QRIS Implementation Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Effective July 1, 2014, all programs with a School Readiness Provider Contract with the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) of Escambia County will be included in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

* All programs under SR contract with the Coalition will enter the system with a One Star Rating
* Programs that enter into a SR contract after July 1, 2014 will automatically be added to the system
* The QRIS Program Profile will be used to rate all SR providers who choose to participate in QRIS.
* All SR providers will have the opportunity to complete a QRIS Program Assessment and receive mentoring from ELC staff towards quality improvement.

1. **How do we begin?** Providers begin the QRIS Profile process by completing a Program Assessment, and assembling a program portfolio to document quality indicators in each profile. ELC staff will make an onsite visit to validate the profile, review the portfolio, and update the Program Star Rating. Validation visits are scheduled on a first come-first served basis.
2. **Description of categories for stars:**

1 star = meets minimum requirements to qualify for a state contract

2 stars=average

3 stars=above average

4 stars-excellent

1. **What is the Program Profile?** A Program Assessment will include the appropriate classroom assessments, a portfolio, and the completed QRIS Star Matrix--all are designed to allow teachers and directors the ability to analyze and critique their performance and environment independently. The Assessment is part of a written document based on QRIS standards and will let the early learning program get a feel for expectations of the ELC QRIS coaches.
2. **What is a program portfolio?** A file or notebook of materials that document how the program/classroom meets the criteria within each component of the QRIS. The portfolio must be complete before the validation visit can be scheduled.
3. **What is a Star Matrix?** There are six (6) standards in the Matrix that build upon mandatory components such as DCF Licensing and ELC contractual requirements. Providers can use the Matrix to set goals and chart growth. Each Star Level must be in compliance to move up to a higher level.
4. **What is a validation visit**? Upon completion of the program portfolio, an appointment will be made with ELC staff to review the results. The ELC coach and the provider must reach an agreement on the results of the Assessment before moving forward in the QRIS process. The program portfolio will be used during the validation visit
5. **How will we establish a baseline rating?** Once the ELC coach and provider have reached agreement on the results of the validation visit, the program’s baseline rating will be established. The rating will be a Star 1, 2, 3, or 4. This rating will continue until the next formal review by ELC staff approximately 10- 12 months later, unless a significant change occurs in a program necessitating an unscheduled review and possible change in rating.
6. **What type of program assistance can providers count on?** ELC staff will consult with providers as requested to better understand how to use the QRIS Matrix, to complete the QRIS Program Assessment, and to compile a Portfolio. Based upon the results of the provider self-assessment and validation visit, the provider with the assistance of the ELC coach will develop a plan with benchmarks that addresses the areas identified that need improvement or changes, in order for the program to move to the next Star Rating. The ELC will make resources available to support program improvements.

Resources include ELC coaching sessions, a menu of technical assistance topics, tip sheets and sample documents such as parent handbooks, newsletters and personnel policies. Coaching will be targeted, intentional and for specified time frames such as a four week cycle of training and TA. Programs that choose to participate in QRIS process will also have access to mini-grants, scholarships and free or discounted training fees.

1. **How does a program move to a new star level?**  Once the validation visit is completed, an improvement plan will be created by the early learning program director, practitioners and the ELC coach. Once identified milestones are completed to meet the requirements of the next Star Rating level and a revalidation is complete the program will receive a new Star rating.

1. **What is the timeline to move up a Star Level?** There is no formal timeline although a best practice is to work towards improvement during the 10-12 months between formal reviews.
2. **What if the program does not want to participate in QRIS?** There is no requirement to participate in QRIS at this time.