachers to develop strategies to work most effectively with children in early learning settings. Contact your coach to find out if Smart Support is available in your area.

An example of services that might be provided through Smart Support would be training for teachers on helping children to label emotions and create helpful activities that assist children in learning how to deal with strong feelings.

- **Inclusion of Children with Special Needs** – Inclusion Coaching addresses the need for quality early care and education for young children with special needs ages birth to age 5. Specific focus is on improving skills of child care staff and providing training and assistance to support quality inclusive settings. Contact your coach to find out if Inclusion Coaching is available in your area.

An example of how this specialized assistance could be provided would be in helping you find assistive learning devices for children who may have developmental or learning delays and using these learning tools effectively for the child's benefit.

- **Arizona Department of Education (ADE)** - ADE offers free training to all early childhood professionals throughout the state in a number of areas including the Arizona Early Learning Standards, the Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines, and the Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten. An ADE Early Childhood Specialist may also be available to participants in some regions to support the transition of children from early care and education settings into Kindergarten. Professional development opportunities can be found on ADE's Events Management System at: <http://www.azed.gov/ece/workforce-development>.

An example of the services offered through the Department of Education would be to invite a representative to your facility to offer hands-on training for you and your staff to discuss and learn more about the Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines. If your group is too small to have a representative at your site, you could partner with another participant in your area or have your staff attend a regularly scheduled training.

STRATEGIES TO BENEFIT FROM SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE

In order to make the most of the specialized assistance available to you as a Quality First participant, here are some considerations:

- Do some research to find what types of specialized assistance services are available in your area. Visit ***firstthingsfirst.org***, select Find your Region and insert the address. This will take you to your region page, which includes the regional council members and a selection of publications and resources available for that region.
- Talk with your Quality First coach to discuss your specific needs. Consider some of the goals you have established for program improvement and how specialized assistance can be used to help you meet your goals.
- Reach out to the staff you work with. What are their needs in providing the best care to the children and families they serve? What types of specialized assistance could they engage in to support their teaching?
- Review your assessment reports and find areas that may indicate more work is needed to provide quality care. If it is in the area of creating appropriate lesson plans with the Arizona Early Learning Standards, call the Arizona Department of Education. If it is in the area of Personal Care Routines, call your Child Care Health Consultant.
- Communicate with your families about the types of specialized assistance that you are using in your program. Introduce your families to the coaches and consultants who will be supporting your program as they may see them in your program on a regular basis.

SECTION SIX:

Quality First Professional Development

Professional development is an important part of your Quality First participation and in working toward providing quality care to the children in your program. The opportunity to engage in professional development offers continuous learning for anyone working in the field of early education. Growing in knowledge and developing new skills based on the most recent research and standards of best practice will benefit your program, the staff and the children. There are a variety of ways in which professional development can be offered to you and your staff based on your goals, staff qualifications, unique program needs and availability.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Child Care Exchange Magazine – This professional journal is provided to you free of charge as a Quality First participant and offers valuable information about the field of early care and education with resources to support your staff and the families you serve and ideas for program practice. This magazine will be mailed directly to your program six times per year and is available to you online. If you are not receiving this publication, please contact the Quality First Team at qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org or 602.771.5000.

Arizona Early Childhood Career and Professional Network – The purpose of this valuable resource is to provide information on Workforce Knowledge and Competencies, training and workshop offerings, career opportunities, and access to the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry for early childhood professionals to document and track their experience, education and knowledge over time. The Network is a comprehensive, consistent, and accessible web-based system designed to meet the professional development needs of Arizona’s early childhood professionals from entry to advanced levels and promote high quality professional development.

THE NETWORK INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS:

- A professional development website to promote and provide access to a variety of professional development, career and higher education resources to assist early childhood professionals in keeping their skills and knowledge up to date.
- A web-based Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry to collect and store data about the early childhood workforce. Information such as college credits, work history, workshops completed and site training logs will be stored making it easier for early childhood professionals to keep track of their professional development.

- The Arizona Career Lattice, a tool that early childhood professionals can use for individualized professional assessment, setting professional development goals, and documenting their progress in their career development.
- The Arizona Workforce Knowledge and Competencies, a uniform set of expectations that identify the basic knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for early childhood professionals across sectors of early childhood including early care and education, early intervention, mental health, physical health and social services/child welfare professionals. They ensure implementation of quality services for young children and their families.
- A Job Bank that includes information about early childhood jobs submitted from employers seeking employees as well as information pulled from Indeed.com.
- College Scholarships for Early Childhood Professionals—Well-educated and highly skilled early childhood teachers and staff are strongly linked with positive child outcomes as they enter kindergarten. First Things First College Scholarships for Early Childhood Professionals are meant to provide access to higher education for the early childhood workforce working directly with or on behalf of young children birth to age 5. These scholarships are available to assist early childhood professionals with credential and degree attainment. The application for College Scholarships is found on the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry website.

Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry

Registry Policy: To track early childhood workforce professional development, education, and experience, Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry membership is required of all staff working with children in Quality First participating programs. Information regarding staff education for the Quality First Points Scale Assessment will be obtained from information contained in the Registry.

To create a registry account, visit azearlychildhood.org and click on the registry link at the top right side of the page. Program directors will also need to request administrative access to view and manage their early education program and staffing information. Written instructions are outlined in the Arizona Early Childhood Network Guide at <http://azearlychildhood.org/about/using-the-registry>. A video on how to create a registry account may be viewed at youtu.be/pPnDGuVmk9Q. For more information on how to submit documentation to the Registry, see the FY20 Transcript and Education Documentation Policy in the Resources section of this guide.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFULLY USING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to make the most of professional development, here are some considerations:

- Take advantage of professional development opportunities as often as possible to increase your knowledge and support your understanding of the needs of children and how best to support them. It is never too late to learn new things!
- When you or your staff members attend professional development events or complete coursework through a college or university, provide opportunities for the information to be shared among all members of your team. This will not only create common learning opportunities but also create an advanced skill for the individual sharing the information.
- Create a mentor or on-site coach role in your program for a staff member who has specialized or advanced knowledge or skills so that others can receive ongoing support and mentoring from within your own team.
- Consider the vision, philosophy and values of your program in establishing professional development plans for you and your staff. As you and your staff learn more ways to support the uniqueness of your program, there are greater opportunities for unity and common understanding. For instance, if “risk-taking” for young children is a part of your program philosophy, send your staff to training on how to create safe outdoor play environments that support these types of behaviors.
- Read your *Exchange Magazine* and share it with all of your staff. Share information with families at your program. Do an article review with a group or experiment with new ideas you find on the pages. The *Exchange Magazine* also often publishes opportunities for continuing education credits available online or through correspondence. You also have the opportunity to have your program featured on the magazine jacket cover to showcase quality practices.
- Seek out opportunities to learn about quality improvement efforts and how to be a leader in your program in supporting these changes. Make professional development a part of your goal planning process and have your coach or specialized assistance team help you to grow in this area.
- Create an environment that encourages and supports staff in putting new knowledge into practice.
- Ensure your program’s entire classroom and administrative staff become members of the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. Make enrollment in the Registry a part of your new hire onboarding process, and show new staff how to use the Registry to access professional development. As members, they will have access to professional development opportunities, access to possible college scholarship opportunities, and a place to track all of their education and professional development accomplishments.

- To ensure your program and staff information is up-to-date, make reviewing your program's information a regular practice. The reports available provide you with information about your staff's professional development and education and are accepted by ADHS Child Care Licensing and DES Child Care Certification specialists to document ongoing professional development. These reports are a great tool for supporting you and your staff's professional development. Review these reports regularly to identify core knowledge areas (CKAs) that are underrepresented in each staff member's record. As training needs are identified, create a plan to participate in professional development that meets these needs.

SECTION SEVEN: Quality First Administrative Practices

This section offers guidance on policies and state standards to support your participation in Quality First. These practices are listed in alphabetical order for easy review.

APPEALS PROCESS

Appeals Policy: A participant may only submit a Request for Appeal within 60 days of being notified of a Star Rating or enrollment termination. The Request for Appeal must be submitted in writing to the Quality First Director at First Things First using the Request for Appeal form (see forms). Once received, the Quality First Director and the Senior Director for Early Learning, the Chief Program Officer (CPO), and/or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will review the Request for Appeal and provide a written response, which includes a scheduled meeting date, to you within 14 days of the receipt of the request.

The Appeals Process only applies when a participant appeals a star rating or an enrollment termination. A participant must go through the Assessment Report Clarification Process before appealing a star rating. If you would like to discuss any other specific challenge that you are having, the Clarification and Concern Resolution process is the appropriate route.

All Quality First services and benefits will end upon enrollment termination with the exception of already awarded college scholarships and FTF Professional REWARD\$. If First Things First reenrolls the participant in Quality First as a result of the Appeals Process, the participant may be eligible to receive financial benefits withheld during the period of termination.

While an appeal about a star rating is being considered, the participant's star rating will be masked from public view on the Quality First website.

If you are unsatisfied with the result of your Request for Appeal, you may request a formal hearing conducted by an Administrative Law Judge with the Office of Administrative Hearings. First Things First will notify you in writing when the opportunity to request a formal hearing is available. After receipt of that notice, you will have 30 days to file a request for a hearing in writing. Refer to Step 3 under Clarification and Concern Resolution for more details.

CLARIFICATION AND CONCERN RESOLUTION

The process for clarification, dispute resolution, and appeal is outlined in the graphic on page 62. If you have questions about your assessment results and/or Star Rating, review your assessment reports with your coach, using the All About Books, CLASS manuals, and Points Scale Guidance Document to answer questions. If questions remain, you may initiate the clarification process by submitting an Assessment Report Clarification Request. (For more information, see the Assessment Report Clarification Policy in this guide. A copy of the Assessment Report Clarification Request form is included in the Forms section at the end of this guide.)

If you have other concerns related to your participation in Quality First, including concerns related to technical assistance (e.g., coaching or CCHC), you should contact the coach or CCHC supervisor for support.

Informal Dispute Resolution Policy: Informal Dispute Resolution is available to resolve concerns related to a Quality First services or Quality First Star Rating. If informal methods of resolving the issue have not successfully addressed the participant's concerns, a Quality First Complaint Form may be submitted to the Quality First Director at First Things First including a description of the concern and any attempts made to resolve the issue as well as recommendations of possible solutions.

If your questions or concerns persist after seeking solutions using the Assessment Report Clarification process or through communication with a technical assistance professional supervisor, you have the option to submit a Quality First Complaint Form to the Quality First Director at First Things First. (A copy of the Complaint Form is included at the end of this guide in the Forms section.) In the Complaint form, you will provide a description of your concern and any attempts made to resolve the issue as well as recommendations of possible solutions. The Quality First Director will attempt to resolve the dispute by scheduling a meeting with all involved parties, ideally within 14 calendar days of receiving the Complaint. After the meeting, the Director will make a decision and notify you within 14 days. While a Complaint about a Star Rating is being considered, the participant's Star Rating will be masked from public view on the Quality First website.

This informal dispute resolution process does not apply in the case of an enrollment termination.



- **If you have concerns about your participation in Quality First:**
 - If you have concerns related to technical assistance (coaching or CCHC), you should contact the coach or CCHC supervisor for support.
 - If concerns persist after discussing the issue with a supervisor, you may submit a **Quality First Complaint**. (See forms)
- **If you have questions about your assessments:**
 - If you have questions about your assessment results and/or Star Rating, review your assessment reports with your coach, using the All About Books, CLASS manuals, and Points Scale Guidance Document to answer questions.
 - If questions remain, you may submit a Quality First Assessment Report Clarification Request (see forms). A response will be provided from the assessment program manager within 21 days as possible. (See Assessment Report Clarification Policy on page 41 of this guide.)
 - If concerns persist after completing the assessment clarification process, you may proceed to an appeal or you may submit a **Quality First Complaint**. Submitting a Complaint does not change the timeline for making an appeal.
- **If you are appealing termination from Quality First, begin at step 2, Request for Appeal.**



- A participant may only submit a Request for Appeal to appeal an unresolved Star Rating dispute or enrollment termination. The Request must be submitted within 60 days of being notified of the star rating or termination.
- Once received, the Quality First Director and the Senior Director for Early Learning, the Chief Program Officer (CPO), and/or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will review the Request for Appeal and provide a written response, which includes a scheduled meeting date, to you within 14 days of the receipt of the request. The Quality First Director, Senior Director for Early Learning, Chief Program Officer, and/or the CEO will meet with you and provide a decision on the Request for Appeal.



- If you are unsatisfied with the result of your Request for Appeal, you may request a formal hearing conducted by an Administrative Law Judge with the Office of Administrative Hearings.
- First Things First will notify you in writing when the opportunity to request a formal hearing is available. After receipt of that notice, you will have 30 days to file a request for a hearing in writing. The request must include the name and address of the program seeking the hearing, the decision being appealed and a concise statement of the reasons for the appeal. The request must be provided to First Things First's main office in care of the General Counsel.
- Once a recommendation decision is made by the Office of Administrative Hearings, the First Things First Board will review the decision and take action to accept, reject or modify the recommendation. First Things First will notify you of the final Board decision in writing.

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT (NAEYC)

The Code of Ethical Conduct is a document that provides a framework and guidance for the early childhood professional in working with families and young children. The Code outlines the Core Values of the early childhood profession and details the Ethical Responsibilities to children, to families, to colleagues, and to the community. This Code can help in making ethical decisions and in developing sound policy and practice guidelines for your program. As a Quality First participant, you agree to utilize the principles and ideals of the Code of Ethical Conduct in your work with children, families, colleagues, and the community. A copy of the Code is included in the Resources section of the extranet.

The Code of Ethical Conduct can also be found online at:

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct>.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality Policy: All Quality First partners (coaches, assessors, child care health consultants, supervisors, and other technical assistance professionals) are expected to maintain confidentiality about their work with the assigned Quality First participant. Program records, staff information, assessment results and quality improvement efforts are not made public, nor are they shared with individuals outside of First Things First, except as required by law and state regulatory agencies.

If you feel your confidentiality has not been maintained, please discuss this with your coach or coach supervisor to address this issue.

CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING

Critical Incident Report Policy: For the purpose of documenting critical incidents, the Critical Incident Report is required for all Quality First grantees and agency partners as mandated reporters and technical assistance support providers. This policy must be followed in the event of witnessed incidents or reports of serious health and safety violations, child endangerment, abuse, or neglect. The appropriate authorities will be contacted (as applicable) and a Critical Incident Report will be completed. A copy of the completed Critical Incident Report will be available upon request.

DISENROLLMENT

Program Disenrollment Policy: To end Quality First participation and related services, a disenrollment process must be completed. Participants may voluntarily disenroll from Quality First and submit a signed Disenrollment form to the coach confirming the understanding that all services will be terminated on the date noted. Programs disenrolling from Quality First due to a business closure are advised to redistribute all materials purchased with financial incentives to other providers serving children in the region. Programs disenrolling from Quality First, but continuing to serve children may retain the materials purchased with financial incentives to support their continued work with children. Involuntary disenrollment will be at the discretion of the Quality First Director based on compliance with program requirements.

If you decide to disenroll voluntarily, please submit the Disenrollment form to your coach. If you are disenrolled based on the decision of the Quality First Team, you will be notified and your coach will contact you to sign the Disenrollment form. If your Quality First participation is funded by external sources and that funding ends, your program may be disenrolled.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Policy: Enrollment begins after the initial assessment has been conducted, the participant has been able to review the assessment results, and the Enrollment Agreement is signed by the director or owner. Quality First services including child care health consultation and financial incentives may not begin until after a program is officially enrolled.

E-VERIFY AND LAWFUL PRESENCE

E-Verify and Lawful Presence Policy: To determine eligibility for financial incentives, First Things First is required to collect documentation related to E-Verify Participation and Lawful Presence to ensure compliance with federal and state laws.

A participant that is an “employer” as specially defined in A.R.S. § 23-211 must provide proof to First Things First that the participant is registered with and participating in E-Verify. E-Verify forms will be provided to you by your coach. All participants must complete and return the form, but only “employers” must provide proof of registration with and participation in E-Verify.

When a participant’s child care program is owned in the name of an individual or a sole proprietorship, the owner must complete the Statement of Lawful Presence & Eligibility to Receive Public Benefits form and submit certain documentation (see the form) establishing lawful presence and eligibility. First Things First will email you a link to the form if you need to comply with this requirement.

EXTRANET (DATA SOURCE)

The extranet is where you can access all of your Quality First information in one place and track all of your improvement data over time to note your progress and program status. This data is extremely helpful in keeping up to date on staffing trends, enrollment changes, and your movement in scores across time. The extranet is also used to determine financial incentives, potential scholarship allocations, and assessment scheduling, so the accuracy of this information is critical.

Extranet Update Policy: To ensure accurate and up to date information, the Quality First extranet database must be updated at least quarterly by the participant. All Quality First participants are responsible for updating information in the areas of program information, classroom enrollment, identification of children with special needs, and staffing information. Contact information in the extranet will be used for all communication.

You will receive an invitation to the extranet with your own personal login and password. It may be helpful to note your login information on the front page of this Participant Guide for easy access. If you have challenges logging in or navigating this database for your program, assistance is available at extranet@firstthingsfirst.org. See the extranet User Guide for more detailed information. (A copy of the extranet User Guide is included at the end of this guide in the Resources section.)

LICENSED CAPACITY VERIFICATION (LCV)

Licensed Capacity Verification Policy: To determine financial incentives and other quality improvement benefits for Quality First participants, the participant's licensed capacity is verified. All Quality First participants are responsible for confirming or updating the total licensed capacity and capacity for children age birth to age 5 each year. The License Capacity Verification Form (LCV) is due to the coaching agency no later than March 15 each year. Failure to provide this data may result in future incentives not being accessible. Information about license changes, such as a new license number and/or expiration date, must be submitted to the coaching agency within two weeks of the previous license expiring.

The verification process typically takes place between February and March every year. This data is used to determine your financial incentives in the following fiscal year, so the accuracy of this information is critical. Failure to provide this data may result in future incentives not being accessible.

In the event an LCV form is not submitted or an incorrect LCV form is not corrected and resubmitted by the **March 15** deadline, the following information will be used to determine both the total license capacity and the birth to age 5 capacity:

- **DHS Licensed Participants** – DHS March 1 total license capacity and the current fiscal year’s birth to five capacity. Should the current fiscal year’s birth to five capacity exceed the DHS March 1 license capacity, the DHS March 1 license capacity will serve as the birth to age 5 capacity.
- **DES Licensed Participants** – DES capacity of four or the current fiscal year’s capacity, whichever is lower.
- **Tribal Participants** – Current fiscal year’s birth to age 5 capacity.

MANDATED REPORTING

As an early childhood provider, you are a designated mandated reporter by law (as outlined in A.R.S. § 13-3620). Mandated reporters are individuals who are obligated by law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. In general, any person who has responsibility for the care or treatment of a child is a mandated reporter. Quality First technical assistance professionals, including coaches, assessors and child care health consultants, are required to report suspected cases of abuse and neglect as well. Mandated reporter laws are designed to catch child abuse in its early stages so that children are protected from physical or emotional trauma. If you reasonably believe a child in your program is a victim of abuse or neglect, you are required to report this information to the Department of Child Safety or your local law enforcement authority, though a tribal social services agency may be contacted instead for any child who is a tribal member and who lives on a reservation. If you have an incidence of child abuse in your program, it is your responsibility to contact local law enforcement and your regulatory agency to make a report.

OWNERSHIP CHANGE

Ownership Change Policy: To ensure accurate information about Quality First participation location and ownership as related to funding and access to services, ownership changes must be communicated to your Quality First coach. Participants are required to notify Quality First of changes in licensing and/or ownership immediately and a new enrollment agreement must be signed by the new owner to ensure understanding of the Quality First program guidelines and responsibilities. E-Verify and Lawful Presence documentation will be re-gathered for the new owner.

All programs must remain in good standing and work with their regulatory agency to ensure that the proper paperwork has been filed and approved. Any change in information, including the issuance of a new license or modifications to program size or licensed capacity, must be communicated to your Quality First coach and updated in the extranet, including who has extranet access.

REDISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

If your program closes, it is recommended that all materials purchased with your financial incentives be redistributed to other providers serving children in your region. Your Quality First coach will provide assistance to you. If you will be disenrolling from Quality First, but continue to serve children, you may retain the materials purchased with your financial incentives to support your work with children.

REGULATORY STATUS

Regulatory Status Policy: To ensure all Quality First participants are in good standing with the program's regulatory agency, regulatory status is reviewed on a monthly basis. All Quality First participants are required to maintain regulatory status and remain in good standing to ensure compliance with state regulatory standards (ADHS, DES, and/or tribal or military authority). If a program experiences an event that causes it to be placed in enforcement action with ADHS or on probation or suspension with DES, the program will not have access to Quality First Financial Incentives or receive reimbursement for Quality First Child Care Scholarships during that time. While the program is not in good standing, its Star Rating will not be publicly visible on the internet. Once the program is removed from this status, access to your incentives and reimbursement for all Quality First Scholarships will be reinstated. If a program is noted as not in good standing with its regulatory body for over 60 calendar days or if there is more than one incident in a 12-month period, participation in Quality First may be terminated.

Your program's regulatory status will be monitored on a monthly basis. If your program has been noted in enforcement action or on probation/suspension, you will receive notification from your coach and the scholarships team (if applicable). If you have corrected the issue that caused you to be placed in enforcement action or on probation/suspension, you may submit documentation to the Quality First team to regain access to financial incentives and scholarships reimbursement prior to the next month's reporting period. The documentation must include, if applicable, the signed Enforcement Agreement and proof of the regulatory body's receipt of payment of fines. Documentation must be submitted to the Quality First Team at qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org.

It is important for you to maintain open communication with your Quality First coach and other consultants to help in supporting your compliance with state standards. Your licensing surveyor or certification specialists are also available to support you in the process of creating a plan of improvement for your success.

RELOCATION/MOVING

If your program may be moving to a new location, discuss this move with your Quality First coach to ensure that the new location has Quality First funding available in the region. A program staying in the same region can maintain participation in Quality First with an update in the program information and licensing.

STATE STANDARDS

The State of Arizona through its various agencies has a wealth of resources available to you as an early childhood professional in your work with young children. Quality First, through First Things First, partners with these state agencies in providing documentation to guide your practice.

The following tools are available to you free of charge and are excellent sources of information for you and your program to establish best practices in your work with the children you serve. Trainings for all three of these resources are now available online and free of charge. Please visit the Arizona Department of Education website, <http://www.azed.gov/ece/> for more information.

- **Arizona’s Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines**

Arizona’s Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines are part of a continuum of early learning guidelines that provide a framework for understanding and communicating a common set of developmentally appropriate expectations for young children, presented within a context of shared responsibility and accountability for helping young children meet these expectations. Specifically, these guidelines describe expectations about what infants and toddlers should know and do across multiple domains of development during specific age ranges, as well as what adults can do to support children’s optimal learning and development. (Click on the link below to access these Guidelines.)

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=54efdb1e1130c00eb465d5bc>

- **Arizona Early Learning Standards**

The Arizona Early Learning Standards have been developed to provide a framework for the planning of quality learning experiences for all children three to five years of age. The standards cover a broad range of skill development and provide a useful instructional foundation for children from diverse backgrounds and with diverse abilities. The standards are intended for use by all those who work with young children in any early care and education setting in urban, rural and tribal communities. (Click on the link below to access these Standards.)

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5ba5462a1dcb2507f8788ea1>

- **Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth Through Kindergarten**

The Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten does not contain a list of requirements, but rather a set of recommended practices for programs to use as they strive for excellence in the care and education of young children throughout Arizona. This document is intended to provide guidance by delineating quality and providing a set of indicators that concretely describe what a program will look like when providing high quality early care and education for children birth through age six. (Click on the link below to access these Guidelines.)

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5879561caadebe0c98a80509>

TARGETED SUPPORT PROCESS

Targeted Support Process Policy: A Targeted Support Plan may be initiated to provide short term intensive support to overcome barriers to participation and quality improvement. A Targeted Support Plan identifies barriers toward quality improvement and designates specific steps to be taken to overcome barriers and sustain quality practices. At the end of your Targeted Support Plan timeframe, the plan will be reviewed with the technical assistance professionals to identify next steps and review participation. Inability to comply with the Targeted Support Plan may lead to disenrollment from Quality First.

As a Quality First participant, you are the leader in the improvement process, working together with your coach and other consultants to implement the necessary policies and procedures noted in this Participant Guide. If you experience barriers to compliance with these standards, your coach will partner with you to develop a Targeted Support Plan.

A Targeted Support Plan may be initiated if your program has had regulatory status challenges as noted in the Regulatory Status Policy or is not in compliance with Quality First policies and procedures. A Targeted Support Plan may also be initiated if your program is not progressing as noted below:

- Programs rated at 1 star must increase their rating to a 2 star or higher within 3 assessment cycles. This means that a program rated at 1 star will have 2 years of improvement supports before a 2 star or higher is expected.
- Programs rated at 2 stars must increase their rating to a 3 star or higher within 3 assessment cycles. This means that a program rated at 2 stars will have 2 years of improvement supports before a 3 star or higher is expected.

During the time a program is on a Targeted Support Plan, financial incentives are only accessible if necessary to support the focus of the plan.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE

Temporary Closure Policy: In the event of a short-term program closure or temporarily not serving children 0-5, temporary closure status may be established to place a hold on Quality First services without disenrolling. A participant may request to have temporary closure status for up to 45 days; if the participant does not resume services after 45 days, disenrollment may result.

Some examples of a temporary program closure include:

- Facility/property damage due to natural disasters, such as fire or flooding
- Health epidemic/personal medical conditions
- Lack of enrollment of children birth to age 5

In the event your program has an unexpected closure, you must complete a Temporary Closure Form and submit it to your Quality First coach. Quality First Child Care Scholarships and financial incentives are not available while a program is in temporary closure status. If your program does not resume services after 45 calendar days, your ongoing enrollment in Quality First will be reconsidered, taking into account any extenuating circumstances on a case by case basis.

WAITLIST

Waitlist Policy: Quality First applications are available on the Quality First website and are considered on a first come, first served basis, unless regional priorities are identified. Applications are selected based on regional funding and will be placed on a waitlist until openings are available. Applicants are required to be in good standing with their regulatory body and serving children birth to age 5 for at least 12 hours per week in order to be eligible for selection.

Early care and education providers interested in participating in Quality First must fill out an application online at qualityfirstaz.com. Once the application is submitted, the provider will receive a confirmation email. The application is automatically added to the Quality First waitlist, which is managed by the Quality First team at First Things First. Programs are selected for participation every five weeks between July and March, based on regional funding availability. Prior to program selection, Quality First monitors the status of applicants to ensure they meet eligibility requirements as described in the Application and Waitlist Policy. If an applicant does not meet eligibility requirements, their application will be bypassed but they will remain on the waitlist. They will be eligible for selection once they meet eligibility criteria. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the Quality First team if their application information needs to be updated.

Participant Guide Resources

Fiscal Year 2020



QUALITY FIRST

FIRST THINGS FIRST



User Guide: Extranet Log in- Quality First

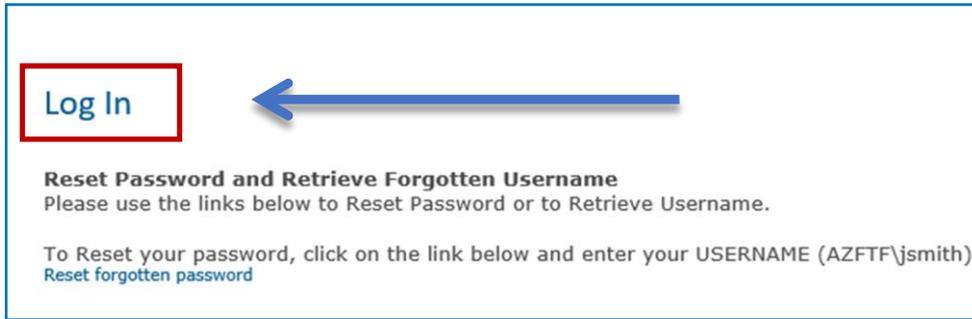


Welcome to the First Things First extranet!

To access the FTF extranet, please go to the following website or click here:

<https://extranet.azftf.gov/extranet/Pages/default.aspx>

1. Click Log In

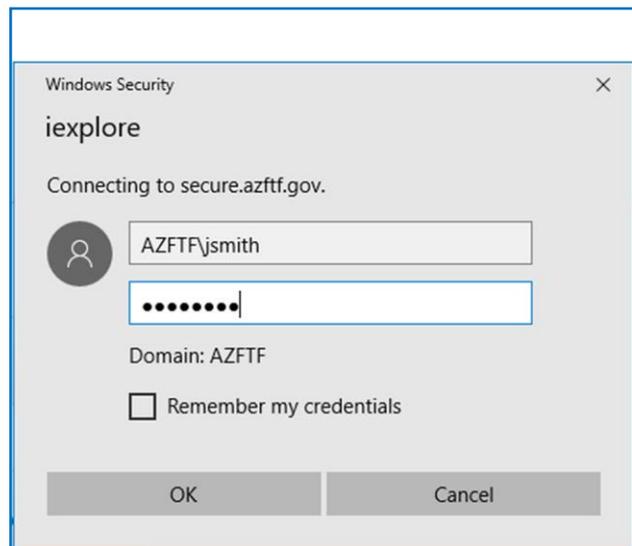


2. Log in window will pop up to enter Username and Password.

- a) Username must include backslash (\); not a forward slash.
 - This is typically the first initial of first name and last name.
- b) Password is case sensitive;
 - You will be sent a temporary password, which you can change once logged in. Passwords must be minimum eight characters and include at least one capital letter and one number.

Username: AZFTF\jsmith

Password: Cartoons8



3. Click Ok. You will be on the main Dashboard. Click on Quality First Graphic.



4. Click on "Quality First Participants" link.

For Technical Support, please email extranet@aztf.gov.
 For Quality First program related questions, please email qualityfirst@aztf.gov.
 For all Child Care Health Consultation program related questions, please email cchc@aztf.gov.

Quality First Announcements

[Recall of Baby Carriers](#) by [lutherland](#) 5/12/2016 9:16 AM
 Twin Go Recalls Baby Carriers Due to Fall Hazard, Please visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website for more information on this recall. <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Recalls/2016/Twin-Go-Recalls-Baby-Carriers/>

Center Lookup

Provider ID

Participant Quick Links

- Quality First Participants

5. Click "Select" to access your Profile.

Show only Inactive Participants

Select status of participants you would like to view:
 Selected Pending Verification Selected for Rating Only Enrolled Participant Rating Only Enrolled Participant CCHC Only

	Provider_ID	Organization Name	Site Name	Address	City	Postal Code	Regional Partnership Council	Provider Type	Status	Flex
<input type="button" value="Select"/>	146	Quality First Test Center	Center #1	123456 Test Center	Phoenix	85205	Coconino Regional Partnership Council	Home	Data Not Verifiable	

6. The first page is the Profile Summary.

Quality First
Profile Summary

Quality First Test Center, Center #1
 Address: 13346 Test Center Phoenix, AZ 85026
 Regional Partnership Council: Cocooning Regional Partnership Council
 Main Contact: First Name: 602-555-1111
 Provider Type: Home
 Home Type: N/A
 Provider Size: Home

Current Users and Assignments

Role	Name	Title	User ID	Phone	E-Mail
Coach	Test Coach	Coach	ADP1234567	602-555-1111	testcoach@qf.net
CCHC	Test CCHC	CCHC	ADP1234567	602-771-1111	testcchc@qf.net
Inclusion Coach	Test Inclusion Coach	Inclusion Coach	ADP1234567	602-771-1111	testinc@qf.net
Mental Health Consultant	Test MHC	MHC	ADP1234567	602-771-1111	testmhc@qf.net
Child Care Center Director	Test Child Care Center Director	Child Care Center Director	ADP1234567	602-771-1111	testdirector@qf.net
Web Contact	First Name	Last Name		602-555-1111	director@qf.net
Primary Program Designer	First Name	Last Name		602-555-1111	director@qf.net

Site Details
 Provider Type: Home
 Contact Information:
 Name: First Name
 Last Name
 Phone: 602-555-1111
 Fax:
 Email: director@qf.net
 Address: 13346 Test Center Phoenix, AZ 85026
 Website: www.qualityfirstaz.com

Program Snapshot
 Size of Site: Home
 Number of Staff:
 Classrooms: 1
 Total Enrolled: 0
 Ages Served:
 Number of Children who are Non-English Speakers:
 Primary Language Used for Instruction:

QF Activities
 Orientation Completed:
 Orientation Completed Date:
 Status: Date Not Verifiable
 Fund Source: FTR/ADE Part 4
 Assessment Cycle:
 Assessment Cycle Rating (QF):
 Assessment Completion Date: 9/25/2015
 Date Current Cycle Ends: Pending

Service Information
 CCHC Service Level:
 QF Tier 2 Export Model Services

7. To update your profile, click on the Left Navigation Link to access each area of your profile.

Extranet

Quality First

Profile Summary

- Site
- Program
- Staffing
- Classroom / Family Group
- Assessment Summary
- Quality First Points Scale
- QF Rating Provider Checklist
- Quality Improvement Plans
- Calendar of Events
- Scholarships
- Print Application

TROUBLESHOOTING USERNAME AND PASSWORD ISSUES FOR THE FTF EXTRANET:

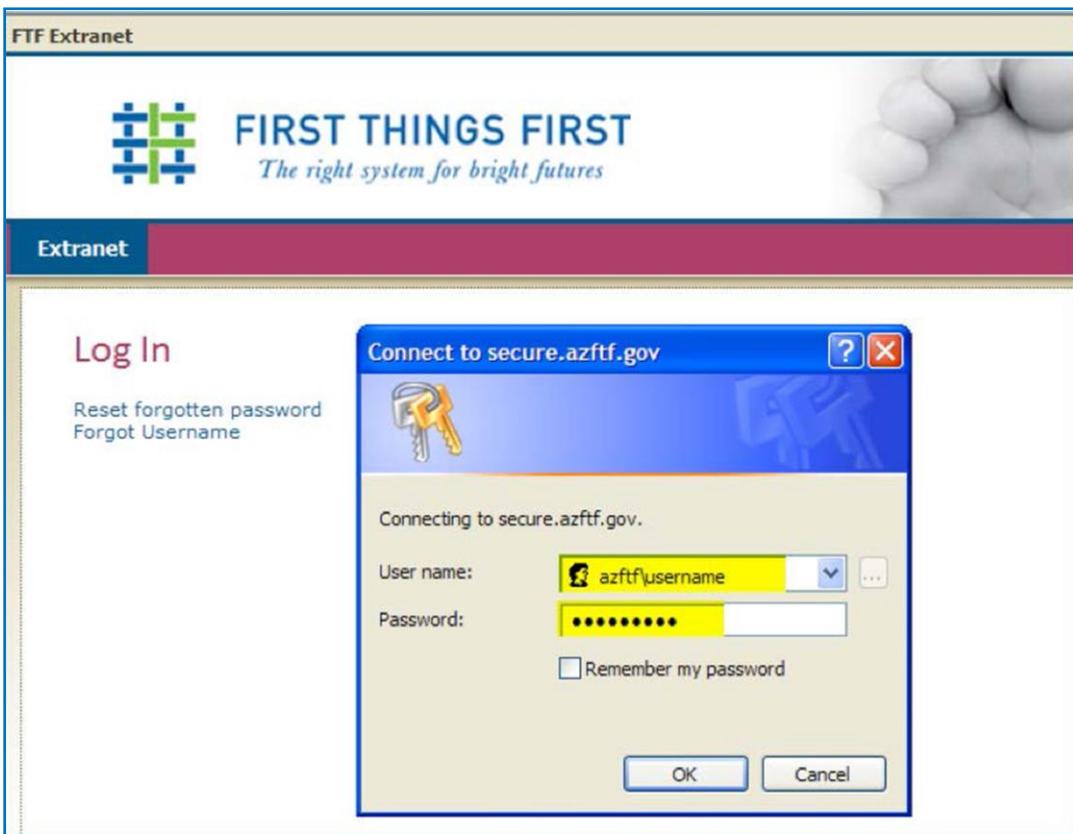
1. Username and Password Error:

Check that your username is being entered correctly.

The back slash is a “ \ ” and must be entered as AZFTF\username.

A common error is for users to put in their username with the forward slash AZFTF/username; this will cause an error.

Your Password is case sensitive.

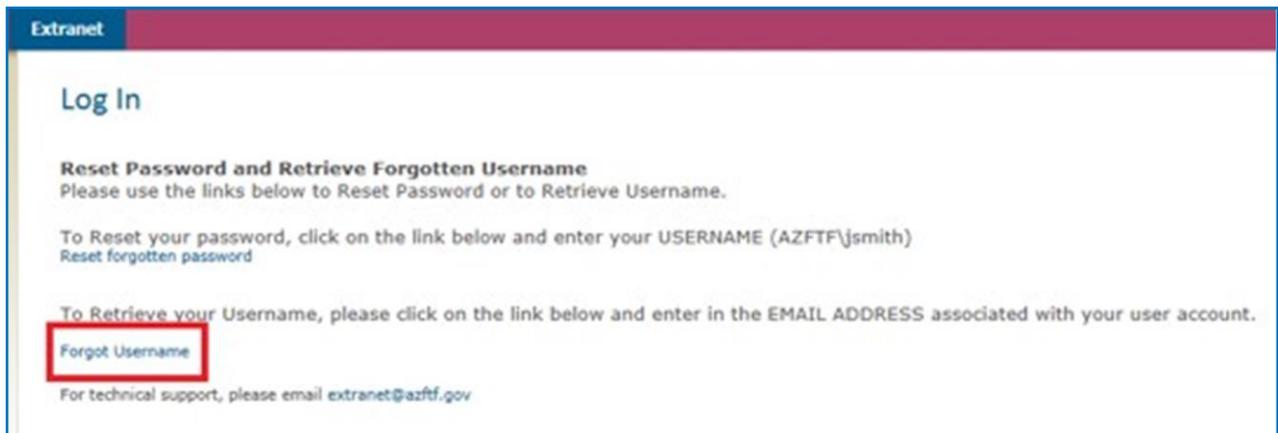


2. Forgotten Your Username:

You can request to have your username sent to you via email by accessing the main FTF extranet Dashboard and selecting the FORGOT USERNAME link.

(<https://extranet.azftf.gov/extranet/Pages/Default.aspx>)

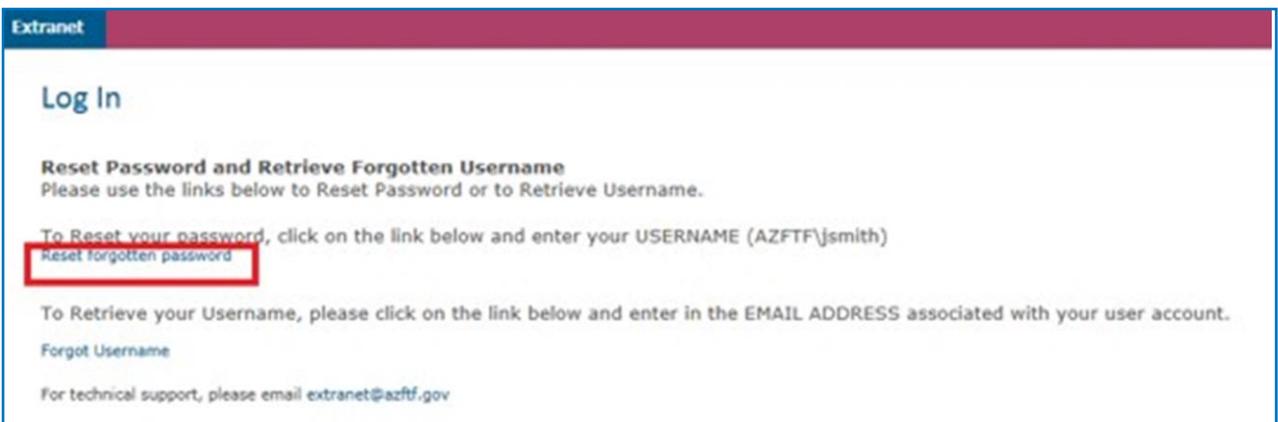
You will be requested to enter in the email address that was used to provide your original username and password. Your username will be emailed to you.



3. Reset Forgotten Password:

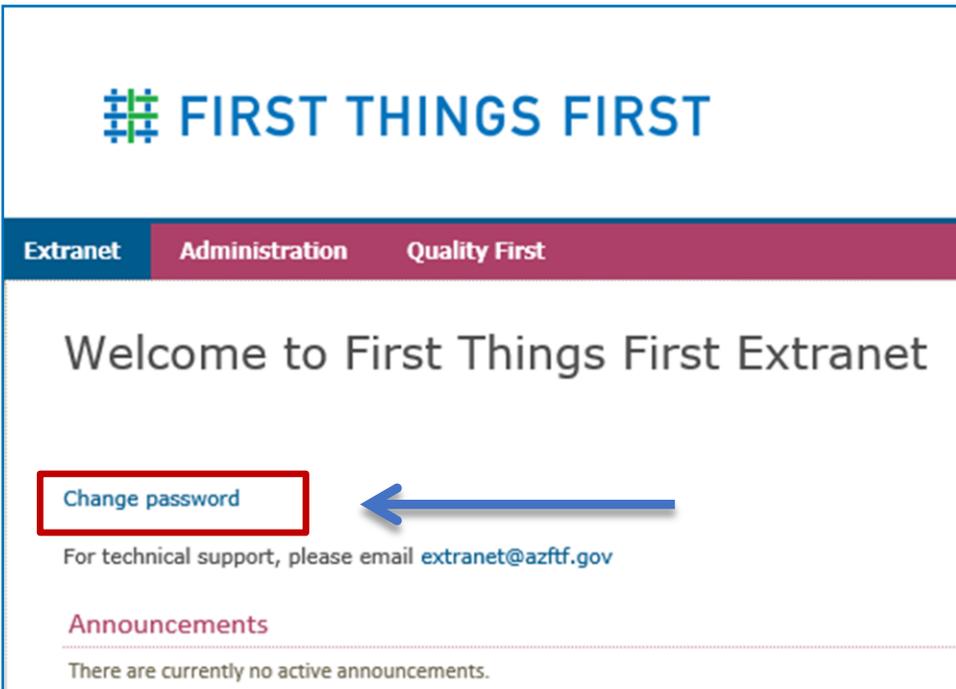
If your username is correct and you need to Reset Forgotten Password you can request a reset password be sent to you by accessing the FTF extranet Dashboard and selecting the RESET FORGOTTENPASSWORD link. (**<https://extranet.azftf.gov/extranet/Pages/Default.aspx>**)

You will be requested to enter in your username (AZFTF\username) that was provided to you. A temporary new password will be emailed to you. If you do not have your username, you must complete the steps in #2 to obtain your username.



4. To Change a Password (not FORGOT Password),

- a) You can change your password by logging into the extranet with your AZFTF\username and password.
- b) Once logged in, you will be at the main Welcome Page of the extranet.
- c) Select the CHANGE PASSWORD link.



- a) You will be prompted to enter your current password along with your New Password and Confirm.
- b) Next, select Change Password.
- c) **IMPORTANT:** a pop-up window will appear after you click Change Password; you will need to enter your Username AND your NEWLY CHANGED password.

d)

Instructions for changing your password:

1. **Please enter your Current Password.** If you do not know your current password, please use the reset password link on the main extranet page to have a temporary password sent to you.
2. **Enter a New Password.** Please see the following requirements for password generation.
Your new password must be a minimum of 8 characters and contain 3 of the 4 groups of following characters:
 - Alpha uppercase
 - Alpha lowercase
 - Numeric
 - Non-alphabetic characters (for example, !, \$, #, %)Your password must not contain more than 2 consecutive characters of your user ID.
3. **Confirm your New Password.**
4. **Click Change Password.** A pop up window will appear requesting you to enter in your username and newly created password. You must complete this set to complete the process.

Current Password: *

New Password: *

Confirm Password: *

IMPORTANT: a pop up window will appear after you click Change Password; you will need to enter your Username AND your NEWLY CHANGED password.

The screenshot shows the 'FTF Extranet' interface. At the top, there is a header with the 'FIRST THINGS FIRST' logo and tagline 'The right system for bright futures'. Below the header is a dark blue bar with the word 'Extranet' in white. The main content area is titled 'Log In' and includes links for 'Reset forgotten password' and 'Forgot Username'. Overlaid on this page is a Windows-style security dialog box titled 'Connect to secure.azftf.gov'. The dialog box contains a key icon, the text 'Connecting to secure.azftf.gov.', a 'User name:' field with a dropdown menu showing 'azftf\username', a 'Password:' field with masked characters, and a 'Remember my password' checkbox. At the bottom of the dialog are 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons.

National Accrediting Organizations

Transcripts must be received from an accredited institution. “Accredited” means approved by the:

New England Association of Schools and Colleges,
Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools,
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools,
Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges,
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or
Western Association of Colleges and Schools

National Early Childhood Education Accrediting Organizations

Association Montessori International (AMI)
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission (NECPA)
Association for Christian Schools International
American Montessori Society (AMS)
National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education (NAC)
National Family Child Care Accreditation (NAFCC)

***Head Start programs are also recognized at the same level as accredited programs**

Points Scale Guidance

Fiscal Year 2020

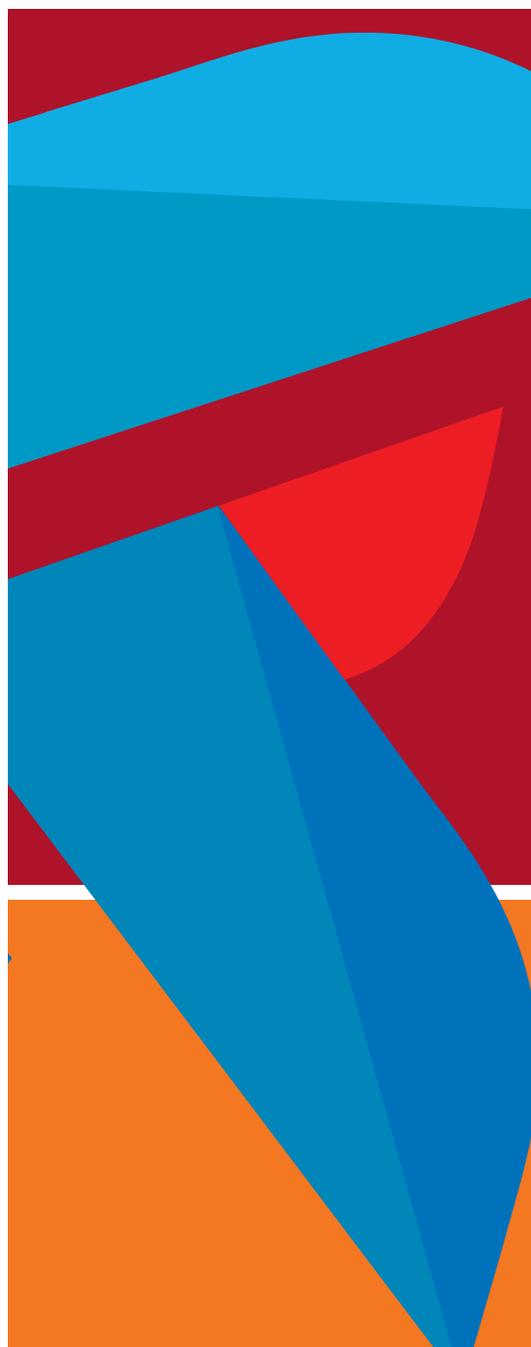


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INTRODUCTION

This Points Scale Guidance Document is designed to help you and your staff prepare for the Quality First Points Scale Assessment. The document is not intended to be used in isolation; rather it should be used alongside the [First Things First Quality First Points Scale rubric](#). The Points Scale rubric is the scoring rubric used to assess your program. This guidance document will help your program gather and/or develop the evidence needed to demonstrate each concept assessed.

The document is divided into three main sections: Staff Qualifications, Administrative Practices, and Curriculum and Child Assessment. These sections mirror the three domains of the Points Scale Assessment. Within each section, there are best practices statements to inform you of why Quality First is assessing the domain. Next, the section will outline the information that is reviewed for each domain during the Points Scale Assessment and indicate whether the data is reviewed by an assessor during the onsite visit or reviewed offsite by Quality First staff using the extranet or [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#). Following this, there is additional information regarding the scoring requirements for each indicator in the Points Scale Assessment. The information includes descriptions of the indicators and the details of each piece of required evidence. At the end of each section are frequently asked questions, definitions, additional resources, and a checklist to help you track that you've gathered all of the required evidence for each domain and indicator. There are also additional documents, such as picture directions and Quality First policies to assist you in preparing.

There are two additional sections within the Fiscal Year 2020 Points Scale Assessment Guidance Document. First, there is a Highlights for FY2020 section. It calls attention to some of the critical practices for this fiscal year. There is also a Primary Caregiving section at the end of the document to provide further details on how to organize and submit information if your program practices the philosophy of primary caregiving.

You are encouraged to utilize this document alongside the [Quality First Points Scale rubric](#). Take time to match the evidence your program has gathered and the indicator(s) to which it aligns. You can self-assess where your program should score in each domain and what is required to achieve full points.

While the Points Scale Guidance Document is comprehensive, you may find you need additional assistance when gathering your evidence. Please feel free to reach out to the Quality First team, whether by asking further questions of your Quality First coach and consultants, the Assessment Team or the First Things First Quality First Team at 602-771-5000 or qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org. We are all here to act as a resource during your preparation.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY2020

The following information includes updates for this fiscal year. The information should not be used in isolation. Please refer to the remainder of the Points Scale Guidance Document as more details regarding each item are provided.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The yellow highlighting found throughout the document spotlights information that is commonly requested by participants. The highlights shift year to year based on the trends of questions from the field.
- Quality First has renamed the “Missing Documents Form” as the “Documentation Review Form.” Please refer to the Curriculum and Child Assessment FAQ section for more information on what the form will capture during the onsite assessment.
- Please remember that programs going through the Points Scale Assessment for the second time, or any cycle thereafter, do not have a six month preparation period. The Points Scale Assessment is conducted in the same timeframe as the program’s ERS and CLASS assessments.
- All documentation a program wants to be considered in the scoring of its Points Scale Assessment must be prepared by the participant’s cycle end date and presented at the time of assessment. This includes all documentation reviewed in-person by the assessment team, as well as documentation reviewed offsite via the [Quality First extranet](#) or [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#). Documentation that is not presented at the time of assessment may not be submitted for review during the assessment clarification process.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

- Education documentation submitted for the Points Scale Assessment will be reviewed using the [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#)’s Participant Education and Professional Development Report.
- To score the Staff Qualifications indicators related to lead teacher and administrator education qualifications, Quality First will access the site’s registry report by the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number documented in the [Quality First extranet](#). All program staff must be included on the registry account with the matching license/certification number.
- All staff members’ years of experience working in an ECE setting is reviewed via the [Quality First extranet](#)’s staffing tab. The participant should complete the hire date and years of previous ECE experience field for each active staff member prior to the Points Scale Assessment.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

- The staff that will be credited in your ratio and group size counts, with the exception of short-term substitutes, must be included on your site’s extranet staffing tab and [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#)’s Participant Education and Professional Development Report.
- A new resource, the [Quality First Staffing Guide](#), was added to the end of the section. The staffing guide can assist your site in understanding how different staff roles and volunteers are considered in the Points Scale Assessment.

CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT

- More details regarding the required ADE trainings for indicators 2a and 6a have been added. This includes a list of trainings that are credited at each point level.
- The process for selecting the classrooms where curriculum/lesson plans and child assessment portfolios will be reviewed has been updated. On the day of the onsite visit, a random draw will be conducted to determine which classrooms' documentation will be assessed.
- A list of technical requirements for written lesson plans and child assessment portfolios has been added. To be credited in the Points Scale Assessment, documentation must meet all of the required technical requirements outlined.
- New examples of how to reflect the use of the Arizona Early Learning Standards or Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines in curriculum planning were added to the written lesson plans section.
- The resources section was updated to include a hyperlink for the newly released 4th edition of the Arizona Early Learning Standards.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

1. WHY IS QUALITY FIRST ASSESSING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS? WHAT RESEARCH AND BEST PRACTICES TELL US THIS IS GOOD FOR CHILDREN?

Arizona's Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten, Standard 1.0: Program Administration and Qualification

Effective program administration is one key ingredient in the successful implementation of an early education program. Through the development of a written philosophy, the identification of efficient operational policies, the hiring of competent and committed staff, and the provision of consistent supervision, program administrators lay the foundation for early education program staff to focus on implementing developmentally appropriate programs. Since professional background and knowledge are critical components to early education program quality, it is necessary to address the experience, competence, and continuous development of staff to improve the early education system in Arizona. Achieving and maintaining the highest levels of quality personnel universally across the varying types of early childhood programs will be an ever-evolving and ongoing process (Arizona Department of Education, 2013).

NAEYC Program Standard 6: Staff Competencies, Preparation, and Support

The program employs and supports teaching and administrative staff that have the qualifications, knowledge and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.

RATIONALE:

Children in early learning programs benefit most when teaching and administrative staff have high levels of formal education and specialized professional preparation. Staff who have specific preparation, knowledge, and skills in child development and early childhood education are more likely to engage in warm, positive interactions with children, offer richer language experiences, and create higher quality learning environments. Opportunities for teaching and administrative staff to receive supportive supervision and to participate in ongoing professional development ensure that their knowledge and skills reflect the profession's ever-changing knowledge base (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2018).

2. HOW WILL THE INFORMATION FOR STAFF QUALIFICATIONS BE ACCESSED?

The information used to score the Staff Qualifications domain of the Quality First Points Scale Assessment is accessed offsite using (a) the Quality First extranet (<http://extranet.azfff.gov>) and (b) the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry (www.azregistry.org).

- 1. The site's extranet staffing tab is used to review all staff members' months of employment at the current program and years of previous experience in early childhood education, working with children birth-8.**

Picture directions for how to update this information are included at the end of this section. Staff members who work directly with children should be included on the site's extranet staffing tab. Information will be gathered from the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry for all active staff members listed on the extranet's staffing tab.

2. The site's Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report from the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry is used to review all lead teacher and administrator education documentation.

Quality First accesses the program's **registry report by the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number documented in the Quality First extranet. All site staff must be included in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry account with the matching license/certification number.** Site staff not included in the registry report for the site's license/certification number will not be credited in the Points Scale Assessment. Documentation that is not presented at the time of assessment may not be submitted for review during the assessment clarification process.

The Arizona Early Childhood Network has created a comprehensive resource to assist individuals in navigating the website and registry. Please refer to the Network Guide for assistance in creating or managing registry accounts (<http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/10172017>).

CENTERS

For each lead teacher and administrator, the information reviewed includes:

1. Months employed at the current program
2. Total years of experience working with children birth-8 prior to employment at the current program
3. Education documentation, including highest degree earned and/or the number of college credits in ECE or a related field. *Please note that only coursework passed with a grade C or better is credited. Quality First does not recognize hashtags.*

For each assistant teacher, the information reviewed includes:

1. Months employed at the current program
2. Total years of experience working with children birth-8 prior to employment at the current program

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

The Staff Qualifications domain is assessed for the person who holds the family child care license/certification. The information reviewed includes:

1. Months employed at current program
2. Total years of experience working with children birth-8 prior to employment at the current program
3. Education documentation, including highest degree earned and/or the number of college credits in ECE or a related field. *Please note that only coursework passed with a grade C or*

better is credited. Quality First does not recognize hashtags.

PARTICIPANTS RECEIVING THEIR FIRST POINTS SCALE ASSESSMENT

All official transcripts, teaching certificates, or other education documentation must be verified by the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry before your Points Scale Preparation End Date.

Education documentation must be submitted directly to the registry. The documentation can be submitted four ways:

1. By U.S. Postal Mail to
Arizona PBS- Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry
555 N. Central Ave., Suite 500
Phoenix, AZ 85004
2. By email to info@thearizonaregistry.org
3. By fax to 602-297-6590, ATTN: Registry Staff
4. By upload in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry (for CDAs and teaching certificates only).
 - Click on **“My Profile”** under **My Tools & Settings**
 - Look for the Participant Files Section
 - Click on **Choose File**. You will upload one file at a time.
 - **Upload Document**

Education documentation that was submitted and verified by Quality First before July 1, 2017, was transferred to the registry on your site’s behalf.

It is the participant’s responsibility to ensure all education documentation to be considered in the scoring of their Points Scale Assessment is verified and viewable on the Registry Participant Education and Professional Development Report for the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number that is documented in the Quality First extranet’s program tab.

Please see the [FY2020 Transcript and Education Documentation](#) Policy located at the end of the Staff Qualifications for further details.

Please refer to the Network Guide for assistance in creating or managing registry accounts (<http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/10172017>).

PARTICIPANTS RECEIVING THEIR SECOND POINTS SCALE ASSESSMENT (OR ANY CYCLE THEREAFTER)

All official transcripts, teaching certificates, or other education documentation must be verified by the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry prior to the start of your assessment cycle. (This date is

located on your extranet profile page under “Date Current Cycle Ends.”)

Education documentation must be submitted directly to the registry. The documentation can be submitted four ways:

1. By U.S. Postal Mail to
Arizona PBS- Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry
555 N. Central Ave., Suite 500
Phoenix, AZ 85004
2. By email to info@thearizonaregistry.org
3. By fax to 602-297-6590, ATTN: Registry Staff
4. By upload in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry (for CDAs and teaching certificates only).
 - Click on “**My Profile**” under **My Tools & Settings**
 - Look for the Participant Files Section
 - Click on **Choose File**. You will upload one file at a time.
 - **Upload Document**

Education documentation that was submitted and verified by Quality First prior to July 1, 2017, was transferred to the registry on your site’s behalf.

It is the participant’s responsibility to ensure all education documentation to be considered in the scoring of their Points Scale Assessment is verified and viewable on the Registry Participant Education and Professional Development Report for the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number that is documented in the Quality First extranet’s program tab.

Please see the [FY2020 Transcript and Education Documentation](#) Policy located at the end of the Staff Qualifications for further details.

Please refer to the Network Guide for assistance in creating or managing registry accounts (<http://azearlychildhood.org/resources--information/network-guide>).

PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE HIRED NEW STAFF MEMBERS OR SUBSTITUTE STAFF NEAR THE TIME OF ASSESSMENT

New staff and substitute staff may be considered in the scoring of the Staff Qualifications domain of the Points Scale Assessment, depending on their length of employment with the program.

For programs receiving their first Points Scale Assessment, any new or substitute staff that meets the criteria below on the Points Scale Preparation end date must be included on the extranet’s staffing tab and the site’s Registry Participant Education and Professional Development Report.

For programs receiving their second Points Scale Assessment or any assessment thereafter, a new staff or substitute staff member who meets the criteria below on the date of your first assessment (either ERS or CLASS) must be included on the site's extranet staffing tab and the site's Registry Participant Education and Professional Development Report.

1. If the administrator has worked onsite for 15 business days, their information will be considered in the scoring of the Staff Qualifications section of the Points Scale Assessment.
2. If a lead teacher has worked in the classroom for 15 classroom days, their information will be considered in the scoring of the Staff Qualifications section of the Points Scale Assessment.
3. If an assistant teacher has worked in the classroom for 15 classroom days, their information will be considered in the Staff Qualifications section of the Points Scale Assessment.

For new and substitute staff, Quality First allows 15 business days after your Points Scale End Date (first Points Scale Assessment) or the date of the first assessment, ERS or CLASS (any other Points Scale Assessment) for education documentation to be verified by the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce registry. Documentation that is not received, verified, and included on the site's Registry Participant Education and Professional Development Report will not be credited in the scoring of the site's Points Scale Assessment.

3. WHAT COURSES, SUBJECTS, OR MAJORS ARE CREDITED IN THE QUALITY FIRST POINTS SCALE ASSESSMENT?

Quality First credits the degrees, courses, and subjects recognized in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Career Lattice.

(http://azearlychildhood.org/uploads/sites/1/Career_Lattice_2nd_edition_3.4.16.pdf)

The degrees, subjects, and courses credited as early childhood education (ECE) are listed on p. 8 of the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Career Lattice.

The degrees, subjects, and courses considered related fields are listed on p.9. For coursework in a related field to be credited, it must:

1. Be closely related to ECE;
2. Have a focus on children birth-8; and
3. The majority of the course objectives must reflect at least one of the eight Workforce Knowledge and Competencies: (<http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/462017/?page=1>)
 - Child Growth and Development
 - Curriculum and Learning Environment
 - Child Observation and Assessment
 - Effective Interactions
 - Health, Safety and Nutrition
 - Family and Community Partnerships

- Professionalism
- Program Management

Additional coursework may be considered on a case-by-case basis. The staff member must contact the [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#) for assistance.

4. WHAT CERTIFICATES AND CREDENTIALS ARE CREDITED IN THE POINTS SCALE ASSESSMENT?

Quality First credits the certificates and credentials recognized in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Career Lattice.

(http://azearlychildhood.org/uploads/sites/1/Career_Lattice_2nd_edition_3.4.16.pdf)

1. A valid Child Development Associate (CDA) credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition
2. Certificate of Completion in Early Childhood Education or a related field from a community college
 - A list of accepted certificates is located on p.9 of the Career Lattice.
3. A valid AZ Teaching Certificate in:
 - Early Childhood Education (Birth-Age 8 or Grade 3)
 - Early Childhood Special Education
 - Elementary Education with an Early Childhood (Birth-Age 8 or Grade 3) Endorsement

Certificates and credentials must be submitted directly to the registry. The documentation can be submitted four ways:

1. By U.S. Postal Mail to
Arizona PBS- Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry
555 N. Central Ave., Suite 500
Phoenix, AZ 85004
2. By email to info@thearizonaregistry.org
3. By fax to 602-297-6590, ATTN: Registry Staff
4. By upload in the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry (CDAs and teaching certificates only).
 - Click on **“My Profile”** under **My Tools & Settings**
 - Look for the Participant Files Section
 - Click on **Choose File**. You will upload one file at a time.
 - **Upload Document**

Documentation submitted and verified by Quality First prior to July 1, 2017, was transferred to the

registry on your site's behalf.

It is the participant's responsibility to ensure all education documentation to be considered in the scoring of their Points Scale Assessment is verified and viewable on the Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report for the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number that is documented in the Quality First extranet's program tab. **Please note that Quality First does not recognize certificates or credentials that have expired. It is your staff's responsibility to submit updated certificates and credentials as needed to document their continued good standing with the National CDA Council or Arizona Department of Education.**

Please see the [FY2020 Transcript and Education Documentation](#) Policy located at the end of the Staff Qualifications for further details.

Please refer to the Network Guide for assistance in creating or managing registry accounts (<http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/10172017>).

5. WHAT IS THE SCORING CRITERIA FOR THE STAFF QUALIFICATIONS DOMAIN?

The Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric is the First Things First Board approved document used for scoring.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS (MUST MEET STANDARDS IN ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
Center Based - Administrators (Director and Assistant Director) and Teachers* have the following education and experience:	Center Based - Assistant Teachers have the following education and experience:	Family Child Care - Providers have the following education and experience:	
2a. July 1, 2011 25% have Education: 12 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields listed in the documentation requirements section OR Certificate of completion in ECE or child development from a community college OR CDA credential AND Experience: 1 year of teaching in or administration of an early care and education program	2b. 50% have experience: 6 months of experience working in an early care and education program	2c. Education: 6 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields listed in the documentation requirements section OR Certificate of completion in ECE or child development from a community college OR CDA AND EXPERIENCE: 1 year of experience in an early care and education program	2 points

* Teacher refers to one who is primarily responsible for the classroom operations, including writing the lesson plans, conducting the parent-teacher conferences, and documenting the children's developmental progress.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS (MUST MEET STANDARDS IN ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
Center Based - Administrators (Director and Assistant Director) and Teachers* have the following education and experience:	Center Based - Assistant Teachers have the following education and experience:	Family Child Care - Providers have the following education and experience:	
<p>4a. A total of 75% have the following education. EDUCATION: 25% HAVE 12 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields listed in the documentation requirements section OR Certificate of completion in ECE or child development from a community college or CDA credential AND 50% HAVE AA or AAS in ECE OR AA or AAS that includes at least 15 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields listed in the documentation requirements section AND EXPERIENCE: 1 year of teaching in or administration of an early care and education program</p>	<p>4b. 50% HAVE EXPERIENCE: 6 months of experience working in an early care and education program</p>	<p>4c. Education: 12 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields listed in the documentation requirements section OR Certificate of completion in ECE or child development from a community college OR CDA credential AND EXPERIENCE: 1 year of experience in an early care and education program</p>	4 points

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS (MUST MEET STANDARDS IN ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
Center Based - Administrators (Director and Assistant Director) and Teachers* have the following education and experience:	Center Based - Assistant Teachers have the following education and experience:	Family Child Care - Providers have the following education and experience:	
<p>6a. 25%** HAVE EDUCATION BA or BS in ECE or related field OR State of AZ Provisional/Standard Teaching Certificate in Early Childhood Education OR State of AZ Provisional/Standard Teaching Certificate in Early Childhood Special Education with ECE endorsement OR State of AZ Provisional/Standard Teaching Certificate in Elementary Education with ECE endorsement AND EXPERIENCE: 6 months of teaching in an early care and education program AND The remaining percentage of teachers meets the requirements at the 2 point level</p>	<p>6b. 50% HAVE EXPERIENCE: 6 months of experience working in an early care and education program</p>	<p>6c. Education: AA or AAS in ECE OR AA or AAS that includes at least 15 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields listed in the documentation requirements section OR BA or BS in any field with at least 15 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields listed in the documentation requirements section AND EXPERIENCE: 1 year of experience in an early care and education program</p>	6 points

6. USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Administrator: The one who is engaged in administrative duties or program practices and onsite at the program more than 50% of the time.

Family Home Child Care Provider: The person who holds the family home child care license/

certification

Lead Teacher: The one who is primarily responsible for classroom operations, including writing lesson plans, conducting parent-teacher conferences, and documenting children's developmental progress.

Short-Term Substitute: A substitute staff member that has worked in the classroom less than 15 days as of the Points Scale Preparation end date for sites in their first Points Scale Assessment. For sites receiving their second Points Scale Assessment or any assessment thereafter, it is a substitute staff member that has worked in the classroom less than 15 days on the day of your first assessment (either ERS or CLASS).

Staff: For Quality First purposes, staff includes paid or unpaid adults working directly with children.

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where should I submit my staff's transcripts, certificates or credentials?

- Please refer sections 2 and 4 above for directions on where to submit education documentation.

My staff's education documentation is visible in the registry and included in my Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report. How do I get the information updated on my extranet staffing tab?

- Quality First transitioned the process of transcript and education review to the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry and is not updating education documentation on a site's extranet staffing tab. We use the site's Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report to assess administrator and lead teacher education documentation during the Points Scale Assessment.

My staff sent education documentation to the registry, but I do not see it on my Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report. What should I do?

- Please contact the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry staff for assistance at info@thearizonaregistry.org. In your request, please provide the following information:
 1. The staff member's first and last name as it appears in the registry;
 2. The staff member's Registry ID number;
 3. Your email address; and
 4. Your daytime phone number.

I have a staff member with a teaching certificate. Can it be counted?

- Please refer to section 4 above or the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Career Lattice for a list of accepted Arizona teaching certificates.
(http://azearlychildhood.org/uploads/sites/1/Career_Lattice_2nd_edition_3.4.16.pdf)

There is substitute staff working in my program right now. How will they be viewed during the Points Scale Assessment?

- Please refer to section 2 above for the requirements to consider a new staff member in the

scoring.

I'm in the process of hiring new staff at my site. Will they be considered in the scoring of Staff Qualifications?

- Please refer to section 2 above for the requirements to consider a new staff member in the Points Scale Assessment.

My staff members' education documentation is verified in the registry, but I think there is a mistake. What should I do?

- Please contact the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry staff for assistance at info@theazregistry.org. In your request, please provide the following information:
 1. The staff member's first and last name as it appears in the registry;
 2. The staff member's Registry ID number;
 3. Your email address; and
 4. Your daytime phone number.

I didn't find an answer to my question. What should I do?

- The FAQs included here are a sampling of information. Review the remainder of the Points Scale Guidance Document to see if your question is answered.
- Talk with one of your site's Quality First technical assistance providers, such as your coach.
- Contact the Quality First Assessment Program Manager, Katie Romero, at 602-633-8652 or kromero@swhd.org.
- Contact the First Things First Quality First Team at 602-771-5000 or qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org.

8. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Arizona Early Childhood Network www.azearlychildhood.org

- Arizona Early Childhood Network Guide <http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/10172017>
- Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Career Lattice <http://azearlychildhood.org/resources--information/arizona-career-lattice>
- Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry www.azregistry.org
- Arizona's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies <http://azearlychildhood.org/resources--information/workforce-knowledge--competencies>

Arizona's Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Childhood Education: Birth through Kindergarten
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5879561caadebe0c98a80509>

National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org

- NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/higher->

[ed/standards](#)

- NAEYC Program Standards <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-naeyc-program-standards>

Quality First Extranet <http://extranet.azftf.gov>

- Extranet question inbox extranet@azftf.gov

9. **AM I READY?**

- All current administrators, lead teachers, and assistant teachers are included on my Quality First extranet staffing tab. This includes new staff and substitute staff who have worked in my program for at least 15 classroom days as of my Points Scale end date (first Points Scale)/ start of my assessment process (all other Points Scales).
- The position title, hire date, and years of previous ECE experience fields for each administrator, lead teacher, and assistant teacher on the extranet's staffing tab are current.
- All staff members have created an Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry account. This includes new staff and substitute staff who have worked in my program for at least 15 classroom days as of my Points Scale end date (first Points Scale) or the start of my assessment process (all other Points Scales).
- Another site administrator or I have administrator access for the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry account under the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number that matches the one in the Quality First extranet to review my staff's information.
- All current staff members are viewable on the Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report under the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number that matches the one in the Quality First extranet.
- Administrators and lead teachers have submitted education documentation to the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.
- I have reviewed my site's Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report to ensure all education documentation I want to be credited in my Points Scale Assessment is included.
- I reviewed the FTF Board approved Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric to see where I believe my site should score in the Staff Qualifications domain of the Points Scale.

FY20 Transcript and Education Documentation

All education documentation, including official transcripts, Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials and teaching certificates, will be verified using the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. To create a registry account, visit azearlychildhood.org and click on the registry link at the top right side of the page.

- Written instructions are outlined in the Arizona Early Childhood Network Guide <http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/10172017>.
- A video on how to create a registry account may be viewed at youtu.be/pPnDGuVmk9Q.

Each staff member must have their own registry account and ensure their information remains up-to-date.

- **Correct name:** Please pay special attention to ensure that current and former last names are included in the registry to ensure that a staff member's transcript can be matched with their account. You may also email the registry staff to alert them if a staff member's transcript name will be different than the name on their registry account.
- **Current employer:** Be sure staff members' current employer is updated to reflect their Quality First site.
- **No duplications:** Please do not create duplicate staff accounts. If staff forget their password or do not know if they have an account, please contact the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry for assistance. Creating duplicate accounts may lead to education documentation being missed during the scoring of your Points Scale Assessment as it is attached to the wrong account.
- **Get help:** For assistance with creating or managing a registry account, please contact the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry at info@thearizonaregistry.org or 1-855-818-6613.

Administrators can view all their staff members on the registry, including on the Registry Participant Education and Professional Development Report.

- Written instructions are outlined in the Arizona Early Childhood Network Guide <http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/10172017>.
- Quality First will access the site's registry report by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), tribal or military license/certification number documented in the Quality First extranet.
- If you have created an alternative registry account for your program, you will need to move the information to the registry site that matches the ADHS, DES, Tribal or Military license/certification number documented in the Quality First extranet. Please contact the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry staff at info@thearizonaregistry.org or 1-855-818-6613 for assistance in this transition.
- Please be sure that all of your staff members are visible on the Registry Education and Professional Development Report for your site. If staff members are missing, please have them update their current employer or contact the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry staff for assistance.

TIMELINES

All education documentation must be received and verified before your program's Points Scale Assessment.

- Education documentation sent from an institute of higher education within the United States must arrive at the registry at least three weeks prior to your program's assessment date to ensure time for processing and verification.
- Education documentation sent from an institute of higher education outside of the United States must arrive at the registry at least six weeks prior to your program's assessment date to ensure time for processing, translation and verification.
 - The Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry is responsible for translating international transcripts. A staff member does not have to seek outside translation services before submitting their documentation.
- It is the participant's responsibility to ensure all staff education documentation they want to be credited in the Points Scale Assessment is received and verified by the registry. Documentation considered toward the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment must be presented at the time of assessment. Documentation not presented at the time of assessment (via the registry) may not be submitted for review during the assessment clarification process.

THINGS TO KNOW

Quality First automatically transferred all education documentation previously received and verified by Southwest Human Development to the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry during fiscal year 2018.

- Quality First staff will utilize the information in the registry as well as the documentation verified in a site's extranet staffing tab during the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment to ensure that all documentation is credited.
- If you have questions about this, please contact your Quality First coach or the First Things First Quality First Team at 602-771-5000 or qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org.

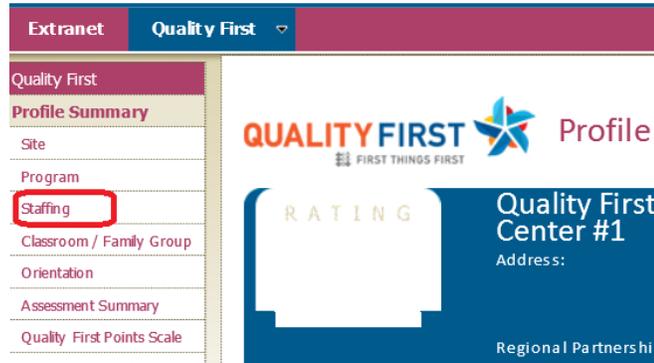
The Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry is a separate program from Quality First and is managed by different staff. For questions about your account, the status of education documentation or coursework credited, please contact the registry staff at info@thearizonaregistry.org or 1-855-818-6613.

There is an appeal process in place if you disagree or question the coursework credited by the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. This process is separate from the Quality First assessment clarification process.

- The process is outlined in the Arizona Early Childhood Network Guide <http://azearlychildhood.org/flipbook/10172017>.
- It is also viewable on the Quality First resources section of the extranet.
- It is the participant's responsibility to initiate and manage the appeals process through the registry.
- The process must be completed before you may submit an assessment clarification request to Quality First requesting a scoring revision.
 - *Please note that Quality First's timelines are not extended for participants going through the registry's appeal process as this should be done before the scoring of your Points Scale Assessment*

How to Update the Extranet's Staffing Tab

1. On the extranet, go to the staffing tab.



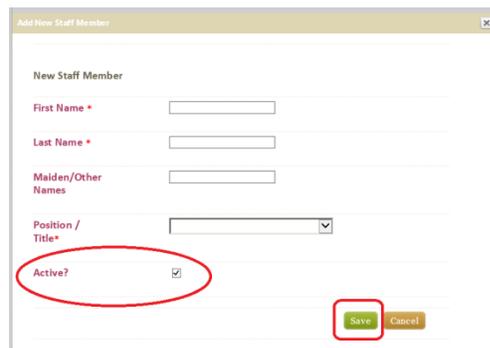
2. To add a new staff member, click on "Add new row."

Staff Members
Click on "Add New Row" to enter staff information. Changes must be saved for each row before saving the Active is for Staff members who are currently Employed. Upon termination or resignation, please uncheck

First Name	Last Name	Maiden / Other Names	Position / Title	Months Employed	Active?	Staff Details	Education Documentation Requested	Re
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Director	39	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Assistant Director		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First Name	Last Name	Maiden	Lead Teacher		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details		
First	Teacher		Assistant Teacher/Class room Aide		<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details		

[+ Add new row](#)

3. Fill out the pop up box with all of the information. Make sure the "Active?" box is checked. Then **click on the green save button.**



Add New Staff Member

New Staff Member

First Name *

Last Name *

Maiden/Other Names

Position / Title*

Active?

[Save](#) [Cancel](#)

4. You should now see the staff member and their position title in the staffing tab.

Staff Members
Click on "Add New Row" to enter staff information. Changes must be saved for each row before saving the entire Active is for Staff members who are currently Employed. Upon termination or resignation, please uncheck Active

First Name	Last Name	Maiden / Other Names	Position / Title	Months Employed	Active?	Staff Details	Education Documentation Requested	Date Requested
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Director	39	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Assistant Director		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Lead Teacher		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details		
First Name	Teacher		Assistant Teacher/Classroom Aide		<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details		

5. Click on "Edit Details" for the staff member just added.

Staff Members
Click on "Add New Row" to enter staff information. Changes must be saved for each row before saving the entire Active is for Staff members who are currently Employed. Upon termination or resignation, please uncheck Active

First Name	Last Name	Maiden / Other Names	Position / Title	Months Employed	Active?	Staff Details	Education Documentation Requested	Date Requested
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Director	39	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Assistant Director		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Lead Teacher		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit		

6. Fill in the "Staff Details" information (with the exception of the end date for employment) and then **click on the green save button** in the box.

Staff Details

First Name:

Last Name:

Maiden/Other Names for Education Identification:

Position/Title:

Active?

Active is for staff members who are currently employed.

Total Years of Early Childhood Experience PRIOR to employment at this site: Years Months

Please use whole numbers to break out experience into number of years and months.

Start Date of Employment at Current Location:

End Date of Employment at Current Location:

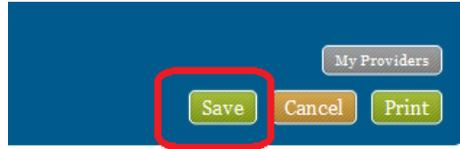
Ethnicity:

Languages Spoken: English Spanish or Spanish Creole Hindi Other Native Born American Korean French Chinese

of Hours Worked in Average Week:

Continuing Training Hours (Non-College Credit):

- When the screen returns to the full page, **click on the green save button** at the top of the page.



- Repeat steps 2-7 for each new staff member.
- To remove a staff member who is no longer employed, start on the staffing tab and click on “Edit details.”

Staff Members

Click on "Add New Row" to enter staff information. Changes must be saved for each row before saving the entire page. Active is for Staff members who are currently Employed. Upon termination or resignation, please uncheck Active.

First Name	Last Name	Maiden / Other Names	Position / Title	Months Employed	Active?	Staff Details	Education Documentation Requested	Date Requested
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Director	39	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First Name	Last Name	Maiden Name	Assistant Director		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	N/A	
First	Last	Maiden	Lead Teacher		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit		

- Uncheck the active button and add the staff member’s end date. Then **click on the green save button**.

Staff Details

First Name

Last Name

Maiden/Other Names for Education Identification

Position/Title

Active?

Active is for staff members who are currently employed.

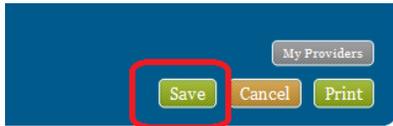
Total Years of Early Childhood Experience PRIOR to employment at this site Years Months

Please use whole numbers to break out experience into number of years and months.

Start Date of Employment at Current Location

End Date of Employment at Current Location

- When the screen returns to the full page, **click on the green save button** at the top of the page.



12. The staff member's name should move to the bottom of your staffing list, underneath all of the active staff members. Also, the totals for current staff members should reflect the change in active staff.

First Name	Last Name	Maiden	Lead Teacher	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details
First	Teacher		Assistant Teacher/Class room Aide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details

[+ Add new row](#)

Staff Information

Number of Active Teachers/Directors/Assistant Directors	3
Number of Active Assistant Teachers	0

13. Repeat steps 9-11 for each staff member no longer employed in the program.

14. To change a staff member's position title or other employment information, repeat steps 5-7.

****Please remember that only staff members who work directly with children should be included in the staffing tab. Information will be gathered from the extranet for all active staff members during the Points Scale assessment. Please consult the [Quality First Staffing Guide](#) if you have questions about which staff members/volunteers should be included on your site's extranet staffing ta**

Quality First Staffing Guide

Providing a high-quality early care and education environment is a team effort, and each team member plays an important role. Teaching staff, management, families, and volunteers all contribute to a child's daily experiences in the early care setting. The purpose of this guide is to support Quality First Participants in understanding how different staff members and volunteers are considered through the lenses of the Quality First assessment tools, the Arizona Department of Health Services Child Care Licensing (ADHS Licensing), and the Department of Economic Security Child Care Administration (DES Certification).



How to use this document:

- Review the staff and volunteers working at your program to ensure you have the required information in each staff member's file, as required by your program's regulating body. This guide includes information pertaining to ADHS Child Care Licensing and DES Child Care Certification. If your program is regulated by a tribal or military authority, please contact your regulating body for specific guidance.
- Review your program's staff to ensure you have accurate and updated information about each staff member on the Quality First Extranet staffing tab and the [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#).
- Identify which staff members' education documentation will be reviewed during the Quality First Points Scale using the Early Childhood Workforce Registry. For more information about education documentation, including timelines for submitting documentation, refer to the [FY20 Transcript and Education Documentation Policy on page 16 of the Points Scale Guidance Document](#).
- Consider the job expectations and employment qualifications your program requires for each role in your program, and how these are communicated to staff, parents, and volunteers.
- Review the document to learn how Quality First assessment and DHS licensing will evaluate your staff members during site visits and assessments.

Things to keep in mind:

- Each program's staffing patterns are unique, and the staff descriptions listed here may not accurately reflect your program's practices. Some job titles, such as Education Coordinator, Curriculum Specialist, or Creative Director are not included in this list due to the variety of functions within these roles. Regardless of the job title, consider the *role* your staff fill and where they fit best within the descriptions listed here. If you have questions, or you are unsure how your staff should be identified, please consult with your Quality First Coach, ADHS licensing surveyor, or your DES Certification Specialist.
- This guide is not meant to be used in isolation; please see the Quality First Points Scale Guidance Document, the [Child Care Licensing Rules for Centers](#) and/or the [Child Care Licensing Rules for Group Homes](#), as applicable, for further information.

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS</p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System- CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirements for Small Group Homes</p> 	<p>DES Requirements for Certified Family Child Care Providers</p> 
<p>Family Child Care Provider- This is the person responsible for the operations of a family child care program. Often, this is also the person providing care and supervision of children.</p> <p><i>May also be called caregiver, provider, or home care provider</i></p>	<p>Interactions between family child care providers and children will be observed during ERS assessment.</p> <p>The majority of the children must be enrolled in the family child care home at least 10 business days for ERS to be completed.</p>	<p>Interactions between family child care providers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>The children must be enrolled in the family child care home at least 20 business days for CLASS to be completed.</p>	<p>The owner/operator of a family child care program should be identified as “director” on the extranet’s staffing tab.</p> <p>First Things First reviews the following to score Staff Qualifications for directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education.* • Coursework in Early Childhood Education and related fields.* • Experience working in an ECE setting. ** <p>First Things First reviews the following to score Curriculum and Child Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care providers have completed the Introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards (AZELS) and the Introduction to Arizona’s Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines (ITDG). ** • Child care providers have completed at least 2 additional modules of the AZELS/ITDG. ** <p>For more information on these trainings, see page 52 of the Quality First Points Scale Guidance Document.</p> <p>Family child care providers are counted in staff to child ratios if they are providing supervision to children.</p> <p><i>*This data is collected from the program’s Staff Education and Professional Development report in the Registry.</i></p> <p><i>**This data is collected from the program’s extranet staffing tab.</i></p>	<p>Family Child Care Providers are counted in staff to child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-3-301-A.1.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Group Homes R9-3-301-A.4.b for guidance on staff files and records.</p>	<p>Family Child Care Providers are counted in adult to child ratios if all eligibility criteria are met in accordance with DES Child Care Administration rules and statutes.</p> <p>See Arizona Department of Economic Security website for eligibility criteria and required documents.</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS</p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System- CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirements for ADHS Small Group Homes</p> 	<p>DES Requirements for Certified Family Child Care Providers</p> 
<p>Family Child Care- Other Family Members</p> <p>In family child care settings, other family members may be present in the home. How these family members are considered depends on their role within the program.</p> <p><i>This may include spouses or other relatives who may live in the home.</i></p>	<p>Unless the family member is typically a part of the child care program and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p> <p>The majority of the children must be enrolled in the family child care home at least 10 business days for ERS to be completed.</p>	<p>The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>The children must be enrolled in the family child care home at least 20 business days for CLASS to be completed.</p>	<p>Family members who are child care staff must be identified as “assistant director,” “lead teacher,” or “assistant teacher,” on the extranet’s staffing tab, depending on the role they serve within the program.</p> <p>Family members who are child care staff: First Things First will assess child care staff based on their role as identified in the extranet. (For example, if a staff member is identified as a lead teacher, they will be assessed as a lead teacher within the Staff Qualifications and Curriculum and Child Assessment sections of the Points Scale Assessment.)</p> <p>Family members who are child care staff are counted in staff to child ratios if they are providing supervision to children.</p> <p>Family members who are not child care staff: First Things First does not consider other family members who are not child care staff when scoring the Quality First Points Scale Assessment. They do not need to be included on the extranet’s staffing tab.</p> <p>Family members who are not child care staff are not counted in staff to child ratios.</p>	<p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Group Homes R9-3-301-A.4.b for guidance on recordkeeping for staff and residents.</p>	<p>Other family members who are age 13 or younger will be counted in the adult to child ratios. Adult family members living in the home must meet all requirements for a home provider, and all required documentation must be provided in accordance with DES Child Care Administrative Rules and Statutes.</p> <p>See Arizona Department of Economic Security website for eligibility criteria and required documents.</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS,ITERS,FCERS</p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System-CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirement</p> 
<p>Owner/Area Manager- This person provides oversight and business administration of the program. This person may have an office off-site and typically spends less than half of their hours on-site at the program.</p> <p><i>May also be the program's business owner. May also be called regional manager, district manager, principal, or supervisor.</i></p>	<p>Unless this staff member is typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>First Things First does not consider Managers in the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Managers do not need to be included on the extranet's staffing tab.</p>	<p>Will be counted in staff to child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.1 and R9-4-101.45.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS,ITERS,FCC ERS</p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System- CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirement</p> 
<p>Director- This is the primary person onsite that is responsible for the planning and daily operations of the program.</p> <p><i>May also be called facility director, center director, site administrator, program administrator, coordinator, or principal.</i></p>	<p>Unless this staff member is typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>First Things First reviews the following to score Staff Qualifications for directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education. * • Coursework in Early Childhood Education and related fields. * • Experience working in an ECE setting. ** <p>First Things First reviews the following to score Curriculum and Child Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors have completed the introduction to the AZELS and ITDG. ** • Directors have completed 2 additional modules of the AZELS/ITDG. ** <p>For more information on these trainings, see pages 52 of the Quality First Points Scale Guidance Document.</p> <p>Directors who have been employed by the program 15 classroom days must submit education documentation to the Registry and be included on the extranet's staffing tab.</p> <p>Directors may be counted in staff: child ratios if they are providing supervision for a group of children, for example, in a teacher's absence.</p> <p><i>*This data is collected from the program's Staff Education and Professional Development report in the Registry.</i></p> <p><i>**This data is collected from the program's extranet staffing tab.</i></p>	<p>May be counted in staff to child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.1 and R9-4-101.45.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales <i>ECERS,ITERS,FCC ERS</i></p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System-CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirement</p> 
<p>Assistant Director- This person provides administration of the program and acts as the director's designee in the director's absence. <i>May also be called facility director designee, office manager, or center assistant.</i></p>	<p>Unless this staff member is typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>First Things First reviews the following to score Staff Qualifications for assistant directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education. * • Coursework in Early Childhood Education and related fields. * • Experience working in an ECE setting. ** <p>First Things First reviews the following to score Curriculum and Child Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant directors have completed the introduction to the AZELS and ITDG. ** • Assistant directors have completed 2 additional modules of the AZELS/ITDG. ** <p>For more information on these trainings, see page 52 of the Quality First Points Scale Guidance Document.</p> <p>Assistant directors who have been employed by the program 15 classroom days must submit education documentation to the Registry and be included on the extranet's staffing tab.</p> <p>Assistant directors may be counted in staff to child ratios if they are providing supervision for a group of children, for example, in a teacher's absence.</p> <p><i>*This data is collected from the program's Staff Education and Professional Development report in the Registry.</i></p> <p><i>**This data is collected from the program's extranet staffing tab.</i></p>	<p>May be counted in staff to child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.2</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS,ITERS,FCCE</p>  <p>RS</p>	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System-CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirement</p> 
<p>Lead Teacher/ Caregiver- This is the person primarily responsible for developing and implementing lesson plans, facilitating activities, documenting children’s developmental progress, and conducting parent-teacher conferences.</p> <p><i>May also be called teacher, primary teacher, co-teacher, co-lead, or guide.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between lead teachers and children will be observed during ERS assessment.</p> <p>The lead teacher must have worked in the classroom with the current group of children for 10 classroom days for ERS to be completed.</p>	<p>Interactions between a lead Teacher and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>The lead teacher must have worked in the classroom with the current group of children for 20 classroom days for CLASS to be completed.</p>	<p>First Things First reviews the following to score Staff Qualifications for lead teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education. * • Coursework in Early Childhood Education and related fields. * • Experience working in an ECE setting. ** <p>First Things First reviews the following to score Curriculum and Child Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead teachers have completed the introduction to the AZELS and ITDG. ** • Lead teachers have completed 2 additional modules of the AZELS/ITDG. ** <p>For more information on these trainings, see page 52 of the Quality First Points Scale Guidance Document.</p> <p>All lead teachers who have been employed by the program 15 classroom days must submit education documentation to the Registry and be included on the extranet’s staffing tab.</p> <p>Lead teachers will be counted in staff to child ratios if they are providing supervision to children.</p> <p><i>*This data is collected from the program’s Staff Education and Professional Development report in the Registry.</i></p> <p><i>**This data is collected from the program’s extranet staffing tab.</i></p>	<p>May be counted in staff to child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.3 and R9-5-101.118.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

Program staff role	Environment Rating Scales- ECERS,ITERS,FCCERS 	Classroom Assessment Scoring System-CLASS- Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant 	Quality First Points Scale Assessment 	ADHS Licensing Requirement 
<p>Assistant Teacher/ Caregiver- This person assists the lead teacher to provide care and supervision of children.</p> <p><i>May also be called instructional assistant, instructional aide, or floater. This may be a college student enrolled in ECE coursework earning practicum hours in an early learning classroom.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between assistant teachers and children will be observed during ERS assessment.</p>	<p>Interactions between assistant teachers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>The assistant teacher must have worked in the classroom with the current group of children for 10 classroom days for CLASS to be completed.</p>	<p>First Things First reviews the following to score staff qualifications for Assistant Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience working in an ECE setting. ** <p>Assistant teachers will be counted in staff to child ratios if they are providing supervision of children.</p> <p>Assistant teachers who have been employed by the program 15 classroom days must be included on the extranet's staffing tab.</p> <p><i>**This data is collected from the program's extranet staffing tab.</i></p>	<p>May be counted in staff to child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.4 and R9-5-101.114.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>
<p>Teacher/Caregiver Aide- This is a person 16 years of age or older who works under the supervision of a lead teacher-caregiver.</p> <p><i>May also be called a student volunteer.</i></p>	<p>If the teacher/caregiver aide is typically a part of the classroom and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will be considered during an ERS assessment.</p> <p>If the teacher/caregiver aide is not typically a part of the classroom staff and does not work with the children for a substantial portion of the day, their interactions will not be considered, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>In order to complete a CLASS assessment, the regular classroom teacher must be present.</p>	<p>First Things First does not consider teacher/caregiver aides in the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Teacher/Caregiver Aides do not need to be included on the extranet's staffing tab.</p>	<p>May not be counted in staff to child ratios.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-401.5-6 for guidance</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS)</p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System-CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirement</p> 
<p>Volunteer Visitor- A community member or parent who, under the supervision of staff, assists with classroom or program activities. <i>May also be called a parent visitor or community volunteer.</i></p>	<p>Unless this person is typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>First Things First does not consider volunteer visitors in the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Volunteer visitors do not need to be included in the extranet's staffing tab.</p>	<p>May not be counted in staff to child ratios.</p>
<p>Volunteer Staff- This person provides child care services without compensation. <i>May also be called a cooperative preschool parent volunteer or student teacher.</i></p>	<p>If the volunteer staff member is typically a part of the classroom and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will be considered during an ERS assessment.</p> <p>If they are not typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or much of the day, their interactions will not be considered unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>If a volunteer staff member regularly participates in classroom activities, they may be considered in the Points Scale Assessment. To be considered in the Points Scale Assessment, volunteer staff must be identified on the extranet's staffing tab.</p> <p>Volunteer staff qualifications are measured within Staff Qualifications based on their role as identified in the extranet. (For example, if a volunteer staff is identified as an assistant teacher, their qualifications will be assessed as an assistant teacher.)</p>	<p>May only be counted in staff to child ratios if they meet the criteria for director, teacher-caregiver, or assistant teacher-caregiver as outlined in R9-5-401. See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

Program staff role	Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS) 	Classroom Assessment Scoring System-CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant 	Quality First Points Scale Assessment 	ADHS Licensing Requirement 
<p>Contractor- This is a person who facilitates activities, but is not employed by the program. <i>May also be called gymnastics coach, literacy program teacher, music teacher.</i></p>	<p>Unless this staff member is typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>First Things First does not consider contractors in the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Contractors do not need to be included on the extranet's staffing tab.</p>	<p>May only be counted in staff to child ratios if they meet the criteria for director, teacher-caregiver, or assistant teacher-caregiver as outlined in R9-5-401. See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS,ITERS,FCCERS</p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System-CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirement</p> 
<p>Student Aide- This is a student under 16 years of age who is participating in an educational, curriculum-based course of study, vocational education, or occupational development program and who, without pay, is present at a facility to receive instruction from and supervision by staff in the provision of child care services. <i>This may include: high school student in a technical education program at a lab school.</i></p>	<p>If the student aide is typically a part of the classroom and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day, their interactions will be considered during an ERS assessment.</p> <p>If the student aide is not typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day or for much of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>First Things First does not consider Student aides in the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Student aides do not need to be included on the extranet's staffing tab.</p>	<p>May not be counted in staff to child ratios.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-101.114 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p>Program staff role</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS)</p> 	<p>Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant)</p> 	<p>Quality First Points Scale Assessment</p> 	<p>ADHS Licensing Requirement</p> 
<p>Therapist- This is a professional who provides individualized services to children at the program. Services are typically provided one-on-one or in very small groups based on a child's identified special need.</p> <p><i>This may include roles such as speech therapist, occupational therapist, literacy specialist.</i></p>	<p>Unless this staff member is typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children for a substantial portion of the day, their interactions will not be considered during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between caregivers and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children. Therapists typically are not observed during CLASS assessments since they usually interact with one child or a small group of children.</p>	<p>First Things First does not consider therapists in the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Therapists do not need to be included in the extranet's staffing tab.</p>	<p>May be counted in staff to child ratios if they meet the criteria for director, teacher-caregiver, or assistant teacher- caregiver as outlined in R9-5-401.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

Program staff role	Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS) 	Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant) 	Quality First Points Scale Assessment 	ADHS Licensing Requirement 
<p>Substitute teacher- An individual who provides child care services in the absence of a teacher/caregiver.</p> <p><i>May also be called sub, temp staff, or teacher on-call.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between substitute teachers and children will be observed during ERS assessment if the substitute teacher has been in the classroom 10 classroom days.</p> <p>The substitute teacher must be in the classroom 10 classroom days for ERS to be completed.</p>	<p>Interactions between a substitute teacher and children will be observed during the CLASS assessment. The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>The substitute teacher must have worked in the classroom with the current group of children 20 business days for CLASS to be completed.</p>	<p>Short-term Substitutes-Substitute teachers who have worked at the program fewer than 15 consecutive classroom days will not be considered for the Staff Qualifications or Curriculum and Child Assessment sections of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Long-term Substitutes-Substitute teachers who have worked at the program at least 15 consecutive classroom days will be considered for the Staff Qualifications and Curriculum and Child Assessment sections of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>All substitute teachers who have worked at the program at least 15 consecutive classroom days must submit education documentation to the Registry and be included on the extranet staffing tab. Identify which role the substitute teacher is filling by selecting “Lead Teacher” or “Assistant Teacher” from the drop-down menu. Substitute teachers who have worked at the program 15 consecutive classroom days or more will be assessed based on the role selected. (Please see “Lead Teacher/Caregiver” and “Assistant Teacher/Caregiver” sections of this chart.)</p> <p>Substitute teachers working at the program (regardless of the length of time) will be counted in staff to child ratios if they are providing supervision to children.</p>	<p>May be counted in staff to child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.</p> <p>See Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402 for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

Program staff role	Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS, FCCERS) 	Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS-Pre-K, CLASS-Toddler, CLASS-Infant) 	Quality First Points Scale Assessment 	ADHS Licensing Requirement 
<p>Technical Assistance Provider- An individual who provides on-site consultation, coaching, training, or technical assistance to early childhood programs and staff. This person is neither employed by the program nor volunteering to provide child care services at the program. Typically, this person is employed by a social service or state agency to provide professional support to the early childhood staff.</p> <p><i>This may include roles such as Quality First Coach, Mental Health Consultant, Inclusion Coach, Child Care Health Consultant, Department of Education Early Childhood Specialist.</i></p>	<p>Because they are not program staff, technical assistance providers are not observed using the Environment Rating Scales Tools.</p>	<p>Because they are not program staff, technical assistance providers are not observed using the CLASS assessments.</p>	<p>First Things First does not consider technical assistance providers in the scoring of the Points Scale Assessment.</p> <p>Technical assistance providers do not need to be included in the extranet's staffing tab.</p>	<p>Because technical assistance providers are not providing direct child care services, they are not counted in staff to child ratios.</p>

Additional Resources on Staffing in Early Care and Education Programs

Arizona's Program Guidelines for High-Quality Early Childhood Education: Birth through Kindergarten
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5879561caadebe0c98a80509>

Barhyte, D. (2018, September/October). Volunteer Management: Leadership Strategies for Success. *Child Care Exchange*.
<https://ccie-catalog.s3.amazonaws.com/library/5024342.pdf>

Harris, L. (2005, September/ October). Staffing at the Child Care Center. *Child Care Exchange*.
<https://www.childcareexchange.com/library/5016570.pdf>

Yastishock, A. (2016, August/September). Miss Nelson is Missing! Preparing for a Substitute Teacher. *Teaching Young Children*, 9 (5) <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/aug2016/miss-nelson-missing-preparing-substitute>

If you have questions about the information in this guide, please contact:

For questions about the Arizona Department of Health Services licensing requirements, contact ADHS at 602-364-2539 or 1-800-615-8555

For questions regarding Quality First Assessment, contact Katie Romero, Quality First Assessment Program Manager at 602-633-8652 or kromero@swhd.org.

For questions about the Quality First program, contact the Quality First Team at First Things First at 602-771-5000 or qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

1. WHY IS QUALITY FIRST ASSESSING ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES? WHAT RESEARCH AND BEST PRACTICES TELL US THIS IS GOOD FOR CHILDREN?

“Group size works to raise program quality, not simply because there is magic in having a particular number of children gathered together, but because when the number of children is small, each child gets more individual attention and interaction is more likely. Small groups do not automatically produce quality; quality lies in what can be achieved because the size of the group is small. Group size is, therefore, a key indicator of program quality (Wilson, 2007).

NAEYC Program Standard 10: Leadership and Management

The program effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

RATIONALE:

Excellent programming requires effective leadership and governance structures and comprehensive, well-functioning administrative policies, procedures, and systems. Effective leadership and management create the environment for high-quality care and education by (a) ensuring compliance with relevant regulations and guidelines; (b) promoting fiscal soundness, program accountability, effective communication, helpful consultative services, and positive community relations; (c) maintaining stable staff; and (d) instituting ongoing program planning as well as continuous quality improvement (NAEYC, 2018).

2. HOW WILL THE INFORMATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES BE ACCESSED?

The information used to score the Administrative Practices domain of the Points Scale Assessment is gathered (a) by the assessment team during the onsite visit and (b) offsite through review of the extranet’s staffing tab at <http://extranet.azftf.gov>.

RATIOS AND GROUP SIZES

The assessment team will collect the information used to score indicators related to ratios and group size during the onsite Points Scale Assessment visit.

The procedures for conducting ratio and group size counts include:

1. Ratios and group size data will be collected for all open classrooms/child care groups serving children birth to five. This includes the assessor coming back on a different day if required by classroom configurations, such as a program with M/W/F and T/TH classrooms. AM/PM classrooms will be assessed separately.
 - a. To maintain consistency and integrity in the assessment cycle date, the Points Scale

Assessment will use the same classroom/child care group information you provided to the assessment team on your first day of assessment, ERS or CLASS, to verify the site's open classrooms. This information is documented using the On-site Assessment Summary Form, signed by the onsite administrator, and a copy is left with the site.

- b. If your program has experienced a change in enrollment and a classroom has been opened or closed since that time, please let the assessor know.
 - c. A single classroom's composition cannot be shifted between the ERS/CLASS assessments and the Points Scale Assessment. This means if a classroom was assessed during the ERS/CLASS as one group of children, it may not be split into more than one group of children (two classrooms sharing the same space, such as in primary care groups) for the Points Scale Assessment.
 - d. If your program utilizes Primary Caregiving and has throughout your assessment cycle, including during the ERS and CLASS assessments, please refer to the Primary Caregiving section of this document for further details on how ratios and group sizes will be assessed.
2. The onsite administrator will provide the following information for each classroom/child care group:
- a. The classroom/group name
 - i. If the current classroom/group name is different than what is listed in the extranet, please inform the assessor of the old and new name.
 - b. The licensed capacity of the classroom/group
 - c. The highest number of children the site allows in the classroom/child care group at one time (self-limit).
 - d. The birthdate of the youngest child enrolled on the classroom/child care group roster. *Please note that ratio and group size counts are assessed based on the birthdate of the youngest child enrolled in the group, whether or not the child is present on the day of assessment.*
 - i. Children who are transitioning into a new classroom (i.e. moving from the Toddler room to the Preschool room) should be included on their primary classroom's roster. The child does not need to be included in the birthdates provided to the assessor for the room the child is transitioning into unless the child is present in the transitioning classroom, under that teachers' supervision at the time of assessment.
 - e. The name(s) of the staff member(s) assigned to the classroom and their position title.
 - i. Please consult the [Quality First Staffing Guide](#) located at the end of this section to determine which staff roles and volunteers may be included in your site's ratio and group size counts.
3. The assessor, accompanied by an onsite administrator, will visit each classroom to document the ratio and group size count. This will be done at two different points in time for each classroom.

- a. The ratio and group size counts will be collected at least two hours apart in full-day programs.
 - b. The ratio and group size counts will be collected at least one hour apart in programs operating four hours or less.
4. The onsite administrator will confirm the name(s) of the staff member(s) present in the classroom for the assessor.
 5. If there are unusual circumstances in the classroom at the time of a ratio and group size count, such as short-term substitutes, unpaid adults, visiting children, children transitioning into the classroom, or missing staff members, it is the onsite administrator's responsibility to share this information verbally with the assessor. The assessor documents the information on the Ratio and Group Size Form.
 - a. All children the staff member(s) have supervisory responsibility for are included in the ratio and group size count. If a child from another classroom or program is visiting and the teacher(s) in the classroom are responsible for the child's safety and well-being, the child will be counted in the ratio.
 - b. If a child is visiting the classroom with a family member and not enrolled in the classroom, they will not be included in the ratio and group size count because the child's family member is responsible for their health and well-being.
 - c. In a family child care home, all children participating in the group that the participant has supervisory responsibility for are considered, whether or not the participant is receiving compensation for the child.
 6. The assessor will state the number of staff and the number of children aloud, and then record the information on the Ratio and Group Size Form.
 7. The onsite administrator initials each ratio/group size count verifying that the ratio and group size count information recorded on the Ratio and Group Size Form matches what both the onsite administrator and assessor observe, including (a) the classroom name, (b) birthdate of the youngest child enrolled, (c) staff member(s) present, (d) the number of children present, and (e) any classroom anomalies.

STAFF RETENTION

The data used to score indicators related to staff retention is accessed (a) offsite using the extranet (<http://extranet.azftf.gov>) and (b) by the assessment team during the onsite visit.

1. All staff members' months of employment at the program will be reviewed in the extranet's staffing tab.
2. The assessment team will review the site's written retention plan during the onsite visit.

A **written staff retention plan** includes information about the policies and benefits offered to staff

that encourage them to stay employed at their current job.

- A staff retention plan is suggested for any program that employs more than one staff member.
- This information may be included as part of an existing document, for example, an employee handbook, company operations manual, or a policy and procedures manual.
- You can also write a new retention plan. The plan may be in any format, but there is a Quality First Retention plan form included on the extranet (<http://extranet.azfff.gov>) in the FY20 Forms file in the Quality First Resources section for your use.
- A sample retention plan form is included at the end of this section for your review.

3. WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO UPDATE IN THE EXTRANET?

1. Update the classroom tab to include all open classrooms serving children birth-5. *Picture directions are included at the end of this section for assistance.*
2. Update the staffing tab to include all active administrators, lead teachers, and assistant teachers' hire date. *Picture directions are included at the end of the Staff Qualifications section for assistance.*

4. WHAT IS THE SCORING CRITERIA FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES DOMAIN?

The Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric is the First Things First Board approved document used for scoring.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES (MUST MEET STANDARDS IN ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
Center Based - Ratios and Group Sizes*** Age of youngest child determines ratio of group. All classrooms will be assessed.	Family Child Care - Ratios and Group Sizes***	All Programs - Retention	
<p>2a. Group sizes are a maximum of no more than two times the ratio of children per a single adult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants 1:5, max of 10 children • 12-24 months 1:6, max of 12 children • 2 year olds 1:8, max of 16 children • 3 year olds 1:13, max of 26 children • 4-5 year olds 1:15, max of 30 children 	<p>2b. Ratios and group sizes are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 5 children enrolled 1:5, max of 5 children • 6-10 children enrolled 1:5, max of 10 children 	<p>2c. In the past 2 years, the retention rate for Director, Assistant Director and Lead Teachers or Family Child Care Provider does not fall below 60%. If a program falls below 60%, 2 points will be earned with a written retention plan to address barriers and propose recommendation to be implemented.</p>	2 points

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES (MUST MEET STANDARDS IN ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
Center Based - Ratios and Group Sizes*** Age of youngest child determines ratio of group. All classrooms will be assessed.	Family Child Care - Ratios and Group Sizes***	All Programs - Retention	
<p>4a. Group sizes are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants 1:5, max of 10 children • 12-24 months 1:6, max of 12 children • 2 year olds 1:8, max of 16 children • 3 year olds 1:12, max of 24 children • 4-5 year olds 1:13, max of 26 children 	<p>4b. Ratios and group sizes are the same as the previous level.</p>	<p>4c. In the past 2 years, the retention rate for Director, Assistant Director and Lead Teachers or Family Child Care Provider does not fall below 65%. If a program falls below 65%, 4 points will be earned with a written retention plan to address barriers and propose recommendation to be implemented.</p>	4 points

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES (MUST MEET STANDARDS IN ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
Center Based - Ratios and Group Sizes*** Age of youngest child determines ratio of group. All classrooms will be assessed.	Family Child Care - Ratios and Group Sizes***	All Programs - Retention	
<p>6a. Ratios and Group sizes meet the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants 1:4, max of 8 children • 12-24 months 1:4, max of 8 children • 2 year olds 1:6, max of 12 children • 3 year olds 1:9, max of 18 children • 4-5 year olds 1:10, max of 20 children 	<p>6b. Ratios and group sizes are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 5 children enrolled 1:4, max of 5 children • 6-10 children enrolled 1:4, max of 10 children 	<p>6c. In the past 3 years, the retention rate for all classroom staff or Family Child Care staff does not fall below 65%. If a program falls below 65%, 6 points will be earned with a written retention plan to address barriers and propose recommendation to be implemented.</p>	

5. USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Enrolled: A child is enrolled at a center or home, not in a classroom or child care group. A child is listed on a classroom roster when they are physically in the classroom and under the supervision of that group’s teaching staff. Quality First requires that children are assigned to their primary classroom. For programs that use enrollment management software, the generated rosters of children should include only children assigned in that room as their primary group. If a child is transitioning or visiting for any other reason, the child’s name can be handwritten on the physical roster in the classroom and the child signed in and out.

Lead Teacher: The one who is primarily responsible for classroom operations, including writing lesson plans, conducting parent-teacher conferences, and documenting children’s developmental progress.

Open Classroom: A classroom or child care group in which there are children currently assigned (on a roster).

Staff Retention Plan: A retention plan that includes policies and benefits offered to staff that encourage them to remain employed at their current job.

6. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need to submit a written staff retention plan if I'm a family child care home?

- Quality First recommends a written staff retention plan be developed for sites who employ more than one staff member. The Points Scale Assessment measures the staff retention percentage for all staff employed, provider and assistants, at the six point level. If less than 65% of all staff have been employed with the program for more than three years, credit for this indicator may still be given if you have a written retention plan in place.
- Please see the Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric above for more details.

How does Quality First look at a child who is not enrolled in the classroom when conducting ratio and group size counts?

- Please see step 5 of the ratio and group size procedure listed in section 2 above for information about which children are considered in the ratio and group size counts.
- Please see the Useful Definitions section for Quality First's definition of enrolled.

Why must an onsite administrator accompany the assessor during both ratio and group size counts?

- This policy provides your site with a level of protection. The onsite administrator will observe the same ratios and group sizes as the assessor and verify the accuracy of the written documentation. Please see section 2 above for the complete Quality First ratio and group size procedure.
- The onsite administrator also has the opportunity to provide additional context or clarification for each ratio and group size count if there are anomalies in the classroom, such as unpaid adults, missing staff members, or visiting children.

Why does Quality First assess ratios and group sizes using the birthdate of the youngest child enrolled in the classroom? Shouldn't it be the youngest child present at the time of assessment?

- The ratios and group sizes established in the Quality First Points Scale Assessment measure best practice. Best practice states that classrooms should have consistent staffing to support the number and ages of the children enrolled in the group, anticipating that the youngest child may be present at any time.
- Please refer to section 7 below for additional resources on supporting best practices in regards to ratios and group sizes and continuity of care.

I didn't find an answer to my question. What should I do?

- The FAQs included here are a sampling of information. Review the remainder of the Points Scale Guidance Document to see if your question is answered.
- Talk with one of your site's Quality First technical assistance providers, such as your coach.
- Contact the Quality First Assessment Program Manager, Katie Romero, at 602-633-8652 or kromero@swhd.org.
- Contact the FTF Quality First Team at 602-771-5000 or qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org.

7. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Arizona's Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Childhood Education: Birth through Kindergarten
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5879561caadebe0c98a80509>

National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org

- NAEYC Program Standards <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-naeyc-program-standards>

Quality First Extranet <http://extranet.azff.gov>

- Extranet question inbox extranet@azff.gov

Wilson, R. A. (2007). Group size- A key indicator of quality.

http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleId=576+

Zero to Three. (2010). How to care for infants and toddlers in groups.

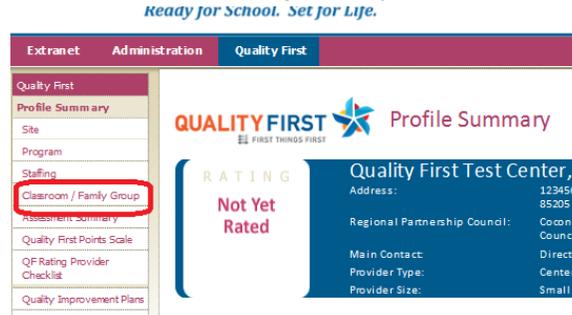
<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups>

8. AM I READY?

- I consulted the Quality First Staffing Guide to determine which staff roles should be included in the extranet's staffing tab, and all current staff members are inputted.
- The position title and hire date fields for each administrator, lead teacher, and assistant teacher are up-to-date on the extranet's staffing tab.
- All open classrooms serving children 0-5 are included on my extranet's classroom/family group tab.
- I am ready to provide an assessor the name, licensed capacity, self-limit capacity, birthdate of the youngest child enrolled, and full names of staff assigned to each open classroom serving children birth to five.
- I have a written staff retention plan in place for my program. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- I reviewed the FTF Board approved Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric to see where I believe my program should score in the Administrative Practices domain.

How to Update the Extranet's Classroom/ Family Group Tab

1. On the extranet, go to the Classroom/Family Group tab.



2. To add an open classroom, click "add classroom."

Classroom/Family Groups

Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit_Details	Assessments
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit_Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit_Details	Assessments
+ Add Classroom									

[Print](#)

3. Fill out the information in the pop-up box and **click the green save button.**

Classroom/Family Group Name*

Classroom/Family Group Active

Checked box indicates an Active Classroom or Family Group. Please uncheck if Classroom/Family Group area is no longer being used.

Number of Children who are Non-English Speakers: Spanish Other
Please list all other non-English languages

Max. Group Size Allowed by Age Group

Ratios Maintained :

Licensed Capacity by Classroom/Home Setting

Number Date Number Last Verified

of Children Five and Under with an IEP

of Children Five and Under with an BSP

of Children Identified with Special Health Needs (Severe allergies, feeding tube, asthma, etc.)

Enrolled By Age: Infants (0 to 12 months) Toddlers (12 to 24 months) 2 year olds 3 year olds 4 year olds 5 year olds

[Save](#) [Cancel](#) [Print](#)

4. You should now see the newly entered classroom in the list.

Classroom/Family Groups

Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit_Details	Assessments
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit_Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit_Details	Assessments
+ Add Classroom									

5. Repeat steps 2-4 for each newly opened classroom.

- To inactivate a classroom that is now closed, find the classroom's name in the list and click on "Edit Details."

Classroom/Family Groups
Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments

[Add Classroom](#)

- Uncheck the "Classroom/Family Group Active" box. Then click the green save button.

Regional Partnership Center: [blurred] Director - Test1 602-555-1111
 Main Contact: [blurred] Center
 Provider Type: [blurred] Small
 Provider Size: [blurred]

Save Cancel Print

Classroom/Family Group Name*

Classroom/Family Group Active

Checked box indicates an Active Classroom or Family Group. Please uncheck if Classroom/Family Group area is no longer being used.

- You should now see the checkmark gone and the classroom has moved to the bottom of the list, underneath all of the active classrooms.

Classroom/Family Groups
Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments

[Add Classroom](#)

- Repeat steps 6-8 for each classroom that no longer has children enrolled (on an attendance roster).

- To update the number of children in a classroom, click on "Edit Details."

Classroom/Family Groups
Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments

[Add Classroom](#)

- Update the information and click the green save button.

Number Date Number Last Verified

of Children Five and Under with an IEP

of Children Five and Under with an IFSP

of Children Identified with Special Health Needs (Severe allergies, feeding tube, asthma, etc.)

Enrolled By Age

Infants (less than one year)	Toddlers (12 to 23 months)	2 year olds	3 year olds	4 year olds	5 year olds
<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Save Cancel Print

12. You should now see the changes in the classroom list.

Classroom/Family Groups
Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments

+ [Add Classroom](#)

13. Repeat steps 10-12 for each classroom required.

14. If you want to make a previously closed classroom active, click on "Edit Details."

Classroom/Family Groups
Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments

+ [Add Classroom](#)

15. Check the "Classroom/Family Group Active" box. Then click the green save button.

Classroom/Family Group Name*

Classroom/Family Group Active

Checked box indicates an Active Classroom or Family Group. Please uncheck if Classroom/Family Group area is no longer being used.

16. You should now see the "Active" box checked when looking at the classroom list.

Classroom/Family Groups
Click on "Add Classroom" to enter individual classroom/family group information.

Classroom	Infants	Toddlers	2year-olds	3year-olds	4year-olds	5year-olds	Active		
ABC	2	4	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
TEST	1	2	1	1	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments
Test2	0	11	0	0	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edit Details	Assessments

+ [Add Classroom](#)

17. Repeat steps 14-16 for each classroom required.

All active classrooms in the extranet will be assessed for ratios/group sizes during the Quality First Points Scale assessment.

An open (active) classroom is one in which children are assigned (i.e., on an attendance roster).

If your program uses primary care groups, each group should be listed separately in the Classroom/Family Groups tab.

PARTICIPANT NAME:	ADDRESS:
PARTICIPANT ID#	
CONTACT PHONE:	DATE PLAN CREATED:
NAME OF COACH:	PARTICIPANT TYPE: <input type="checkbox"/> Center-Based <input type="checkbox"/> Family Child Care

BARRIER <i>List barriers that impact teacher retention. List one barrier per line, with at least one barrier.</i>	PLAN OF ACTION <i>For each barrier, write a plan to address the challenge.</i>	PERSON RESPONSIBLE

Follow up: Upon 6 months from the date the staff retention plan was created, please evaluate the plan(s) of action listed above. If new barriers exist or different plan(s) of action need to be created, please use a new retention plan form to create a new plan. If the retention calculation rate for (1) all lead teachers/administrators and (2) all staff meets the 65% level, complete the current plan of action and no further plan is necessary.

CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT

1. WHY IS QUALITY FIRST ASSESSING CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT? WHAT RESEARCH AND BEST PRACTICES TELL US THIS IS GOOD FOR CHILDREN?

Arizona’s Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten, Standard 3.0: Program Practices: Curriculum, Environment, and Child Assessment

NAEYC defines curriculum as “...the goals for the knowledge and skills to be acquired by children and the plans for learning experiences through which such knowledge and skills will be achieved” (NAEYC, 2003). A high quality early education program recognizes and understands how children’s goals for learning are framed with the context of learning standards and aligns planning of activities and design of environment to stimulate children’s learning across content areas (social-emotional, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, physical development and health, and fine arts). In high quality programs, instructors place as much emphasis on the process of learning as they do on the content and capitalize on children’s natural curiosity to promote language, thinking and problem-solving. Effective early education programs provide a wide variety of planned experiences within an intentionally designed environment that enable children to learn through interaction, exploration, manipulation, and self-discovery. Research clearly demonstrates that children learn more in programs where there is a well-planned and implemented curriculum (Landry, 2007). Therefore, it is essential for every early childhood setting—school, center, family child-care home, tribal, military, and faith-based programs—to have a high quality curriculum which incorporates thoughtful planning and design.

Child assessment in an early education program is the process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting the work children do and how they do it. To ensure that assessment is both reliable and valid, a variety of approaches to data collection that match children’s ages, development and background are used. The information is then used as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child, including designing the environment, planning activities to meet individual and group of children’s needs, monitoring children’s development and learning, and communicating with families. Appropriate and on-going assessment methods are essential if programs are to provide curriculum and experiences that are age and developmentally appropriate, as well as culturally sensitive. Assessment will address all areas of learning, meet the needs of individual students, and include a variety of methods and processes (Arizona Department of Education, 2013).

2. HOW WILL THE INFORMATION FOR CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT BE ACCESSED?

The information used to score the Curriculum and Child Assessment domain of the Quality First Points Scale Assessment is accessed (a) offsite using the Quality First extranet (<http://extranet.azftf.gov>) and (b) by the assessment team during the onsite visit.

All documentation a site wants credited in the scoring of its Points Scale Assessment must be presented at the time of assessment, either in person to the assessor or via the extranet's staffing tab. Documentation that is not presented at the time of assessment may not be submitted for review during the assessment clarification process.

1. The information used to verify staff training requirements is reviewed offsite using the site's extranet staffing tab.

For each lead teacher, administrator, or family child care home provider, the information reviewed includes:

- a. Completion of the introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards training
- b. Completion of the introduction to the Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines training
- c. The number of completed module trainings for the Arizona Early Learning Standards and Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines
- d. The months employed at the current program

2. The assessor collects data during the onsite visit related to curriculum/lesson plans, child assessment portfolios, and written policies and procedures.

3. WHAT TRAININGS ARE REQUIRED IN THE QUALITY FIRST POINTS SCALE ASSESSMENT?

1. To receive credit at the 2 point level, the extranet's staffing tab must document that all lead teachers, administrators, or a family child care provider completed:

- a. Introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards training and
- b. Introduction to the Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines training

2. To receive credit at the 6 point level, the extranet's staffing tab must document that all lead teachers and administrators or a family child care provider attended two of the module trainings listed below:

- AZELS Approaches to Learning module
- AZELS Fine Arts module
- AZELS Language and Literacy module
- AZELS Mathematics module
- AZELS Physical Development, Health, and Safety module
- AZELS Science module
- AZELS Social Emotional module
- AZELS Social Studies module
- ITDG Approaches to Learning module
- ITDG Cognitive Development module
- ITDG Language Development and Communication module

- ITDG Physical and Motor Development module
- ITDG Social Emotional module

INTRODUCTORY TRAINING WAIVERS

1. All lead teachers, administrators, and family home child care providers are required to complete the introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards training, unless:
 - a. The staff member has been employed with the program less than six months at the time of assessment OR
 - b. The staff member has a valid AZ Teaching Certificate with an ECE endorsement verified on the site's Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report
2. All lead teachers, administrators, and family home child care providers are required to attend the introduction to the Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines training, unless
 - a. The staff member has been employed with the program less than six months at the time of assessment.

Please note there is no waiver available for staff with an AZ Teaching Certificate with an ECE endorsement.

MODULE TRAINING WAIVERS

There are no waivers for the module trainings required at the six point level. This is in part because credit at the six point level is not required to achieve any star rating, including the highest rating.

WAYS TO ATTEND THE TRAININGS

The Introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards and Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines trainings (credited at indicator 2a) can be facilitated:

1. In person by the Quality First Coaching Team
2. In person by ADE staff

Please see the ADE calendar of events for scheduled opportunities

<https://ems.azed.gov/Home/Calendar?sd=4956> or contact the ADE Early Childhood Unit at 602-364-1530 or ECEinbox@azed.gov

3. Online through ADE's event management system

<https://ems.azed.gov/Home/Calendar?sd=4956>

[For help with registering for a course in ADE's event management system, please see the ADE EMS Quick Reference Guide.](#)

The Arizona Early Learning Standards and Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines module trainings (credited at indicator 6a) are facilitated in person by ADE staff.

Please see the ADE calendar of events for scheduled opportunities

<https://ems.azed.gov/Home/Calendar?sd=4956> or contact the ADE Early Childhood Unit at 602-364-1530 or ECEinbox@azed.gov

DOCUMENTATION OF ATTENDANCE

When a staff member has attended a training session, please provide a copy of your certificate of attendance to your Quality First coach. Your coach will update the extranet to document for each staff member:

1. Attendance at the introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards training
2. Attendance at the introduction to the Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines training
3. The number of module trainings completed

It is the participant's responsibility to review its staff's training information in the extranet's staffing tab to ensure all attended trainings are documented.

4. WHAT DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR CURRICULUM/LESSON PLANS?

A random draw will be conducted to determine which classrooms' or child care groups' curriculum/lesson plans will be assessed. The random draw process will mirror the process used when conducting a CLASS assessment.

CENTERS:

1. Curriculum/lesson plans from one-third of your preschool classrooms/care groups (3-5 years) and one-third of your infant/toddler classrooms/care groups (birth-36 months) will be reviewed.
2. In each age group (infant/toddler or preschool) your program serves, the assessor will determine the number of classrooms/care groups in that age group to assess curriculum/ lesson plans based on the chart below.
 - 1-3 classrooms = 1 classroom
 - 4-6 classrooms = 2 classrooms
 - 7-9 classrooms = 3 classrooms
 - 10-12 classrooms = 4 classrooms
 - 13 + classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES:

1. If your program operates as one classroom or child care group, then a random draw is not required.
2. If your program operates as more than one classroom or child care group, a random draw will be conducted using the guidelines listed above for centers.

ALL PARTICIPANTS:

The most recently completed four weeks of curriculum/lesson plans for each classroom/child care group selected during the random draw process will be reviewed.

There is no required format for lesson plans/curriculum; your program is encouraged to utilize the format that works best for your program.

Each written lesson plan/curriculum must include the following technical requirements.

1. The name of the classroom/child care group
2. The full dates (month, day, and year) that the curriculum was used.

All documentation a program wants to be credited in the scoring of its Points Scale Assessment must be presented at the time of assessment. Documentation not presented to the assessor at the time of the onsite visit may not be submitted during the assessment clarification process.

A. USE OF THE ARIZONA EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS (AZELS) / INFANT TODDLER DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDELINES (ITDG)

To receive credit at the 2 point level, all written lesson plans must include at least 1 AZELS standard or 1 ITDG domain per week.

1. Use of AZELS standards is assessed for classrooms/child care groups serving children 3-5 years
2. Use of ITDG domains is assessed for classrooms/child care group serving children birth-2 years
3. Documentation must include (a) the AZELS domain or ITDG standard and (b) a corresponding activity on the curriculum/lesson plan.

a. If the activity takes place during a transition or routine care time (i.e. handwashing, diapering, etc.) that is not included on the curriculum/lesson plan form, a written description of the time, along with the domain/standard and activity, must be provided.

Examples of reflecting standards on lesson plans:

A preschool teacher identified the AZELS Language and Literacy Standard as an area of focus for a week. On the lesson plan, there is an activity labeled “reciting rhymes” during group time on Monday.

A family home child care provider identified the ITDG Standard for Physical Health and Well Being as an area of focus for the week. The staff plan to talk about healthy foods during snack time each day. The home’s lesson plan template does not include a pre-made area for snack time. So, the staff writes on the bottom of the lesson plan, “ITDG Physical Health and Well Being: Each day during AM Snack, provide nutritious foods for children to try and talk about what makes each one healthy.”

B. SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A **specific learning objective** documents how the teacher individualizes instruction to meet different children’s needs and interests.

To receive credit at the 4 point level, all written lesson plans must include at least 1 specific learning objective for an individual child or small group of children. *Please note that whole group learning objectives do not meet this requirement.*

The skill/concept identified, the activity during which it will take place, and the child or group of children whom the specific learning objective targets must be written on the lesson plan or an attached document.

1. To protect the identity of the children in your care, coding systems such as initials or symbols may be used rather than writing children's full names.
2. If using a coding system other than initials, a code key must be provided to the assessor so the assessor can interpret your system.
3. If the activity will take place during a transition or routine care time (i.e. handwashing, diapering, etc.) that is not included on the lesson plan form, a written description of the time, along with the activity and specific learning objective, must be included.

If using an attached document for specific learning objectives:

4. The lesson plan/curriculum must include a written statement outlining this practice so the assessor can interpret your system.
5. Items 1-3 from the list above must be met.
6. The attached document must be labeled with the classroom/child care group name.
7. The attached document must include the dates of implementation, including month, day, and year.
8. The attached document must be presented to the assessor alongside the written lesson plan/curriculum to which it corresponds.

If the site stores specific learning objectives within individual child assessment portfolios:

9. The lesson plan/curriculum must include a written statement outlining this practice so the assessor can interpret your system.
10. Items 1-3 from the list above must be met.
11. The attached document must be labeled with the child's first and last name.
12. The attached document must include the dates of implementation, including month, day, and year.
13. There must be at least 1 activity on each written lesson plan/curriculum that matches the specific learning objectives noted on the document. *Please note that if there is no alignment between the lesson plans activities and the specific learning objective, credit will not be given.*

Examples of specific learning objectives for children:

A teacher plans to use the classroom's math time to work in small groups. Although all children will participate in a beading activity, small groups of children will work on different skills. Group A will work AB patterns, Group B will work on AABB patterns, and Group C will work on AABC patterns. The teacher documents the activity (small group patterning by AB, AABB, or AABC), the activity time (math time), and the children the skill is targeted for (each subgroup must be identified with the children it includes using initials or other coding systems).

A teacher may plan a small group activity for a set of children that have shared an interest in the

same skill. For instance, during free play, the teacher plans to initiate a small group that works on one-to-one correspondence. The teacher documents the activity (small group for one-to-one correspondence), the activity time (during free play), and the children the skill is targeted for (either by initials or another coding system).

A teacher may facilitate an activity designed to help one child build a skill, but do so in a small group or whole group setting. For example, a teacher identifies a child that needs practice balancing on one foot. She plans to have the whole group practice this skill while waiting to wash hands before lunch. The teacher documents the activity (balancing on one foot), the activity time (during the handwashing routine before lunch), and the child the skill is targeted for (either by initials or a coding system).

C. STRATEGIES, MODIFICATIONS, AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A **strategy, adaptation or modification** identifies the resources a teacher will introduce into the environment to allow a child with special needs to fully participate in the activity.

To receive credit at the 6 point level, all written lesson plans must include at least 1 strategy, modification and/or accommodation for children with an IEP, IFSP, or specialized health concern. *Please note that you are not required to provide the child's name, the area of special need, or paperwork (including an IEP or IFSP) to the assessor.*

The strategy, accommodation and/or modification and the child or group of children whom it targets must be written on the lesson plan or an attached document.

1. The assessor will ask before reviewing any lesson plans/curriculum if there are children with special needs or special health concerns enrolled in the classroom. If the onsite administrator answers yes, the indicator is scored. If the onsite administrator answers no, the indicator is marked N/A.
2. To protect the identity of the children in your care, coding systems such as initials or symbols may be used rather than writing children's full names.
3. If using a coding system other than initials, a code key must be provided to the assessor so they can interpret your system.
4. If the activity will take place during a transition or routine care time (i.e. handwashing, diapering, etc.) that is not included on the lesson plan form, a written description of the time, along with the activity and strategy, accommodation or modification, must be included.

If using an attached document for documenting strategies, accommodations and/or modifications for children with special needs:

5. The lesson plan/curriculum must include a written statement outlining this practice so the assessor can interpret your system.
6. Items 2-4 from the list above must be met.
7. The attached document must be labeled with the classroom/child care group name.
8. The attached document must include the dates of implementation, including month, day, and

year.

9. The attached document must be presented to the assessor alongside the written lesson plan/curriculum to which it corresponds.

If the program stores documentation of strategies, accommodations and/or modifications for children with special needs within individual child assessment portfolios:

10. The lesson plan/curriculum must include a written statement outlining this practice so the assessor can interpret your system.
11. Items 2-4 from the list above must be met.
12. The attached document must be labeled with the child's first and last name.
13. The attached document must include the dates of implementation, including month, day, and year.
14. There must be at least 1 activity on each written lesson plan/curriculum that matches the specific learning objectives noted on the document. *Please note that if there is no alignment between the lesson plan activities and strategy, accommodation and/or modification, credit will not be given.*

Examples of strategies, accommodations, and/or modifications:

There is a child in your class with special needs in the area of fine motor. You know that during art activities, the child must be provided a glue stick rather than a glue bottle to work independently. The teacher documents the accommodation (providing a glue stick), the activity (in the art center during free play), and the child the accommodation targets (either by initials or another coding system).

There is a child with a language delay in your classroom. The child's IEP states that he should be provided clear, one step directions. The teacher documents the strategy (stating clear, one step directions), the activity (during clean-up times), and the child the strategy targets (either by initials or another coding system).

There is an infant in your care with delayed motor skills. You know that to play with an infant gym successfully, the hanging objects must be large-sized and made of a non-slippery material. The teacher documents their strategy (providing large, non-slippery hanging objects to encourage reaching and grasping), the activity (while using the infant gym), and the child the strategy targets (either by initials or another coding system).

5. WHAT DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR CHILD ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS?

A random draw will be conducted to determine which classrooms' or child care groups' child assessment portfolios will be assessed. The random draw process will mirror the process used when conducting a CLASS assessment.

CENTERS:

1. Child assessment portfolios from one-third of your preschool classrooms/care groups (3-5 years) and

one-third of your infant/toddler classrooms/care groups (birth-36 months) will be reviewed.

2. In each age group (infant/toddler or preschool) your program serves, the assessor will determine the number of classrooms/care groups in that age group to assess curriculum/ lesson plans based on the chart below.
 - 1-3 classrooms = 1 classroom
 - 4-6 classrooms = 2 classrooms
 - 7-9 classrooms = 3 classrooms
 - 10-12 classrooms = 4 classrooms
 - 13 + classrooms = 1/3 of the number of classrooms

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES:

1. If your program operates as one classroom or child care group, then a random draw is not required.
2. If your program operates as more than one classroom or child care group, a random draw will be conducted using the guidelines listed above for centers.

ALL PARTICIPANTS:

For each classroom/child care group that was randomly selected, four child assessment portfolios will be randomly selected on the day of the onsite visit for review by the assessor.

1. Please have current classroom/child care group rosters available for the assessor during the random draw process.
2. Children must have been in attendance for 30 classroom days in the past six months to be eligible for review.
3. If a child has not been in attendance for 30 classroom days in the past six months, a re-draw will be conducted to choose an eligible portfolio. ***Please note that it is the participant's responsibility to inform the assessor if they believe any child is ineligible for review during the random draw process. The assessor will confirm the child's eligibility or lack of eligibility with the site administrator during the random draw process.***

There is no required format for child assessment portfolios; your program is encouraged to utilize the format that best meets your program's needs.

1. If your site uses an electronic child assessment system, the information must be presented to the assessor in a "frozen" state, such as by PDF. *Instructions for downloading child assessment portfolio information in Teaching Strategies Gold are included at the end of this section.*
2. If your program uses an electronic system that cannot be placed into a "frozen" state, the documentation must be printed out for the assessor to review.
3. **If you use a mix of formats, some hardcopy and some electronic, all information should be provided to the assessor for review.**
4. All documentation a participant wants to be credited in the scoring of their Points Scale Assessment must be presented at the time of assessment. Documentation not presented to the assessor at the time of the onsite visit may not be submitted during the assessment

clarification process.

5. If the program's electronic curriculum or child assessment system encounters errors, it is the participant's responsibility to share written documentation, such as a screenshot or email from the system administrator, with the assessor. For example, if the system is down for maintenance at the time of assessment or if one of the system's features is unavailable to staff. If possible, the participant should notify the assessor before the start of the Points Scale Assessment if there are any known issues.

ACCEPTED DOCUMENTATION METHODS

Methods of documentation should match children's ages, abilities, and background (ADE, 2013). Quality First recognizes three forms of documentation.

1. **Anecdotal Note:** Short written descriptions of what a teacher sees and hears a child doing throughout the day. A photo may accompany the note as an additional way of tracking developmental information about the child. *Please note that a photo must have a written description, so there is context about what area of development is being highlighted.*
2. **Developmental Checklist:** A checklist that shows the developmental milestone a child reaches at a certain age. Use of the checklist can show whether a child is reaching developmental milestones at the anticipated age range (the rate of a typical peer) or if there is a need for further assessment in a developmental area because the child is not meeting the anticipated milestone.
3. **Work Sample:** A tangible piece of evidence created by the child. *Please note that a work sample must include a completed child-created product, such as a photograph of a finished block tower or an original piece of artwork. A photo of a child participating in an activity, such as riding a bike or sharing with peers, is not a work sample as the child does not create a tangible piece of evidence.*

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

All child assessment portfolio documentation must meet the following technical requirements to be credited:

1. Each piece of documentation must include the child's first and last name.
2. Each piece of documentation must include a date of collection, including the month, day, and year.
3. Each piece of documentation must include labeling of the developmental domain(s) it represents.
4. Documentation must be collected within the past 12 months of the date of the onsite assessment to be credited.
5. Documentation must be specific to the child whose portfolio is being reviewed. If a piece of documentation references a group of children, it must also include at least one statement that references the individual child and their developmental information.
6. Child assessment portfolio documentation is reviewed per child, not per classroom. If a child is

enrolled in more than one classroom, documentation from all classrooms/child care groups may be presented to provide a full picture of the child's development.

7. Each piece of documentation must be legible/viewable. *Please note that electronic documentation that is too small/blurry for the assessor to view cannot be credited. Please review scanned/uploaded documentation to ensure that it meets requirements.*

A. EACH CHILD ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO MUST INCLUDE DOCUMENTATION IN THE FOUR DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS

To receive credit at the 2 point level, the child assessment portfolios randomly selected for review must include all of the following:

1. Documentation that meets Quality First's definition of an anecdotal note, developmental checklist, or work sample;
2. Documentation that meets the technical requirements listed in the section above;
3. One piece of evidence documenting the child's social development;
 - a. Social development involves growing awareness of social values and expectations and developing skills that allow a child to relate to others, form relationships, and positively contribute to society.
4. One piece of evidence documenting the child's emotional development;
 - a. Emotional development involves a child increasing his capacity to experience and express personal feelings as well as recognize and interpret those of others.
5. One piece of evidence documenting the child's cognitive development;
 - a. Cognitive development includes progressively building thinking and learning skills that allow a child to process sensory information and then later evaluate, analyze, remember, and make comparisons.
6. One piece of evidence documenting the child's physical development; and
 - a. Physical development involves a child developing control over their body, including muscle coordination, and increasing their knowledge and skills to develop healthy life-long habits.
7. The documentation must be collected by program staff. *Please note that documentation provided by families is credited as family input at the 4 point level.*

ALIGNMENT

1. The developmental domains assessed in the Points Scale Assessment align with the learning domains in Arizona's State Standards.
 - a. Arizona Early Learning Standards (AZELS)
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5ba5462a1dcb2507f8788ea1>
 - b. Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines (ITDG)
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=54efdb1e1130c00eb465d5bc>
2. The developmental domains assessed align with Teaching Strategies Gold's (TSG) Objectives for Development & Learning: Birth through Third Grade.
<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=586d752daadebe1114465447>
3. Please refer to the Quality First Points Scale Child Assessment Review form on the [extranet](#) for more descriptions on how the Arizona Early Learning Standards and Infant Toddler

Developmental Guidelines strands and concepts are aligned with the four domains in the Points Scale Assessment.

4. The terms/labels used by AZELS, ITDG or TSG are recognized as labels of developmental domains in the areas to which they are aligned.

B. A VARIETY OF METHODS ARE USED TO DOCUMENT CHILDREN'S ONGOING DEVELOPMENT

To receive credit at the 4 point level, in each classroom/child care group, at least 2 of 3 documentation methods must be used to gather evidence of children's ongoing development and progress.

When looking across the four child assessment portfolios in a classroom/child care group, there must be examples credited as:

1. Anecdotal notes and developmental checklists;
2. Anecdotal notes and work samples;
3. Developmental checklists and work samples; or
4. Anecdotal notes, developmental checklists, and work samples

Please note that each developmental domain does not need more than one method. For example, all social development samples may be developmental checklists, but there are anecdotal notes or work samples as evidence for physical development.

C. FAMILY INPUT

To receive credit at the 4 point level, all child assessment portfolios randomly selected for review must include family input.

Family input consists of information about a child's development that comes from the family to the program to support the program's understanding of the child. Families offer insight into how their child develops outside of the classroom/child care group environment. The information is important for consideration in developing learning plans and objectives.

There is not a required format for family input; you are encouraged to use the documentation that best works for your program, for example, a Best of Care Form or another intake form, home visiting or parent-teacher conference notes that includes the family's perspective, or parent questionnaires.

To be credited, family input must meet the following requirements:

1. It must include information from the family to the program about a child's development.
2. It must include the child's first and last name.
3. It must include a parent/guardian signature. *Please note that electronic signatures are accepted as long as the site also provides a copy of a statement to families explaining this practice for the assessor to review.*
4. It must include the date of collection, including month, day, and year.
5. **The documentation's date of collection must be within the past 12 months as of the date of the**

onsite assessment. *Please note that family input must be gathered at least annually as children's growth and development changes rapidly in the early years.*

Quality First recognizes that some families may be hesitant to share information with participants. Every effort should be made to collect documentation through multiple means. However, credit is given on a case-by-case basis when family input is not present in a portfolio if:

1. The teacher documents the dates they attempted to gather family input and
2. Provides a copy of the family input form they attempted to collect.

6. WHAT DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR MY SITE'S WRITTEN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ASSESSMENT?

There is no required format for the policies and procedures. The site is encouraged to use ones already in place as part of an employee handbook, family handbook or other operations manual if available.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

A **parent-teacher conference policy** is written documentation that includes how often parent-teacher conferences occur in a calendar year.

Quality First requires the participant to offer regularly scheduled conferences for all families. Providing conferences upon family request does not fulfill this requirement. Best practice in early childhood programs is to reach out to families to keep them informed of their child's progress

To receive credit at the 2 point level, parent-teacher conferences must be offered once per year. At the 6 point level, parent-teacher conferences must be offered twice per year.

SHARING CURRICULUM WITH FAMILIES

To receive credit at the 2 point level, the site must have a **policy for sharing curriculum with families**. This is a written statement showing the methods your program uses to inform families of what their children are learning and/or the curriculum used.

CHILD TRANSITION PLAN

A **written child transition plan** outlines the timelines and activities a program, child and/or family engages in when transitioning from home to the program (enrolling), within the program (permanently changing classroom/child care group rosters), and exiting the program (withdrawing).

To receive credit at the 4 point level, the site's written child transition plan must include all three of the requirements below:

1. At least one timeline and one activity for transitioning into the program. This can be child, family or program based.
2. At least one timeline and activity for transitioning within the program. This can be child, family

or program based. *Please note that if children do not transition between classrooms/child care groups during their enrollment in the program, this criterion is not required.*

3. At least one timeline and activity for transitions exiting the program. This can be child, family or program based.

Please note that DHS licensing regulations in center-based care prohibit classroom visits that combine infants and older children in a group setting due to the safety risk it may present.

Examples of written child transition plan statements:

Before enrollment (timeline), the child's family tours the facility and completes an entrance interview with the site's director (activity).

Six weeks before a child transitions to the next age group (timeline), there is a family conference to discuss the child's transition. As long as all parties are in agreement, the child begins spending time in the new classroom with a familiar adult during morning free play (activity).

When a family notifies our program that a child is withdrawing (timeline), the child's lead teacher prepares a current assessment of the child's developmental progress for the family to share with their new program (activity).

CHILDREN'S SCREENING AND REFERRAL

A **screening** is a quickly administered assessment used to initially identify children who may benefit from a more in-depth assessment.

If children require further assessment, a program should offer a **referral** or connect the child's family with a professional or program that can administer the needed evaluation.

To receive credit at the 6 point level, the site must have a **policy for children's screening and referral**. This is a written statement that informs families of the activities and timelines regarding screening at the program and how referrals are offered as a result of those screenings.

7. WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO UPDATE IN THE EXTRANET?

Update the staffing tab to include all active administrators, lead teachers, and assistant teachers' hire date. *Picture directions are included at the end of the Staff Qualifications section for assistance.*

8. WHAT IS THE SCORING CRITERIA FOR THE CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT DOMAIN?

The Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric is the First Things First Board approved document used for scoring

CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT (MUST MEET ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
All Programs - State Standards and Program Guidelines	All Programs - Curriculum	All Programs - Child Assessment****	
<p>2a. Teachers*, Directors and Assistant Directors have completed the approved 2 hour training on the Introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards (AZELS)* and Infant - Toddler Developmental Guidelines (ITDG). The Infant - Toddler Developmental Guidelines will be required when written and available.</p> <p>* A valid Arizona Early Childhood Teaching Certificate or Endorsement is accepted in lieu of training.</p>	<p>2b. The Arizona Early Learning Standards and Infant-Toddler Development Guidelines (when complete) are clearly reflected in the written activity plans. There is a written process for sharing curriculum with families.</p>	<p>2c. Assessment of children’s growth and development is an ongoing process and is conducted during children’s daily activities and routines to assess progress in the 4 domain areas of social, emotional, cognitive and physical development.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Parent Teacher conferences are offered once per year.</p>	2 points

CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT (MUST MEET ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
All Programs - State Standards and Program Guidelines	All Programs - Curriculum	All Programs - Child Assessment****	
<p>4a. Programs follow the Arizona Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education Birth through Kindergarten’s recommendation for transitions between environments.</p>	<p>4b. Written curriculum plans include specific learning objectives for children based on each child’s documented or observed assessment information.</p>	<p>4c. Assessment of children’s growth and development includes gathering and documenting information received from families either from child information surveys, daily communications with families, or formal conferences held with the families AND Programs use a variety of methods including at least two of these methods: observation/anecdotal notes, children’s work samples, developmental checklists.</p>	4 points

CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT (MUST MEET ALL COLUMNS OF EACH ROW TO RECEIVE POINTS)			Points earned
All Programs - State Standards and Program Guidelines	All Programs - Curriculum	All Programs - Child Assessment****	
<p>6a. Teachers*, Directors and Assistant Directors have completed the approved training on at least two of the modules of the Arizona Early Learning Standards or Infant - Toddler Development Guidelines (when written and available)</p>	<p>6b. Written activity plans include strategies, modifications, and/ or adaptations to fully involve all children with special health and/ or developmental needs, including gifted and talented (e.g. adaptive materials are listed to be gathered, wide range of materials allow for individual use based on development, etc.)</p> <p>This item may be N/A</p>	<p>6c. Additional child assessment strategies include developmental and sensory screening activities (either provided directly or arranged for by the provider) and, when necessary, families are referred to appropriate health or intervention agencies. AND Parent teacher conferences are offered twice per year.</p>	

9. USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Anecdotal Note: A way to document children’s development through short descriptions of what a teacher sees and hears a child doing throughout the day. A labeled photo may accompany the note as an additional way of tracking developmental information.

Developmental Checklist: A checklist showing what developmental milestones a child has reached at a certain point in time. Use of the checklist can show whether a child is reaching developmental milestones at the anticipated age range, that of a typical peer, or if there is a need for further assessment because a child is not meeting the anticipated milestones.

Lesson Plan: A lesson plan is developed to guide instruction throughout the day or week and as a method of preparation. It usually includes the name or theme of the lesson, the date(s) of application, the focus or objective of the lesson, the materials used, and the activities to be done, including any modifications for children with special needs.

Referral: Connecting a child’s family to outside resources, including professionals and programs, for more in-depth assessment in an identified area of need.

Screening: A quickly administered assessment used to initially identify children who may benefit from more in-depth assessment.

Specific Learning Objectives for Children: A concept or skills taught to an individual child or small group of children (not the whole classroom/child care group) based on an identified developmental need or child interest.

Strategies, Modifications or Adaptions for Children with Special Needs: A change in what or how a concept, skill or activity is presented to a child to allow the child to participate with their peers successfully. This can include altering the content, presentation or materials used in the lesson or activity.

Work Sample: A way to gather information on where a child is developmentally through a tangible piece of evidence that has been created by the child.

10. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I have children that attend my program on a drop-in basis. Will the assessor review their child assessment portfolios?

- Please see section 5 for the eligibility requirements for children’s assessment portfolios to be reviewed.

I just enrolled a new child in a classroom. Will the assessor review their portfolio?

- Please see section 5 for the eligibility requirements for children's assessment portfolios to be reviewed.

Please note that a child does not need to be enrolled in the same classroom for 30 days to be eligible for review. For example, if a child transitions from the Toddler Room to the Preschool Room but has been continuously enrolled at the site and has attended 30 days in the past six months, the child's portfolio is eligible for review.

My program's policies prevent me from including children's names on lesson plans. How can I document specific learning objectives for children or modifications for children with special needs?

- Please see section 4B and 4C for more information on using coding systems.

My program collects a lot of different documentation for child assessment portfolios. Should I give it all to the assessor or should I select pieces to hand in?

- You are encouraged to present all of your documentation at the time of assessment as it provides a complete picture of each child's development.

How does Quality First look at child assessment portfolios? If one portfolio is missing a piece is that okay?

- Each child assessment portfolio reviewed (100%) must meet the requirements outlined in section 5 to receive credit at each point level.

Will the assessor let me know if I'm missing documentation at the time of assessment?

- The assessor will not verbally share if documentation is missing. It is the participant's responsibility to provide the assessor with all of the documentation they would like reviewed as part of their Points Scale Assessment.
- Quality First policy states that at the end of the assessment, the onsite administrator is provided a Documentation Review Form. The Documentation Review Form will state if entire pieces of documentation are missing. For example, you will be notified if a lesson plan was not observed or if the assessor did not receive one of the child assessment portfolios.
- The Documentation Review Form does not capture if elements inside of a piece of documentation are missing. For example, you will not be notified if specific learning objectives for children are not included with a lesson plan or if a child assessment portfolio does not include family input.
- A template of the Documentation Review Form is available in the Quality First Resources section of the extranet (<http://extranet.azfff.gov>).

What if I forget to provide something to the assessor during the onsite visit? Can I turn it in later?

- Quality First policy requires all documentation to be submitted at the time of assessment, either in person to the assessor, via the extranet, or on the Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report. Documentation that is not presented at the time of assessment cannot be submitted during the assessment clarification process.

I didn't find an answer to my question. What should I do?

- The FAQs included here are a sampling of information. Review the remainder of the Points Scale Guidance Document to see if your question is answered.
- Talk with one of your site's Quality First technical assistance providers, such as your coach.
- Contact the Quality First Assessment Program Manager, Katie Romero, at 602-633-8652 or kromero@swhd.org.
- Contact the FTF Quality First Team at 602-771-5000 or qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org.

11. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) <http://agesandstages.com/>

- ASQ-3 <http://agesandstages.com/products-services/asq3/>
- ASQ-SE-2 <http://agesandstages.com/products-services/asqse-2/>

Arizona Department of Education Early Childhood Education unit <http://www.azed.gov/ece/>

- ADE Event Management System <https://ems.azed.gov/Home/Calendar?sd=4956>
- ADE Event Management System Quick Reference Guide <https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=55c533111130c00930f79660>

Arizona State Standards

- Arizona Early Learning Standards <https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5ba5462a1dcb2507f8788ea1>
- Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines <https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=54efdb1e1130c00eb465d5bc>
- Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Childhood Education: Birth through Kindergarten <https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5879561caadebe0c98a80509>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

- CDC Developmental Milestone Tracker <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>

National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org

- NAEYC Program Standards <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-naeyc-program-standards>

Teaching Strategies Gold's Objectives for Development & Learning: Birth through Third Grade

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=586d752daadebe1114465447>

12. AM I READY?

- ❑ All current staff members are included on the extranet's staffing tab.
- ❑ The position title and hire date fields for each administrator and lead teacher are up-to-date on the extranet's staffing tab.
- ❑ I have provided my coach a copy of each lead teacher's and administrator's training certificate for the introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards training, introduction to the Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines training, and any module trainings they completed.
- ❑ I have verified that each lead teacher and administrator's training information is up-to-date in the extranet's staffing tab.
- ❑ If I have staff with an AZ Teaching Certificate with an ECE endorsement, I have verified that their teaching certificate is reflected on my site's Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report.
- ❑ I have collected the most recently completed 4 weeks of written lesson plans/curriculum (not including weeks the program was not in session) for each of my classrooms/child care groups.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan includes the classroom/child care group's name and dates of use, including month, day, and year.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan reflects the use of at least 1 Arizona Early Learning Standard or 1 Infant Toddler Developmental Guideline and an accompanying activity. This information is clearly marked for the assessor's review.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan includes specific learning objectives for children. This includes the activity, time, and children targeted. The information is clearly marked for the assessor's review.
- ❑ If I use a coding system other than initials to identify the children targeted for specific learning objectives, I have included a code key for review by the assessor to interpret my system.
- ❑ If I use a separate document (other than the written lesson plan) to document specific learning objectives for children, the document (a) includes the classroom name, (b) includes the dates of use with the month, day, and year, and (c) is placed with the written lesson plan it applies to. Additionally, the written lesson plan includes a written statement sharing where to find specific learning objectives for children so that the assessor can interpret my system.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan includes strategies, adaptations and/or modifications for children with special needs in any classroom where a child with a special need or specialized health concern is enrolled. This includes (a) the modification, (b) the activities the modification is used during, and (c) the child(ren) targeted.

- ❑ If I use a coding system other than initials to identify the children targeted for strategies, adaptations and/or modifications for children with special needs, I have included a code key for review by the assessor to interpret my system.
- ❑ If I use a separate document (other than the written lesson plan) to document strategies, accommodations, and/or modifications for children with special needs, the document (a) includes the classroom name, (b) includes the dates of use with the month, day, and year, and (c) is placed with the written lesson plan it applies to. Additionally, the written lesson plan includes a written statement sharing where to find strategies, accommodations and/or modifications for children with special needs so that the assessor can interpret my system.
- ❑ I have child assessment portfolios for all enrolled children and am prepared to provide the assessor with the randomly drawn portfolios for children in any open classroom/child care group.
- ❑ I have classroom rosters available for the assessor so that the assessor can conduct the random draw process for choosing 4 child assessment portfolios from each classroom selected on the day of the onsite visit.
- ❑ Each child assessment portfolio includes at least 1 piece of evidence for social development, 1 piece of evidence for emotional development, 1 piece of evidence for cognitive development, and 1 piece of evidence for physical development.
- ❑ All child assessment portfolio documentation meets the technical requirements listed on p. 60.
- ❑ Each classroom/child care group uses at least 2 of 3 documentation methods outlined on p. 60 as types of evidence in child assessment portfolios.
- ❑ Each child assessment portfolio includes family input. The family input documentation meets the five requirements outlined on p. 62.
- ❑ I have a written policy for parent-teacher conferences. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- ❑ I have a written statement for sharing curriculum with families. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- ❑ I have a written transition plan. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- ❑ I have a written policy for children's screening and referral. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- ❑ I reviewed the FTF Board approved Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric to see where I believe my program should score in the Curriculum and Child Assessment domain.

Printing Documentation

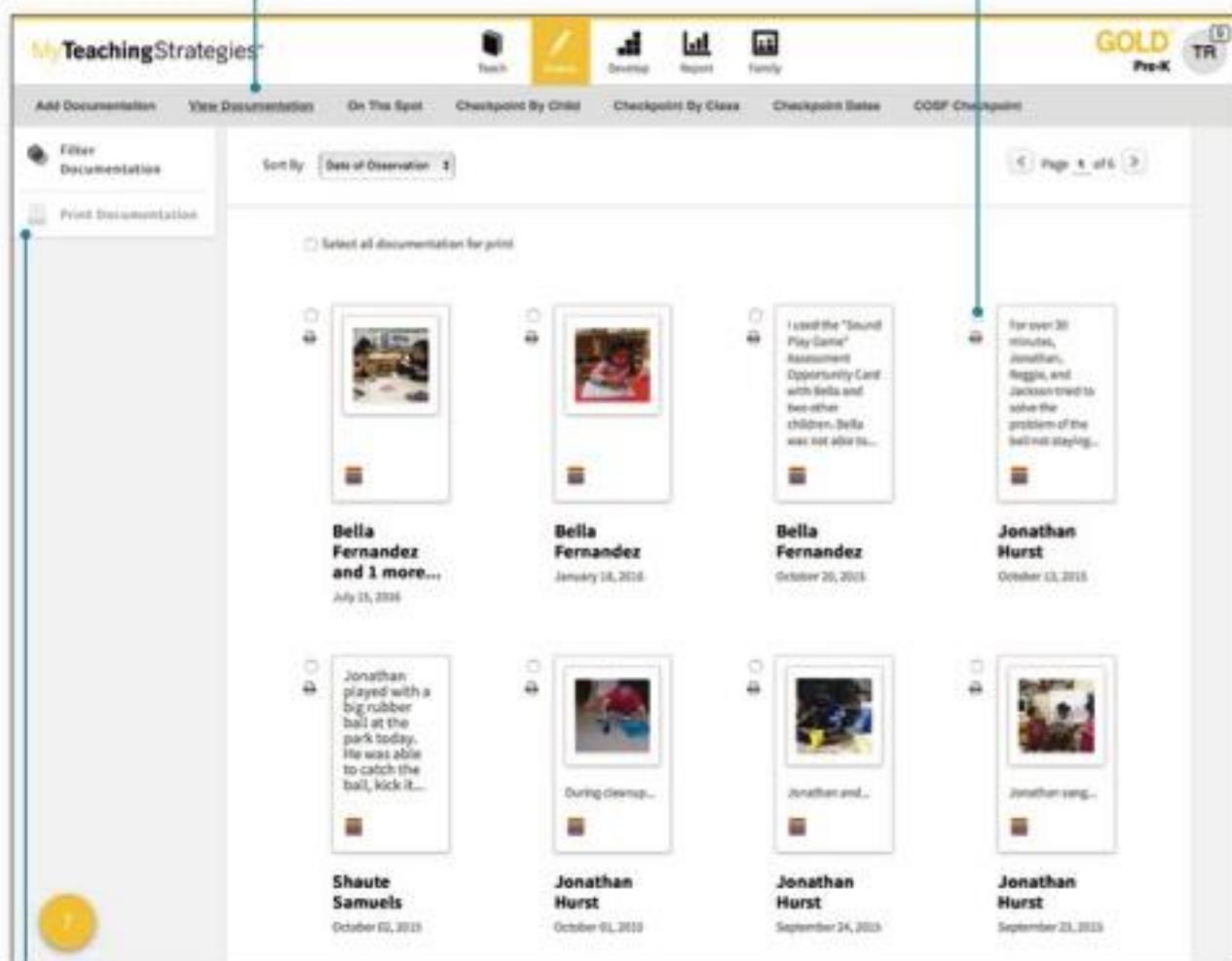
From the View Documentation screen in the Assess area, teachers can print individual, multiple, or all documentation.

Printing Individual Documentation

To print one piece of documentation:

- 1 Select **VIEW DOCUMENTATION** from the sub-navigation.

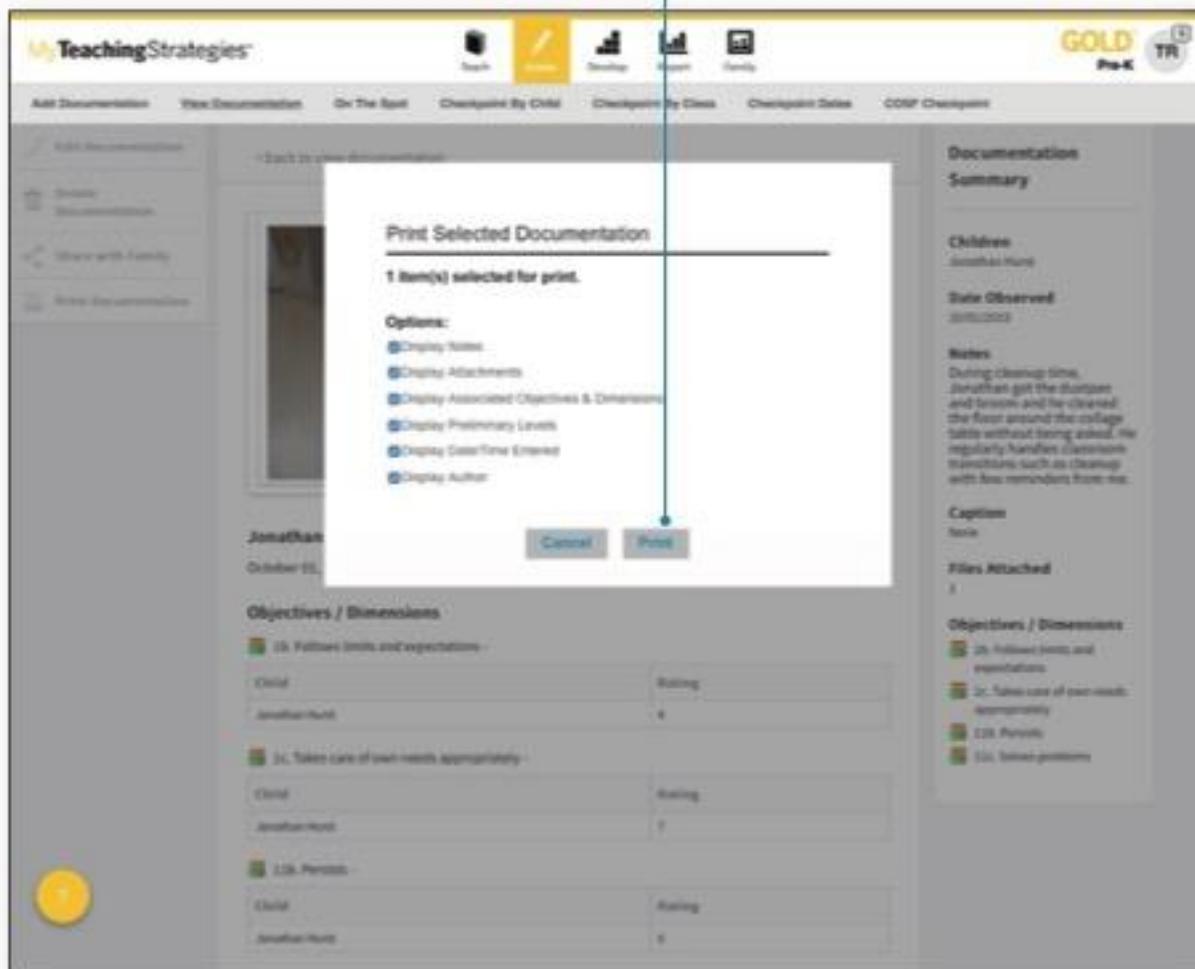
- 2 Select a specific documentation tile.



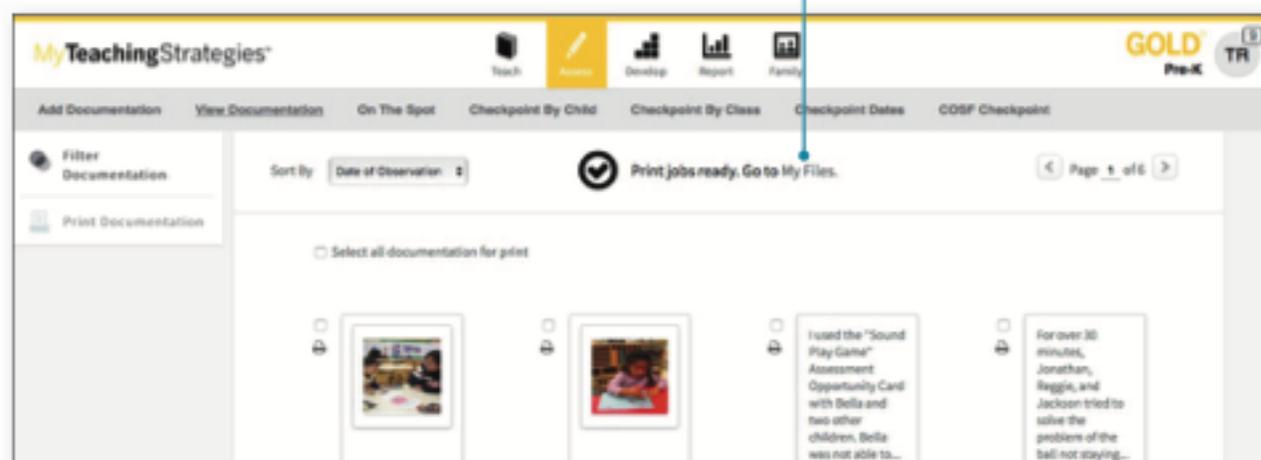
- 3 Then select **PRINT DOCUMENTATION** in the left-hand navigation.

- 4 A pop-up box will appear with the ability to de-select options for displaying the notes, attachments, associated objectives & dimensions, preliminary levels, date/time entered, and/or author. Make sure the options you want to display in the PDF are checked, and then select **PRINT**.

A PDF is then generated on your device that is ready for printing.

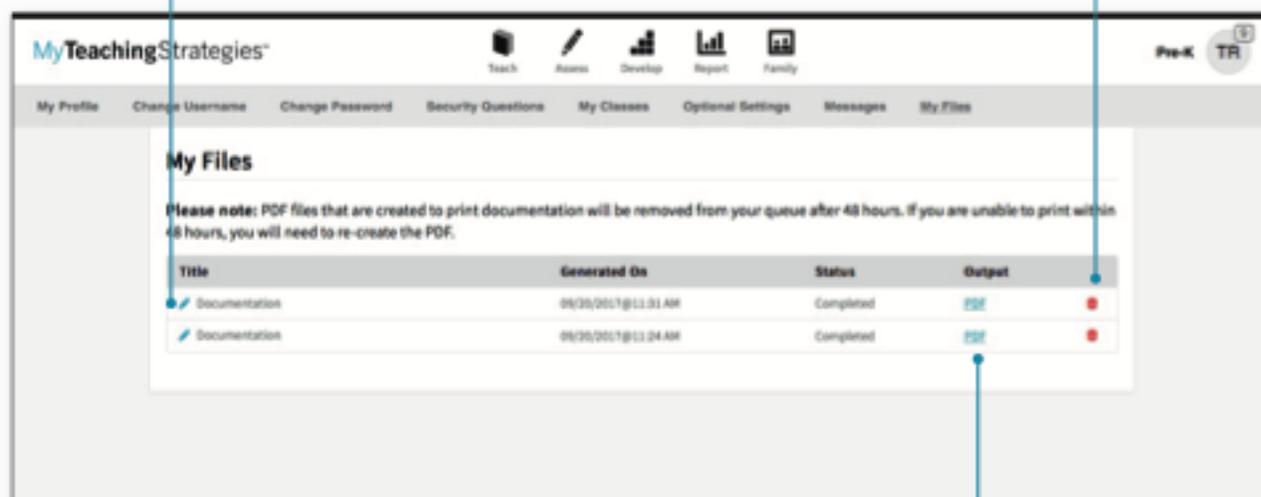


- 5 Select **MY FILES** and you will see the most recent files created. Please Note: The file will only remain here for 48 hours.



- 6 On the My Files page, you can change the name of each PDF you have generated by clicking on the pencil icon next to the title of each PDF.

- 7 You can also remove a specific PDF from your list by clicking the garbage can icon on the right-hand side.



- 8 To view the PDF, select the **PDF** link under the Output column. Please Note: The file will only remain here for 48 hours.

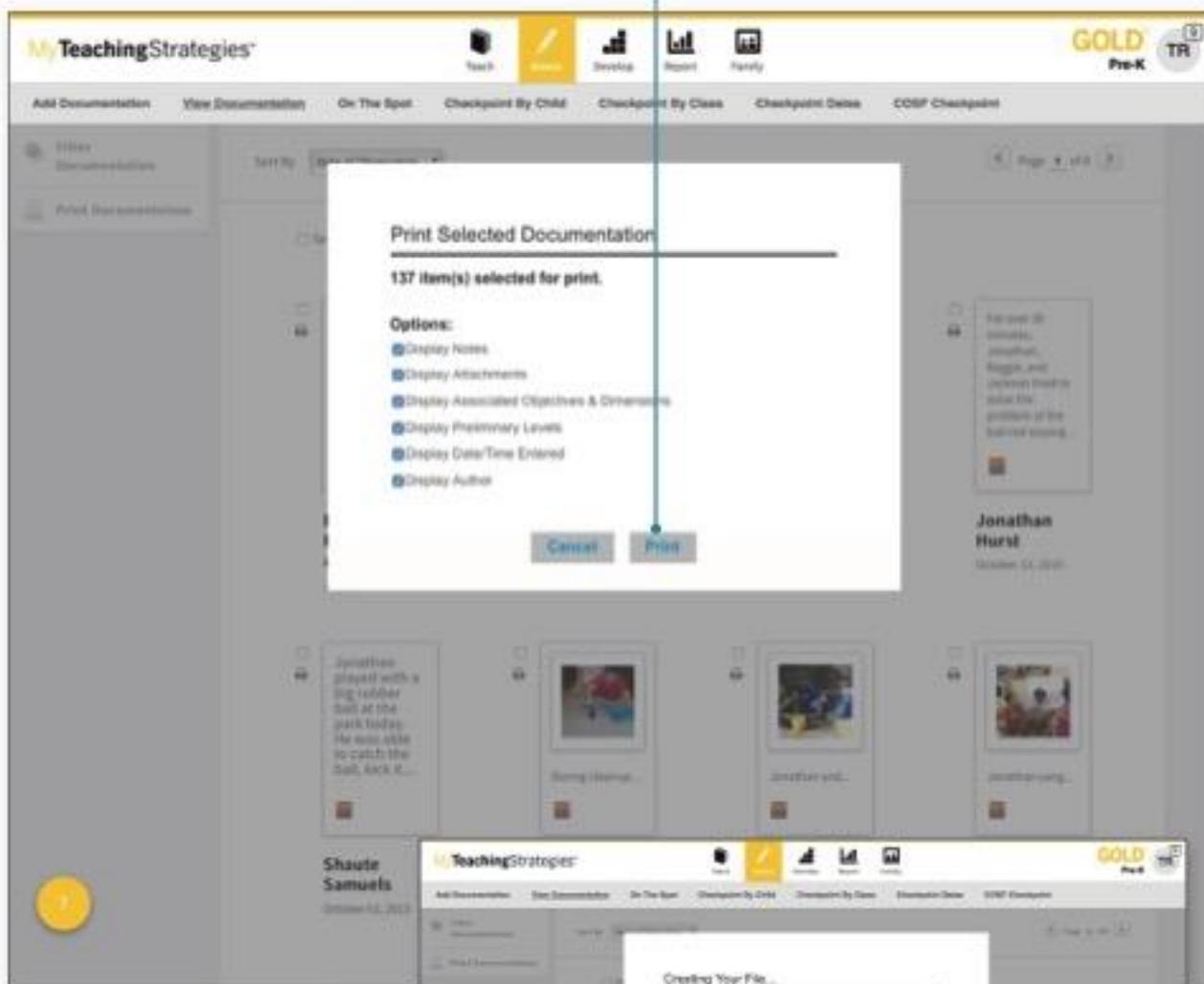
Printing Multiple Documentation

To print multiple or all documentation:

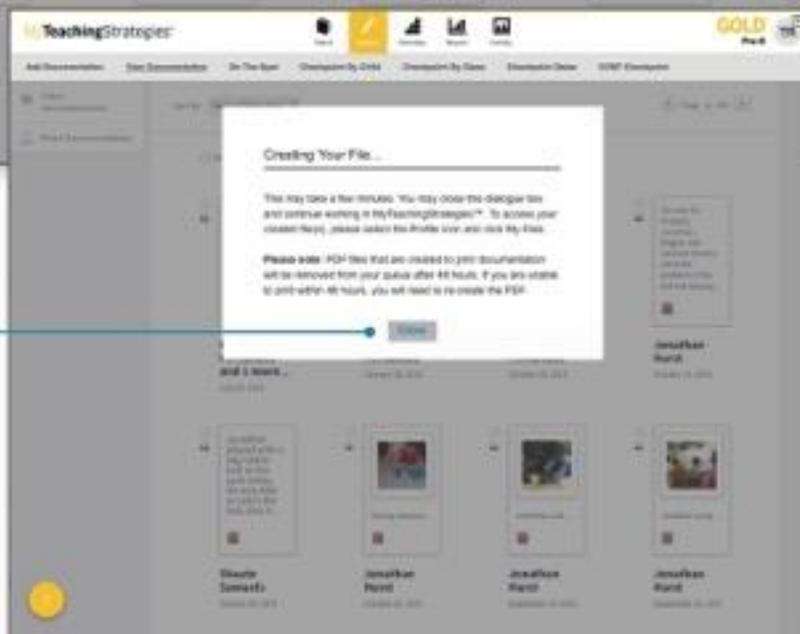
- 1 Select **VIEW DOCUMENTATION** from the sub-navigation.
- 2 Use the **FILTER DOCUMENTATION** option in the left-hand navigation to view specific documentation if desired.
- 3 Select the checkbox to the left of one or more documentation files.
- 4 If you want to select all documentation, select the checkbox next to **SELECT ALL DOCUMENTATION FOR PRINT**.
- 5 Then, select **PRINT DOCUMENTATION** in the left-hand navigation.

The screenshot displays the MyTeachingStrategies interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'Add Documentation', 'View Documentation', 'On The Spot', 'Checkpoint By Child', 'Checkpoint By Class', 'Checkpoint Dates', and 'COSF Checkpoint'. The 'View Documentation' tab is active. On the left, there is a 'Filter Documentation' section with a 'Print Documentation' option. Below this, there is a checkbox labeled 'Select all documentation for print'. The main area shows a grid of documentation files, each with a selection checkbox, a thumbnail image, a title, and a date. The files are for Bella Fernandez and Jonathan Hurst. A yellow circle with the number 4 is placed over the 'Select all documentation for print' checkbox.

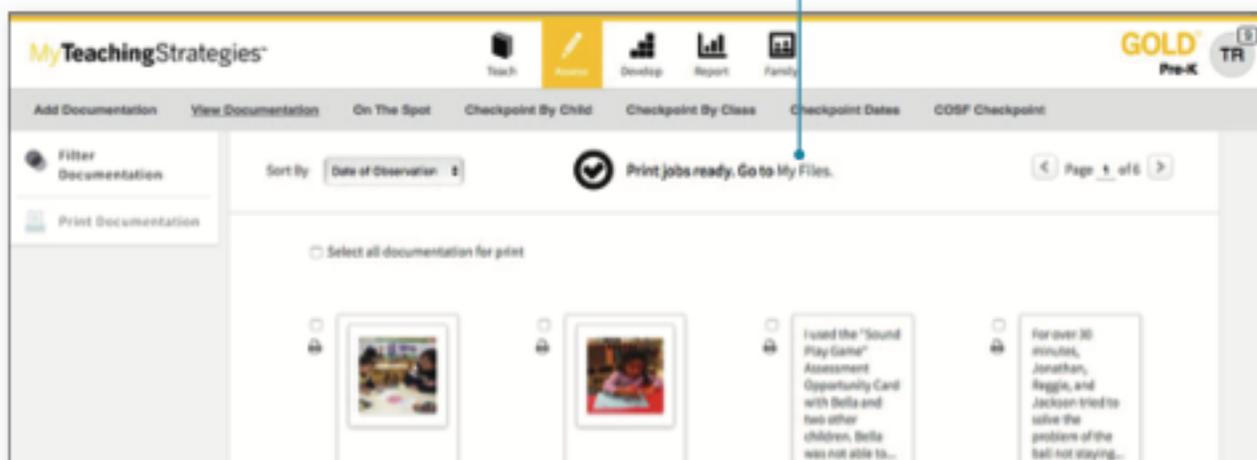
- 6 A pop-up box will appear with the ability to de-select options for displaying the notes, attachments, associated objectives & dimensions, preliminary levels, date/time entered, and/or author. Make sure the options you want to display in the PDF are checked, and then select **PRINT**.



- 7 If the PDF generation will take a few minutes to complete, you will see a message explaining this process. Select **CLOSE**.

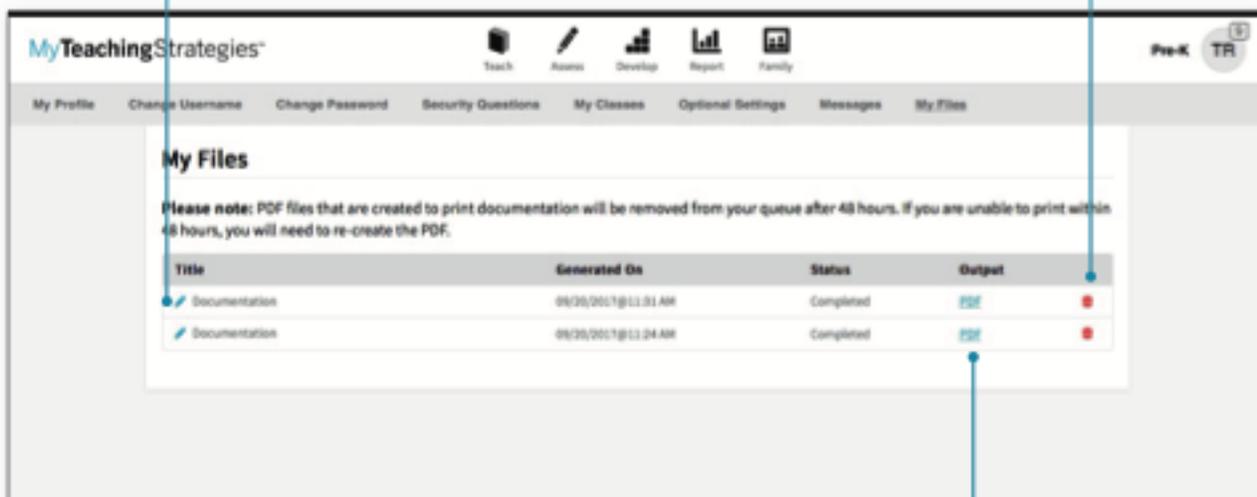


- 8 When the PDF is ready, you will see an alert at the top of your screen. Select **MY FILES** to retrieve your PDF.



- 9 On the My Files page, you can change the name of each PDF you have generated by clicking on the pencil icon next to the title of each PDF.

- 10 You can also remove a specific PDF from your list by clicking the garbage can icon on the right-hand side.



- 11 To view the PDF, select the **PDF** link under the Output column. **Please Note:** The file will only remain here for 48 hours.

PRIMARY CAREGIVING

The following guidelines are intended for sites that embrace primary caregiving as part of their program philosophy. Please use them in conjunction with the information included throughout the rest of the Points Scale Guidance Document when preparing for your assessment.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Your program must have identified at the beginning of your assessment cycle (your first day of assessment, either ERS or CLASS) that primary caregiving is part of your philosophy. It is the participant's responsibility to inform the assessor that primary caregiving is in practice; the assessor will not ask if primary caregiving is used.

The same classroom configuration identified on the initial day of assessment, either ERS or CLASS, will be used to assess all parts of the Points Scale Assessment.

For Quality First's purpose, each primary caregiving group is considered its own classroom.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Each primary care group must be assigned a lead teacher, and the lead teacher must be identified as such in the extranet's staffing tab. This staff member's education documentation and years of experience will be scored in the Staff Qualifications domain.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

Each primary care group must be listed separately in the extranet's classroom tab.

Ratio and group size counts will be assessed individually for each primary care group.

If your program has added a primary care group after your assessment cycle began due to increased enrollment, it is your responsibility to share this with the assessor. Ratio and group size counts are assessed in all open classrooms/groups.

CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT

Each primary care group requires its own lesson plans.

Lesson plans and child assessment portfolios will be reviewed for all primary care groups that are randomly selected on the day of the onsite visit.

AM I READY CHECKLIST

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

- ❑ All current administrators, lead teachers, and assistant teachers are included on my Quality First extranet staffing tab. This includes new staff and substitute staff who have worked in my program for at least 15 classroom days as of my Points Scale end date (first Points Scale)/ start of my assessment process (all other Points Scales).
- ❑ The position title, hire date, and years of previous ECE experience fields for each administrator, lead teacher, and assistant teacher on the extranet's staffing tab are current.
- ❑ All staff members have created an Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry account. This includes new staff and substitute staff who have worked in my program for at least 15 classroom days as of my Points Scale end date (first Points Scale) or the start of my assessment process (all other Points Scales).
- ❑ Another site administrator or I have administrator access for the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry account under the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number that matches the one in the Quality First extranet to review my staff's information.
- ❑ All current staff members are viewable on the Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report under the DHS, DES, tribal or military license/certification number that matches the one in the Quality First extranet.
- ❑ Administrators and lead teachers have submitted education documentation to the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry.
- ❑ I have reviewed my site's Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report to ensure all education documentation I want to be credited in my Points Scale Assessment is included.
- ❑ I reviewed the FTF Board approved Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric to see where I believe my site should score in the Staff Qualifications domain of the Points Scale.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

- ❑ I consulted the Quality First Staffing Guide to determine which staff roles should be included in the extranet's staffing tab, and all current staff members are inputted.
- ❑ The position title and hire date fields for each administrator, lead teacher, and assistant teacher are up-to-date on the extranet's staffing tab.
- ❑ All open classrooms serving children birth-5 are included on my extranet's classroom/family group tab.

- ❑ I am ready to provide an assessor the name, licensed capacity, self-limit capacity, birthdate of the youngest child enrolled, and full names of staff assigned to each open classroom serving children birth to five.
- ❑ I have a written retention plan in place for my program. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- ❑ I reviewed the FTF Board approved Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric to see where I believe my program should score in the Administrative Practices domain.

CURRICULUM AND CHILD ASSESSMENT

- ❑ All current staff members are included on the extranet's staffing tab.
- ❑ The position title and hire date fields for each administrator and lead teacher are up-to-date on the extranet's staffing tab.
- ❑ I have provided my coach a copy of each lead teacher's and administrator's training certificate for the introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards training, introduction to the Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines training, and any module trainings they completed.
- ❑ I have verified that each lead teacher and administrator's training information is up-to-date in the extranet's staffing tab.
- ❑ If I have staff with an AZ Teaching Certificate with an ECE endorsement, I have verified that their teaching certificate is reflected on my site's Registry Participation Education and Professional Development Report.
- ❑ I have collected the most recently completed 4 weeks of written lesson plans/curriculum (not including weeks the program was not in session) for all open classroom/child care groups.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan includes the classroom/child care group's name and dates of use, including month, day, and year.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan reflects the use of at least 1 Arizona Early Learning Standard or 1 Infant Toddler Developmental Guideline and an accompanying activity. This information is clearly marked for the assessor's review.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan includes specific learning objectives for children. This includes the activity, time, and children targeted. The information is clearly marked for the assessor's review.
- ❑ If I use a coding system other than initials to identify the children targeted for specific learning

objectives, I have included a code key for review by the assessor to interpret my system.

- ❑ If I use a separate document (other than the written lesson plan) to document specific learning objectives for children, the document (a) includes the classroom name, (b) includes the dates of use with the month, day, and year, and (c) is placed with the written lesson plan it applies to. Additionally, the written lesson plan includes a written statement sharing where to find specific learning objectives for children so that the assessor can interpret my system.
- ❑ Each written lesson plan includes strategies, adaptations and/or modifications for children with special needs in any classroom where a child with a special need or specialized health concern is enrolled. This includes (a) the modification, (b) the activities the modification is used during, and (c) the child(ren) targeted.
- ❑ If I use a coding system other than initials to identify the children targeted for strategies, adaptations and/or modifications for children with special needs, I have included a code key for review by the assessor to interpret my system.
- ❑ If I use a separate document (other than the written lesson plan) to document strategies, accommodations, and/or modifications for children with special needs, the document (a) includes the classroom name, (b) includes the dates of use with the month, day, and year, and (c) is placed with the written lesson plan it applies to. Additionally, the written lesson plan includes a written statement sharing where to find strategies, accommodations and/or modifications for children with special needs so that the assessor can interpret my system.
- ❑ I have child assessment portfolios for all enrolled children and am prepared to provide the assessor with the randomly drawn portfolios for children in any open classroom/child care group.
- ❑ I have classroom rosters available for the assessor so that the assessor can conduct the random draw process for choosing 4 child assessment portfolios from each classroom selected on the day of the onsite visit.
- ❑ Each child assessment portfolio includes at least 1 piece of evidence for social development, 1 piece of evidence for emotional development, 1 piece of evidence for cognitive development, and 1 piece of evidence for physical development.
- ❑ All child assessment portfolio documentation meets the technical requirements listed on p. 60.
- ❑ Each classroom/child care group uses at least 2 of 3 documentation methods outlined on p. 60 as types of evidence in child assessment portfolios.
- ❑ Each child assessment portfolio includes family input. The family input documentation meets the five requirements outlined on p. 62.

- I have a written policy for parent-teacher conferences. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- I have a written statement for sharing curriculum with families. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- I have a written transition plan. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- I have a written policy for children's screening and referral. It is included in the documents for the assessor to review.
- I reviewed the FTF Board approved Quality First Points Scale Assessment rubric to see where I believe my program should score in the Curriculum and Child Assessment domain

Participant Guide Forms

Fiscal Year 2020





Assessment Report Clarification Request

Participant Name and Address:	Participant ID#:	
	Assessment Tool/Classroom Name:	Requested By:
	Date of Assessment:	Date of Assessment Report Clarification:

The goal of the Assessment Report Clarification process is to ensure clear communication about your assessment and accuracy of the reports. The participant will use this form to identify questions or comments that are not resolved through review of the All About Books, and clarifications on the ERS website or CLASS manuals and Points Scale Guidance Document. Use one form per classroom and assessment (e.g., one form for ECERS in Classroom A and a separate form for CLASS in Classroom A)

Submit clarification questions regarding ERS and/or CLASS assessments to the Assessment Program Manager by email, fax, or mail:
 Email: kromero@swhd.org
 Fax: (602) 633-8662
 Southwest Human Development
 Attn: Assessment Program Manager
 2850 N. 24th St.
 Phoenix, AZ 85008

Submit clarification questions regarding the Points Scale Assessment to the Quality First Team by email, fax, or mail:
 Email: qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org
 Fax: (602) 274-6351
 First Things First
 Quality First Team
 4000 N. Central Avenue Suite 800
 Phoenix, AZ 85012

The Assessment Report Clarification Request must be submitted within **45 calendar days of the assessment results being approved**. A response will be provided within 21 calendar days as possible. Requests must be sent via Word document to allow for timely response. PDF, mailed, faxed, or scanned documents may require additional processing time. If the clarification warrants a change in scores, this will be noted in the extranet and your program assessment report will be updated. Any video or audio recordings or photographs will not be considered in the assessment clarification process. The assessment is conducted using live, on-site observations to capture the entire context of the classroom learning environment and interactions

Item/Indicator	Comments/Questions	Assessor Comments

Participant Name and Address:	Participant ID#:
	Telephone Number:
	Coaching Agency Name:
Director/Owner Name:	Date Form Completed:

Directions: Please complete this form and submit to the First Things First Quality First Director by email, fax, or mail. All submissions will be reviewed by First Things First.

Email: qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org

Fax: (602) 274-6351

First Things First

Attn: Quality First Director

4000 N. Central Ave. Suite 800

Phoenix, AZ 85012

The questions below are to be answered by the person making the complaint or by a person acting with knowledge and consent of the person making the complaint.

1. Describe the complaint/issue.
2. Has there been any attempt to resolve the complaint with the Quality First Team (coach, assessor, consultant, supervisor etc.)? If so, please describe details of the telephone discussion, meetings, or written correspondence. Please also include a copy of the Targeted Support Plan as applicable.
3. Do you have recommendations for possible solutions?

Signature of Person filing the complaint

Printed Name

Date

Signature of person completing the form
(if other than the person filing the complaint)

Printed Name

Date

Complaint Form FY20

Proof of Registration and Participation in E-Verify Program

[A.R.S. §§ 23-211 & 23-214]

Dear Quality First Participant:

An employer must provide proof to First Things First that it is registered with and is participating in the E-Verify program before receiving a grant. For the purposes of this requirement, an employer means:

any individual or type of organization that transacts business in this state, that has a license issued by an agency in this state and that employs one or more employees in this state. Employer includes this state, any political subdivision of this state and self-employed persons. In the case of an independent contractor, employer means the independent contractor and does not mean the person or organization that uses the contract labor.

Please check the appropriate box for each statement:

- Yes No I employ staff other than myself as described above.
- Yes No I operate a business in the State of Arizona.
- Yes No I have a license or certification issue by an Arizona state agency.

If any one of the above answers is “No,” then you are not an employer for the purposes of this requirement. If you are not an employer, please sign and return this form to your Quality First coach.

If all three answers above are “Yes,” proof of E-Verify registration and participation is required before you are able to access Quality First Incentives and/or Quality First Scholarships. If First Things First determines an employer is not complying with the requirement to be registered with and to participate in the E-Verify program, the employer must repay all grant monies received. If you answered “Yes” to all three statements, please sign and return this form along with documentation of E-Verify registration and participation to your Quality First coach.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing declaration is true and correct.

 Applicant Name (Authorized) Signature Date

 Participant ID # Site Name

 Street Address City Zip

Participant Name: _____ Participant ID #: _____

Coaching Agency: _____ Coach: _____

I accept enrollment in Quality First. By accepting enrollment in Quality First by signing below, the early child care provider (Participant) agrees to follow all Quality First and Quality First Scholarships policies and procedures and carry out all of participant's Quality First and Quality First Scholarships responsibilities, as applicable, found in the most current Participant Guide, and all other Quality First and Quality First Scholarships guides, manuals, policies or agreements. Participant acknowledges that Quality First and Quality First Scholarships guides, manuals and policies may be updated from time to time, and Participant agrees to follow those updates unless Participant withdraws from the Quality First and/or Quality First Scholarships program. **Quality First Scholarships are not a guaranteed component of Quality First Enrollment.** If eligible for Quality First Scholarships, the Participant acknowledges that it may be required to enter into a separate agreement.

Participants may be required to submit documentation of participation in the E-verify program and/or provide a Statement of Lawful Presence & Eligibility to Receive Public Benefits and supporting documentation in accordance with state and federal law to access certain state public benefits, such as the Quality First financial incentives.

Participant further acknowledges that if it is not in good standing with its regulatory agency for over 60 days or if it is not in good standing more than once within a 12-month period, its participation in Quality First may be terminated pending further determinations by First Things First. Participant understands that its enrollment in Quality First may determine its eligibility for other First Things First programs and that discontinuing enrollment in Quality First may make Participant's program ineligible for other funding opportunities or services provided through First Things First.

Participant Type: Full Participation Rating Only

Full Participation includes all five components of Quality First: program assessment, individualized coaching (4-6 hours monthly depending on star rating), financial incentives, First Things First College Scholarships for ECE Professionals, and Child Care Health Consultation.

Rating-Only participation includes the following components: program assessment, coaching support (24 hours per year), financial incentives, and First Things First College Scholarships for ECE Professionals.

Initial Star Rating:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Star	ERS Average Program Score:	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Star	ERS Average Program Score:	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3, 4, 5 Star TBD*	ERS Average Program Score:	_____
		CLASS Average Program Score:	IS: _____ CO: _____ ES: _____

*Star Rating to be assigned in 6 months upon completion of the initial Quality First Points Scale Assessment

I decline enrollment in Quality First. I am unable or unwilling to fulfill the required responsibilities of an enrolled participant. I understand that declining enrollment in Quality First may make my program ineligible for other financial funding or services provided through First Things First in my regional area. I further understand that should I be interested in future enrollment, I am able to submit a new Quality First application for future selection consideration.

Participant Signature (Owner and/or District Manager)	Printed Name	Date
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Participant Signature (Main Contact/Program Designee)	Printed Name	Date
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Facility Project Liability Release **FY20**

First Things First is approving the utilization of the Quality First Incentives towards the facility project:

_____ submitted by _____

(herein referred to as Participant) on this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Incentive funds are designed to assist participants in achieving goals by overcoming barriers and supporting quality improvement efforts. Quality First participants may purchase materials, supplies and/or resources up to the maximum award amount available to support continued quality enhancements and professional development.

The participant has received approval for **INSERT FACILITY PROJECT DESCRIPTION** at **INSERT NAME OF PROGRAM** located at **INSERT ADDRESS**. **INSERT HOW THE FACILITY PROJECT WILL IMPROVE PROGRAM QUALITY.**

It is the responsibility of the participant to fulfill any and all fiscal actions that may be required **in excess of INSERT AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR FACILITY PROJECT**, which is 30% of the total incentive amount available to the participant for facility projects as indicated in the Quality First Incentive Policy. It is also the responsibility of the participant to cover any costs associated with maintenance and/or potential structural damage that may occur because of the facility project described herein. Additionally, future Quality First incentives may not be used to assist with any costs for maintenance and/or potential structural damage that may occur because of the facility project described herein.

If the participant relocates or if the facility is sold, First Things First, the Quality First Coaching and Incentive Grantee and/or sub-contractor will not be held liable in the event the facility project requires maintenance or is damaged. Additionally if the facility project does not pass any health and/or safety facility inspections, First Things First, the Quality First Coaching and Incentive Grantee and/or sub-contractor will not be held liable.

I have read and understood the above liability release. I understand that I may use **INSERT AMOUNT** of my Quality First Incentives to supplement costs associated with the facility project. I agree that First Things First, the Quality First Coaching and Incentive Grantee and/or sub-contractor are not liable for any structural maintenance and/or damage that may be caused due to said facility project at **INSERT NAME OF PROGRAM AND ADDRESS.**

Participant Name

Participant ID #

Owner/Manager Name (Printed)

Owner/Manager Signature

Date

Main Contact/Program Designee Name (Printed)

Main Contact/Program Designee Signature

Date

Program Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Director Name: _____ Date: _____

Program Address: _____ Email Address: _____

QF Participant (circle one): YES NO **(NOTE: QF Participation is not required to access Informal Assessment)**

What type of Informal Assessment are you requesting: ENVIRONMENTAL (ERS) INTERACTIONS (CLASS)

What language does instruction in your program occur? _____

How many Informal Assessments are you requesting? _____

What ages of children do you serve? (circle all that apply): Infant Toddler Preschool

What is your ideal time frame for Informal Assessment? (month/year)

Please initial each statement of understanding:

I understand that the Assessment team will attempt to accommodate the time frame noted above for my program.

I understand that availability of the Assessor is based on Assessor caseload and that my request for an Informal Assessment might not be able to be accommodated.

I understand that my formal Quality First assessment process cannot be delayed/deferred due to the delay in an Informal Assessment (If Quality First Participant)

I understand that an Informal Assessment will not affect my Quality First Star Rating.

I understand that submitting this request does not guarantee that an Informal Assessment will be granted to my program. The Assessment team will respond with a timeframe within 10 business days of the request.

Provider Printed Name

Provider Signature

Please return form to Katie Romero, Assessment Program Manager at kromero@swhd.org or fax to (602)633-8662.



Informal Assessment Request



Assessment Response (If needed):

Assessment Program Manager Printed Name

Assessment Program Manager signature

Please return form to Katie Romero, Assessment Program Manager at kromero@swhd.org or fax to (602)633-8662.

Participant Name:	ID#	Date	
Goal Focus:			
Why is the practice identified in the goal focus a priority for the Participant at this time? What data was reviewed/discussed to determine the goal focus? Strengths related to goal focus: Potential barriers to goal achievement:			
Action Steps – Sequential process to achieve goals	Primary Person Responsible	Anticipated Completion	Action Step Completion
1. Key Support Needed: Action Deemed Successful When: Action Step Updates:			
Action Steps – Sequential process to achieve goals	Primary Person Responsible	Anticipated Completion	Action Step Completion
2. Key Support Needed: Action Deemed Successful When: Action Step Updates:			
Action Steps – Sequential process to achieve goals	Primary Person Responsible	Anticipated Completion	Action Step Completion

<p>3. Key Support Needed: Action Deemed Successful When: Action Step Updates:</p>			
<p>Action Steps – Sequential process to achieve goals</p>	<p>Primary Person Responsible</p>	<p>Anticipated Completion</p>	<p>Action Step Completion</p>
<p>4. Key Support Needed: Action Deemed Successful When: Action Step Updates:</p>			
<p>Summary of Implementation: What contributed to the achievement of the goal? What impact has the practices focused on in the goal had on the children, teachers, and families in the program? If the goal was not achieved, what were the barriers? What shifts might need to occur to ensure similar barriers will not impact achieving future goals?</p>			
<p>Goal Support Team</p>			
<p>Participant:</p>			
<p>Coach:</p>			
<p>CCHC:</p>			
<p>Smart Support:</p>			
<p>Inclusion Coach:</p>			
<p>Others Supporting Goal:</p>			

Request for Appeal

Please complete and submit this form to the Quality First Director by email, fax, or mail. All Requests for Appeal are reviewed by First Things First. In addition, please include all documentation that has been received in regards to enrollment termination or Star Rating. Documentation may include but is not limited to: Targeted Support Plans, Quality Improvement Plans, Assessment Reports, meeting notes, emails or any written correspondence.

Email: qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org
 Fax: (602) 274-6351
 First Things First
 Attn: Quality First Director
 4000 N. Central Ave. Suite 800
 Phoenix, AZ 85012

Participant Name and Address:	Telephone Number:
Participant ID#	Email Address:
Director/Owner Name:	Date Form Completed:

The questions below are to be answered by the person making requesting the appeal.

1. What is reason for the appeal? Star Rating* Enrollment Termination

*(*If appealing your Star Rating, you must first submit an Assessment Report Clarification Request)*

2. Have you reviewed the Appeals Policy and/ or the Informal Dispute Resolution Policy?

Yes No

3. Provide the reason for appealing the action.
4. Have you met with the Quality First coaching team to discuss the action? If so, please describe details of the telephone discussion, meetings, or written correspondence.
5. Is there any other information you would like to share relevant to this appeal request?

 Signature Participant Owner/Regional Manager

 Printed Name

 Date

 Signature Participant Main Contact

 Printed Name

 Date

Request for Assessment Deferment

Please complete the information below to request your program assessment be scheduled after the typical time frame. This form must be submitted through the Assessment Grantee for approval. Please email this completed form to Katie Romero at kromero@swhd.org. Final decisions for approval will be made within 21 days of receiving the request.

Participant Name and Address:	Participant ID#:
Current Assessment Cycle End Date:	Length of deferment requested:

Please respond to the following questions:

1. Describe the reason that a deferment is being requested.
2. Why do you think that this will affect your assessment?
3. What is the length of time a deferment is being requested? What is the plan in the meantime?
4. Are you caring for children during this time?
5. Are there any additional considerations that have not been asked that you feel are important to share?

Please initial each statement of understanding:

- I understand that the First Things First, Quality First Team may review the rationale for deferment and recommendation of the Assessment Grantee to make a final decision of approval.
- I understand that I am not guaranteed an assessment deferment. The FTF Quality First Team in coordination with the Assessment Grantee will review the request to determine participant need and feasibility in the assessment schedule.
- I understand that even if my deferment is approved, the FTF Quality First Team may defer my assessment for a length of time shorter or longer than originally requested based on the rationale I provide.

 Main Contact/Program Designee Name

 Main Contact/Program Designee Signature

 Date

Please complete the information below to request your program assessment be scheduled after the typical time frame. This form must be submitted through the Assessment Grantee for approval. Please email this completed form to Katie Romero at kromero@swhd.org. Final decisions for approval are made within 21 calendar days of receiving the request.

Participant Name and Address:	Participant ID#:
Current Assessment Cycle End Date:	Length of deferment requested:

Please respond to the following questions:

1. Is there a different fee structure in the summer?
2. Is there an administrative change or large staffing changes in the summer? Please describe this change.
3. Identify the different number of classrooms/childcare groups in operation over the summer?
4. Do children need to re-enroll for the summer program?
5. Do you have seasonal or temporary enrollment during the summer? Describe the process.
6. How is your program different in the summer than other times of the year?
7. Why do you think that your summer programming will negatively affect your assessment results?
8. Are there any additional considerations that have not been asked that you feel are important to share?

Please initial each statement of understanding:

I understand that the First Things First, Quality First Team may review the rationale for summer deferment and recommendation of the Assessment Grantee to make a final decision of approval.

I understand that I am not guaranteed a summer assessment deferment. The FTF Quality First Team in coordination with the Assessment Grantee will review the request to determine participant need and feasibility in the assessment schedule.

I understand that even if my summer deferment is approved, the FTF Quality First Team may defer my assessment for a length of time shorter or longer than originally requested based on the rationale I provide.

I understand that if my summer deferment is approved my Quality First Childcare Scholarships, if I receive this benefit, may be suspended during this time period.

Main Contact/Program Designee Name

Main Contact/Program Designee Signature

Date

-----Section to be completed by Quality First-----

Assessment Grantee's response:

- Approved assessment deferment for the time period requested
- Approved assessment deferment with revised timeline _____
- Not approved for assessment deferment

Rationale:

Assessment Grantee Name

Assessment Grantee Signature

Date

If the recommendation is to not approve the request, this form will be forwarded to the FTF Quality First Director for review and final decision.

First Things First's response:

- Approved assessment deferment for the time period requested
- Approved assessment deferment with revised timeline _____
- Not approved for assessment deferment

Rationale:

FTF Quality First Director

FTF Quality First Director Signature

Date

Please complete the information below to request your program assessment be scheduled before the typical time frame. This request must be submitted no later than 90 days prior to your program’s assessment cycle end date. Please email this completed form to Katie Romero at kromero@swhd.org. The Assessment Grantee will recommend to approve (A) or not approve (N) the request within 5 business days. If approved, the Assessment Grantee will notify the Participant and Coaching Grantee of the decision within 5 business days. If the Assessment Grantee does not approve the request, a rationale for the decision will be forwarded to First Things First. First Things First will then review the information and approve (A) or not approve (N) the request and notify the Participant, Coaching Grantee and Assessment Grantee of the decision. When not approved, a rationale will be provided within 5 business days.

Participant Name and Address:	Participant ID#:
Current Assessment Cycle End Date:	Requested Assessment Time Period:

Please attach a statement of the reason for requesting an early assessment

Please initial each statement of understanding:

- I understand that the First Things First, Quality First Team may review the rationale and decisions of the Assessment Grantee to make a final decision of approval.
- I understand that by requesting an early assessment, the results will be based on a reduced Quality Improvement time period (less than the typical 12 – 15 month timeline).
- I understand that these assessment results will be effective throughout the assessment cycle. Another assessment will not be completed prior to 12 – 15 months from the assessment completion date.
- I understand that I am not guaranteed an early assessment. The Assessment Grantee will review the request to determine feasibility in the assessment schedule.
- I understand that requests to schedule earlier than two months from the cycle end date will not be approved.
- I understand I cannot request an early assessment two years in a row (1-2 star participants).

 Main Contact/Program Designee Name

 Main Contact/Program Designee Signature

 Date

Assessment Grantee decision:

Request approved

Request not approved

Rationale for not approving the request:

Assessment Grantee Name

Assessment Grantee Signature

Date

If the Assessment Grantee does not recommend approving a Request for Early Assessment, this form will be submitted to the FTF Quality First Director for review and final decision.

FTF Quality First Director review and final decision:

Request approved

Request not approved

Final Decision rationale:

FTF Quality First Director

FTF Quality First Director Signature

Date

Participant Name:	Address:
Participant ID#:	
Coach Name:	

Participants who achieve a Star Rating of 3, 4 or 5 in their initial rating cycle have an option to publicly post the Star Rating at that time rather than waiting for the Rating Assessment. Please complete this form to request a public rating for your initial assessment. This form must be submitted within 3 months of your assessment results to the Quality First inbox at qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org.

Participants enrolling in Quality First have an assessment cycle schedule as follows:

1. Initial Rating (not public) – year one
2. Rating Renewal (public) – year 2 – ongoing

My program has achieved a Star Rating of 3, 4 or 5 at the Initial Rating cycle.

- I choose to have the current Star Rating publicized and receive a Rating Assessment 24 – 26 months from the date of my current assessment.

 Director/Owner/Designee Name Signature Date

This form must be submitted to qualityfirst@firstthingsfirst.org, or mailed to:

First Things First
 Quality First Team
 4000 N. Central Ave. Ste. 800
 Phoenix, AZ 85012

Please maintain a copy of this form for your record