

California

Water Cooler Policy Report

Informing Advocacy for Children Birth to Five
November 2009

Workgroup #3: Quality Rating and Improvement, Curriculum and Tiered Reimbursement

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Goal: Incentivize higher quality care for all California children, desirable working conditions for workforce, and information for families.

Guiding Principles

- 1.** A California Quality Rating and Improvement System must build upon and integrate as appropriate quality projects/programs currently underway in the State. A California Quality Rating and Improvement System must be funded to ensure:
 - a.** High quality care and early learning experiences for children.
 - b.** Desirable working conditions for the workforce.
 - c.** The communication of timely and meaningful information for parents/guardians and consumers.
- 2.** A California Quality Rating and Improvement System must include funding for reform of Community Care Licensing. Such reform would include such things as increased inspections to ensure high standards of health and safety practices.
- 3.** A California Quality Rating and Improvement System must include elements that
 - a.** Support and create opportunities for teachers/providers who are dual language learners.
 - b.** Support and promote competencies for teachers/providers working with children who are dual language learners.
- 4.** A California Quality Rating and Improvement System must include elements that support and create opportunities for children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds as well as children with disabilities and special needs.
- 5.** A California Quality Rating and Improvement System will improve the quality of centers and family childcare homes by ensuring the measurement and inclusion of program structure/elements such as:
 - a.** Indoor and outdoor environmental quality.
 - b.** Program administration.
 - c.** Family involvement and parent engagement.
 - d.** Teacher/provider-child Interactions.

- e. Cultural, linguistic, and special needs responsiveness.
- f. Condition of Facilities/Structure.
- g. Licensing and compliance history.
- h. Teacher/provider education.
- i. Developmental screenings and a response and referral process.
- j. Age and developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- k. Continuous quality improvement plan.
- l. Health, nutrition, and physical activity.
- m. Safety.
- n. Both teacher/child ratios and group size.

Recommendations

1. Scope of a QRIS – Age

- a. California should create a statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System for all programs and providers serving children birth to five.
- b. This Quality Rating and Improvement System should then be expanded to include all children birth to 13.
- c. In order to successfully achieve this vision a phase in structure should be developed.

2. Scope of a QRIS– Program Types Included

- a. California should create a Quality Rating and Improvement System that is inclusive of, and mandatory for, all licensed (Title 5 and Title 22) centers and family childcare providers.
- b. In addition to the licensed providers, an entry point should be created for license-exempt providers that are receiving public subsidies.
- c. All providers, including both licensed and license-exempt providers, receiving public subsidies, should receive incentives and support to improve the quality of the care they provide to children and families.

3. Licensing

- a. Need to reform governance structure and address existing challenges to governance, and aim to increase coordination.
- b. ELQIS should develop a subcommittee to work on specifics, with support from consultants who can highlight national best practices, to have fuller discussion on specifics of how to reform licensing, with strong representation from CCLC, which QRIS Group could help staff.

4. Tiered Reimbursement

- a. California should create a tiered reimbursement/incentive structure linked to a Quality Rating and Improvement System.
- b. This tiered reimbursement/incentive structure should be designed to improve the salaries and benefits of family childcare providers and center staff.
- c. The tiered reimbursement/incentive structure should additionally include, but not be limited to technical assistance, on site coaching, management and fiscal support, and grants or a loan program to continue educational opportunities.

5. Cultural/Linguistic Inclusion: California should create a Quality Rating and Improvement System in which home language, racial, ethnic and cultural competencies are integral to all measures, standards, training, curriculum, and incentives that are developed.

6. Special Needs Inclusion: California should create a Quality Rating and Improvement System in which measures, standards, training, curriculum, and incentives reflect the early identification and inclusion of children with special needs.