

# THE CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM (QRS) ASSESSMENT



## Oklahoma Reaching for the Stars

**QRS Profile**

**April 2010**



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# Oklahoma Reaching for the Stars

## QRS Profile

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**Prepared for:**

**Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation**

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## Child Care Quality Rating System (QRS) Assessment Study

### PROFILE

<b>Site:</b>	<b>Oklahoma</b>
<b>Program Name:</b>	<b>Reaching for the Stars</b>
<b>Respondents:</b>	<b>Jennifer Towell, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma Child Care Service</b>
<b>Information Reviewed and Finalized:</b>	<b>March 11, 2010</b>

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## Oklahoma – Reaching for the Stars

### Program Information

This section provides general information about the QRS including the location, numbers and types of programs participating in the QRS, funding amounts, funding sources and goals.

<b>Site name:</b>	Oklahoma
<b>Program name:</b>	Reaching for the Stars
<b>Service area:</b>	Statewide
<b>Pilot:</b>	No
<b>Date full program launched:</b>	1998
<b>Voluntary:</b>	Yes
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/stars/">http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/stars/</a>
<b>Eligible programs:</b>	Center-based programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, licensed family child care, school-aged programs, pre-kindergarten/comprehensive early childhood programs, licensed programs on military bases or military property, and tribal licensed programs.
<b>Source of funds for eligible public program:</b>	State
<b>Total numbers of programs participating:</b>	4617 licensed
<b>Number of participating child care centers:</b>	1771 rated 1-3 stars; 1214 that are 1+ or higher
<b>Number of participating family child care programs:</b>	2846 rated 1-3 stars;, 1221 that are 1+ or higher
<b>Percent of total programs enrolled in QRS:</b>	Information not available
<b>Percent of programs at each rating level:</b>	1 star-47% 1 star Plus-6% 2 star-42% 3 star-4%
<b>Goals:</b>	The goals are to provide a system to inform parents of quality criteria met by child care programs; improve the quality of child care by increasing the competence of teachers; and raise the Department's subsidy reimbursement rate, resulting in increased accessibility to slots for children whose families are receiving child care assistance.
<b>Language from statute:</b>	340:110-1-8.3 Certification of facilities to receive a differential quality rating:  The differential quality rating system was developed to improve the overall quality of care by increasing the training and education of child care providers and to provide the public with a method to evaluate child care. Certification is required for a provider to receive a differential quality rate for children whose

families are receiving child care assistance through the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS).

## Rating Details

This section provides details about how the rating component is structured and the process that is used to rate programs.

<b>Rating structure:</b>	Building Blocks
<b>Number of levels:</b>	4
<b>Length of time rating is valid:</b>	Ratings are verified by licensing annually (licensing does 3 monitoring visits a year). Programs have to do a full star review at least once a year. Programs with a 1+ star rating are valid for 2 years.
<b>Rating process:</b>	The rating process starts with programs sending in their application and documents. A Stars Outreach Specialist then reviews the program's documentation and licensing record, and approves them for the star level for which they meet the criteria. After a program's status is approved, licensing continually monitors to assure that they are meeting the criteria of the star level status.
<b>Method of combining points:</b>	In the block system, all of the indicators must be met at each level.
<b>Method used to assess programs for infants/toddlers:</b>	No
<b>Method used to assess programs for school-aged children:</b>	Yes. For school-aged programs, Master teachers are allowed other coursework besides early childhood/child development. Reaching for the Stars will accept training in elementary education, recreation, other coursework related to working with children for the staff qualifications categories.
<b>Different process used to assess family child care:</b>	Family Child Care has separate set of quality indicators.
<b>Different process used to assess Head Start/Early Head Start:</b>	No
<b>Different process used to assess accredited programs:</b>	No
<b>Events that trigger re-rating:</b>	Licensing violation or loss of accreditation
<b>Appeal process:</b>	Yes. There is an administrative review process for programs that wish to appeal their star status.
<b>Availability of technical assistance for rating process:</b>	Yes
<b>Description of technical assistance for rating process:</b>	Technical assistance is available for programs that are consistently meeting the criteria for their rating. Outreach specialists are responsible for recruiting programs and getting them approved to

participate. There are 13 consultation and technical support specialists who conduct onsite technical assistance and training in order to help providers meet criteria and improve their quality of care.

**Availability of technical assistance for preparatory process:**

Yes

**Description of technical assistance for preparatory process:**

Consultation and technical support specialist may assist with preparing programs for QRIS processes.

## Quality Indicators for Center-Based Programs

This section describes the indicators used in a QRS to assess the quality of center-based programs. The indicators are divided into the following categories: licensing compliance, ratio and group size, health and safety, curriculum, environment, child assessment, staff qualifications, family partnership, administration and management, cultural/linguistic diversity, accreditation, community involvement and provisions for children with special needs. A QRS may not have indicators in one or more of these categories, and the category labels used in the profile may differ from the site-specific category names used in a QRS.

**Number of site-specific indicator categories:**

8

**Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:**

Accreditation  
Compliance  
Training  
Education  
Learning Environment  
Program Evaluation  
Parent Involvement  
Administration

## Licensing Compliance (centers)

Licensing requirements frequently serve as a minimal set of provisions to ensure that care and education environments are safe, healthy and provide for children's basic needs. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

**Licensing compliance included:**

Yes

**Licensing required for enrollment:**

Yes

**Licensing equivalent to the first level:**

Yes

**Licensing compliance referred to within:**

N/A

**Source of evidence:**

Documentation submitted

**Comments:**

A facility automatically receives a one star rating when a license (6 month permit, license, provisional license) is issued. Licensing compliance is required at all following ratings. The

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program must not have numerous, repeated, or serious non-compliance with licensing requirements. In Oklahoma, licensing is responsible for monitoring facilities to assure they are meeting star level criteria.

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## Ratio and Group Size (centers)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Ratio and group size indicators included:</b>	No
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## Health and Safety (centers)

Provisions for health and safety are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Health and safety indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Health and safety indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	At all Star levels, health and safety checklists for both indoor and outdoor spaces must be completed annually and kept on file at the center.
<b>Health and safety referred to within:</b>	Program Evaluation
<b>Source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted

## Curriculum (centers)

A curriculum is a written document that provides a plan for intentional activities and interactions in an early childhood program. Indicators described in this section refer to requirements for the use of particular curricula or to demonstration that certain features of curriculum are in place. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Curriculum indicators included:</b>	No
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## Environment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the classroom environment. Further details about Observational Measures included in the QRS are included in a section below. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Environment indicators included:</b>	Yes
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<b>Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:</b>	No (used only for program evaluation purposes)
<b>Range of recognized ERS scores:</b>	No score required
<b>Additional indicators related to the environment (e.g. activities, interactions, specific features):</b>	<p><b>1+ Star:</b></p> <p>-Space for children 2 years of age and older is arranged and equipped in at least these five interest areas: blocks, dramatic play, manipulative, art, book/reading.</p> <p><b>2 &amp; 3 Star:</b></p> <p>-The center has and follows a schedule that allows time for children to complete tasks and reflects a balance and variety of activities. The schedule includes time for indoor/outdoor play, active/quiet play, rest periods, and meals.</p> <p>-At least two learning centers are available outdoors for children’s use.</p> <p>-Space for children 2 years of age and older is arranged and equipped in at least these seven interest areas: blocks, dramatic play, manipulative, art, book/reading, math, and science/nature.</p> <p><b>All Star levels:</b></p> <p>-Teachers read to children a minimum of 15 minutes each day.</p> <p>-The center has and follows current weekly lesson plans appropriate for the developmental needs of all groups of children. Lesson plans are readily available in the classroom.</p>
<b>Environment referred to within:</b>	Program Evaluation
<b>Environment source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted
<b>Comments:</b>	<p>The Environment Rating Scales are used by programs to determine ways they need to improve. They are required for Program Evaluation, but a specific score is not required.</p> <p>Programs are assessed within one year of receiving two star status and every three years thereafter using an approved assessment tool to determine the day-to-day quality of the care provided to children. This assessment is required for programs with 2 and 3 stars that are not accredited, but is not required for accredited</p>



programs.

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## Child Assessment (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to processes in place to assess, observe or monitor children's development on a regular basis. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Child assessment indicators included:</b>	No
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## Staff Qualifications (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to specific educational or training requirements for staff. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Staff qualification indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Indicators for teachers include:</b>	Education, training
<b>Indicators for directors include:</b>	Education, training
<b>Directors qualifications related to administration and management</b>	No
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for director:</b>	No
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for teacher:</b>	Yes
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for teacher at level:</b>	An option for Master Teacher qualifications.
<b>Bachelors degree indicator for assistant teacher:</b>	No
<b>Description:</b>	<b><u>Staff</u></b>

### **All Star levels:**

- Staff who have been employed at the facility for at least 12 months must have 20 clock hours of job-related training per employment year.
- All full-time staff have a written professional development plan on file at the center. The professional development plan is reviewed annually and updated as needed.

### **Director**

### **All Star levels:**

- The director has documentation of 30 clock hours of job-related training within the last 12 months. In subsequent years, documentation of 30 hours of training per employment year is required.

- The director has a written professional

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development plan that is reviewed annually and updated as needed.

**2 & 3 Star levels:**

The director is a member of an early care and education professional organization.

**Master Teacher:**

**All Star Levels**

-Master teachers must be employed and on-site at the facility on a full-time basis and meet and maintain one of the qualifications listed:

- A. An occupational child care competency certificate for a master teacher or lead teacher through an Oklahoma technology center and three months of satisfactory full-time experience in a licensed or legally exempt child care setting;
- B. A current Child Development Associate (CDA) or Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) credential;
- C. Certificate of Mastery in early childhood education or child development from an accredited Oklahoma college or university;
- D. 30 credit hours from an accredited college or university including 12 credit hours in early childhood education, child development or other coursework that supports working with children.
- E. A four year degree from an accredited college or university with six college credit hours in early childhood education, child development, or coursework that supports working with children.
- F. A two- or four-year degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or child development.
- G. A valid teaching certificate in early childhood education from the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

**2 & 3 Star levels:**

-There must be a staff person who meets master

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teacher qualifications for every 30 children of the licensed capacity. During the second and subsequent years of star status, there must be a master teacher for every 20 children of the licensed capacity.

<b>Staff qualifications referred to within:</b>	Director/Master Teacher Qualification
<b>Staff qualifications source of evidence</b>	Documentation submitted

**Family Partnership (centers)**

Indicators in this section refer to activities and strategies to involve and engage families. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Family partnership indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	<p><b>All Star levels:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A system is established and maintained for sharing and communicating to parents the happenings, activities and related issues about a child’s physical and emotional state.</li> <li>-Parents are welcomed in the center at all times, for example, to observe, eat lunch with a child or volunteer in the classroom.</li> <li>- Individual parent conferences are arranged for and documented at least annually and at other times as needed to discuss children’s progress, accomplishments, challenges, and set goals together.</li> <li>- There is a parent resource area with books, pamphlets and articles on parenting that are accessible and available to parents.</li> <li>- At least two parent meetings with guest speakers or special events are held each year, for example, open house, brown bag lunch, family pot-luck dinners and children’s programs.</li> <li>-Parents are informed of the center’s program by two of these methods: bulletin board, newsletter, parent handbook, web-site specific to each center location, or e-mails.</li> <li>- Parents participate in program and policy development through board involvement or</li> </ul>

planning meetings or are given the opportunity to complete yearly questionnaires.

- The program makes a copy of applicable licensing requirements available to parents.
- Staff and parents are surveyed every two years to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and evaluate the program’s effectiveness in meeting the needs of children, parents, and staff.

**2 & 3 Star levels:**

- A written report about the child is given to parents at the annual conference.
- Program maintains a current list of available community resources and assists parents in locating and connecting with these services.

<b>Family partnership referred to within:</b>	Parent Involvement, Program Evaluation
<b>Family partnership source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted

**Administration and Management (centers)**

Indicators in this section refer to features of the administration and management of the program. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

**Administration and management indicators included:** Yes

**Description:**

**All Star levels:**

- Staff and parents are surveyed every two years to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and evaluate the program’s effectiveness in meeting the needs of children, parents, and staff.
- All staff have access to licensing requirements.
- The director evaluates staff in writing at least once a year.

**2 & 3 Star levels:**

- An approved self-assessment tool is completed every two years and kept on file at the center.
- The program is assessed within one year of two star status and every three years thereafter using an assessment tool approved by OCCS to

determine the day-to-day quality of care provided to children. (This assessment is not required for programs accredited through an approved national accrediting body.)

-Program goals are established and updated every two years based on information gathered from all program evaluation items.

-The program has a written plan for meeting established goals.

-The program has and follows a salary scale with increments based on job title, level of education, credentials, and years of early childhood experience.

-A policy and procedure manual that includes job duties and responsibilities for all staff is maintained on site.

-A minimum of two staff meetings are conducted each year.

**Administration and management referred to within:** Administrative

**Administration and management source of evidence:** Documentation submitted

## Cultural/Linguistic Diversity (centers)

Indicators in this section refer to provisions for responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

**Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:** No

## Accreditation (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to accreditation by a national accrediting body. Accreditation is a process in which programs demonstrate that they meet standards set forth by the accrediting body. The standards are determined by the accrediting body. There is not a common set of standards used for early childhood program accreditation. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA), the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC) and the Council on Accreditation (COA) are commonly included accreditation systems used in QRSs for center-based programs.

**Accreditation included:** Yes

**If yes, accreditation is:** One criterion in highest rating

**Comments:** To qualify for a three star center, the facility must

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meet all of the two star criteria listed AND have current accreditation by one of these agencies:

Association of Christian Schools International's Preschool Accreditation (ACSI)

Council on Accreditation (COA)

National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education (NAC)

National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)

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## Community Involvement (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to the type or frequency of involvement in the community. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Community involvement indicators included:</b>	No
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## Provisions for Children with Special Needs (centers)

Indicators described in this section refer to provisions for children with special needs and the extent to which programs meet standards for inclusion of children with disabilities or other limiting conditions. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Provisions for Children with Special Needs indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:</b>	No
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## Indicators for Family Child Care Programs

This section describes the indicators used in a QRS to assess the quality of family child care programs. The indicators are divided into the following categories: licensing compliance, ratio and group size, health and safety, curriculum, environment, child assessment, staff qualifications, family partnership, administration and management, cultural/linguistic diversity, accreditation, community involvement and provisions for children with special needs. A QRS may not have indicators in one or more of these categories, and these category labels may not be used in their QRS.

<b>Number of site-specific indicator categories:</b>	6
<b>Site-specific names of categories used in the QRS:</b>	Licensing Compliance Training Education Parent Involvement

Accreditation Learning Environment
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## Licensing Compliance (family child care)

Licensing requirements frequently serve as a minimal set of provisions to ensure that care and education environments are safe, healthy and provide for children's basic needs. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Licensing compliance included:</b>	Yes
<b>Licensing required for enrollment:</b>	Yes
<b>Licensing equivalent to the first level:</b>	Yes
<b>Licensing compliance referred to within:</b>	N/A
<b>Source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted
<b>Comments:</b>	A facility automatically receives a one star rating when a license (6 month permit, license, provisional license) is issued.

## Ratio (family child care)

Ratio and group size requirements are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Ratio and group size indicators included:</b>	No
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## Health and Safety (family child care)

Provisions for health and safety are frequently established in state licensing regulations. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Health and safety indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Health and safety indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	All Star levels, programs must have health and safety checklists for both indoor and outdoor spaces completed annually and kept on file in the home.
<b>Health and safety referred to within:</b>	Program Evaluation
<b>Source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted

## Curriculum (family child care)

A curriculum is a written document that provides a plan for intentional activities and interactions in an early childhood program. Indicators described in this section refer to requirements for the use of particular curricula or to demonstration that certain features of curriculum are in place. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Curriculum indicators included:</b>	No
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## Environment (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the classroom environment. Further details about Observational Measures included in the QRS are included in a section below. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Environment indicators included:</b>	Yes
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<b>Environment Rating Scales (ERS) included:</b>	No (used only for program evaluation purposes)
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<b>Range of recognized ERS scores:</b>	No score required
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<b>Indicators related to specific features of the environment :</b>	<p><b>All Star Levels:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A written daily schedule that reflects a balanced program of opportunities for learning, indoor/outdoor play, rest periods and meals is posted and followed.</li> <li>-Children are read to a minimum of 15 minutes each day.</li> </ul> <p><b>2 &amp; 3 Star levels:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children have opportunities during the day to access dramatic and manipulative play, blocks, art, and books.</li> <li>-The provider has a plan for transition times.</li> </ul>
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<b>Environment referred to within:</b>	Program Evaluation
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<b>Environment source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted
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<b>Comments:</b>	Environment Rating Scales are used for Program Evaluation; programs are not required to have a specific score.
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## Child Assessment (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to processes in place to assess, observe or monitor children's development on a regular basis. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at:

<http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Child assessment indicators included:</b>	No
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## Staff qualifications (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to specific educational or training requirements for staff. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Staff qualification indicators included:</b>	Yes
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<b>Indicators for family child care providers include:</b>	Education, training
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<b>Family child care qualifications related to administration and management</b>	Yes
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<b>Bachelors degree indicator for family child care provider:</b>	Yes
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<b>Bachelors degree indicator for family child care provider at level:</b>	An option for Primary Caregiver qualifications at Star levels 2 & 3
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<b>Description:</b>	<p><b><u>Primary Caregiver</u></b></p> <p><b>All Star levels:</b></p> <p>-The primary caregiver must have documentation of 20 clock hours of job-related training within the last 12 months or within the caregiver's employment year.</p> <p>-The primary caregiver has a written professional development plan.</p> <p><b>2 &amp; 3 Star levels:</b></p> <p>The primary caregiver must be on-site on a full time basis and meet and maintain one of the caregiver qualifications listed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. An occupational child care competency certificate for a master teacher or lead teacher through an Oklahoma technology center and three months of satisfactory full-time experience in a licensed or legally exempt child care setting;</li> <li>B. A current Child Development Associate (CDA) or Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) credential;</li> <li>C. A Certificate of Mastery in early</li> </ol>
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**Primary Caregiver**

**All Star levels:**

-The primary caregiver must have documentation of 20 clock hours of job-related training within the last 12 months or within the caregiver's employment year.

-The primary caregiver has a written professional development plan.

**2 & 3 Star levels:**

The primary caregiver must be on-site on a full time basis and meet and maintain one of the caregiver qualifications listed:

- A. An occupational child care competency certificate for a master teacher or lead teacher through an Oklahoma technology center and three months of satisfactory full-time experience in a licensed or legally exempt child care setting;
- B. A current Child Development Associate (CDA) or Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) credential;
- C. A Certificate of Mastery in early

- childhood education or child development from an accredited Oklahoma college or university;
- D. 30 credit hours from an approved college or university including 12 credit hours in early childhood education, child development or other coursework that supports working with children;
  - E. A four year degree from an accredited college or university with six college credit hours in early childhood education, child development, or other coursework that supports working with children;
  - F. A two- or four-year degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or child development.
  - G. A valid teaching certificate in early childhood education from the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

**Assistant Caregiver**

**All Star levels:**

-Any assistant caregiver, employed 12 months or more, must have documentation of 20 clock hours of job-related training.

-The assistant caregiver has a written professional development plan.

<b>Staff qualifications referred to within:</b>	Primary Caregiver, Assistant Caregiver
<b>Staff qualifications source of evidence</b>	Documentation submitted

**Family Partnership (family child care)**

Indicators in this section refer to activities and strategies to involve and engage families. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Family partnership indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	<p><b>All Star levels:</b></p> <p>-Has a signed contract on file for each family that includes, but is not limited to policy about hours,</p>

- fees, payment schedule, vacation and termination.
- Encourages parents to visit any time their children are present, and provides access to all parts of the home used for child care.
- Arranges for and documents a conference at least once per year with each child’s parents. They discuss the child’s current progress, - accomplishments, challenges, and set goals together. Documentation is kept with the child’s records.
- Makes opportunities available for parents to be involved in the program’s activities.
- Has information available about common childhood issues and resources that provide services to parents and children and makes referrals as needed.
- Makes a copy of the Licensing Requirements For Family Child Care Homes and Large Child Care Homes book available to parents.
- Survey parents every two years to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and evaluate the program’s effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and parents.

**2 & 3 Star levels:**

- Has at least two provider references, including contact information available to parents. References from relatives are not accepted.
- Has and uses a system (such as a daily care sheet) for sharing and communicating with parents the happenings, activities, and related issues about their child’s physical and emotional state.

**Family partnership referred to within:**

Parent Involvement, Program Evaluation

**Family partnership source of evidence:**

Documentation submitted

## Administration and Management (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to features of the administration and management of the program. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Administration and management indicators included:</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	<p><b>2 &amp; 3 Star levels:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-An approved self-assessment tool is completed every two years.</li> <li>-The program is assessed within 1 year of receiving 2 star status and every three years thereafter using an assessment tool approved by OCCS. (This assessment is not required for programs accredited through the National Association for Family Child Care.)</li> <li>-Program goals are established and updated every two years based on information gathered from the completed health and safety checklists, parent surveys, self assessment, and assessment tool.</li> <li>-The provider has a written plan for meeting established goals.</li> <li>-The primary caregiver has a written job description that defines the assistant's responsibilities for any assistant caregiver.</li> <li>-The provider evaluates the assistant in writing on an annual basis.</li> </ul>
<b>Administration and management referred to within:</b>	Assistant Caregiver, Parent Involvement
<b>Administration and management source of evidence:</b>	Documentation submitted

## Cultural/Linguistic Diversity (family child care)

Indicators in this section refer to provisions for responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Cultural/linguistic diversity indicators included:</b>	No
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## Accreditation (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to accreditation by a national accrediting body. Accreditation is a process in which programs demonstrate that they meet standards set forth by the accrediting body. The standards are determined by the accrediting body. There is not a common set of standards used for early childhood program accreditation. Accreditation by the National Association of Family Child Care is a commonly included accreditation used in QRSs for family child care programs.

<b>Accreditation included:</b>	Yes
<b>If yes, accreditation is:</b>	One criterion in highest rating
<b>Comments:</b>	To qualify for a three star program, the facility must meet all of the two star criteria listed above AND have current accreditation by the National Association for Family Child Care.

## Community Involvement (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to the type or frequency of involvement in the community. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>.

<b>Community involvement indicators included:</b>	No
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## Provisions for Children with Special Needs (family child care)

Indicators described in this section refer to provisions for children with special needs and the extent to which programs meet standards for inclusion of children with disabilities or other limiting conditions. All QRS quality indicators described in this profile are beyond those required by licensing. Details on the licensing requirements for a specific state can be found at: <http://nrckids.org/STATES/states.htm>. Provisions for Children with Special Needs indicators are also included in the Environment Rating Scales which are used in some QRSs.

<b>Indicators that specify provisions for children with special needs included:</b>	No
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## Application Process

Information in this section describes specific features of the application process in the QRS.

<b>Requires self-assessment tool:</b>	Yes
<b>Describe self-assessment tool:</b>	An approved self-assessment tool is completed every two years and kept on file at the center (2 and 3 star).
<b>Availability of preparatory process:</b>	No
<b>Describe preparatory process:</b>	There is a preparatory process for family child care homes in Oklahoma county because family child care is the largest pool of applicants in that area, but it is not mandatory.

<b>Requires orientation:</b>	No
<b>Time from application to rating:</b>	Less than 3 months
<b>Can apply for particular rating:</b>	Yes
<b>Describe apply for particular rating:</b>	Programs can apply to a specific star level and must meet all the criteria for that level.

## Outreach

This section describes the strategies that a QRS uses to disseminate information to parents, providers/programs, and the public.

<b>Outreach to parents:</b>	Yes
<b>Method of outreach to parents:</b>	Website, written materials disseminated via mailing and through QRS contractors/partners, and materials are posted in doctors' offices. Assistance is also provided to non-English speaking parents.
<b>Outreach to providers:</b>	Yes
<b>Method of outreach to providers:</b>	Website, written materials disseminated via mailing and through QRS contractors/partners. Information is also provided at conferences attended by providers.
<b>Outreach to public:</b>	Yes
<b>Method of outreach to public:</b>	Website
<b>Percent of budget dedicated to marketing:</b>	None

## Use of Observational Tools

The information in this section provides further detail about observational tools used in the QRS.

<b>Observational tools used:</b>	ECERS-R, FCCERS-R, ITERS-R, SACERS-R
<b>Describe how scores are used in the rating:</b>	The scores are used for program improvement. Minimum scores are not required.
<b>Frequency of observational assessment:</b>	Every 3 years.
<b>Method for choosing classrooms to observe:</b>	Classrooms are chosen by random selection unless a director asks for a specific classroom to be observed.
<b>Percent of classrooms observed in child care centers:</b>	Every age group in the program must be observed using the appropriate scale.
<b>Training for observers:</b>	Observers are trained by the Environment Rating Scale authors once a year on at least 1 scale.
<b>Initial reliability required:</b>	Observers must meet 85% reliability.
<b>Ongoing reliability required:</b>	There are ongoing reliability checks throughout

<b>Observational tool comments:</b>	the year on each scale to maintain 85% reliability. If providers have had a Program Administration Scale, Oklahoma allows providers to use that in lieu of using the Environmental Rating Scale for Program Improvement. (The state does not contract with the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development to specifically offer the Program Administration Scale.)
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## Improvement Process

This section provides information about the strategies used to provide or support quality improvement in the QRS.

<b>Training available that is linked to QRS:</b>	Yes
<b>Content of linked training:</b>	Getting organized, Star Criteria, Developmentally appropriate practices
<b>Total duration of training:</b>	1 hour - 32 hours
<b>Trainer approval process:</b>	Yes
<b>Target population for training:</b>	All providers
<b>Onsite assistance available that is linked to QRS:</b>	Yes
<b>Content of linked onsite assistance:</b>	Varies
<b>Onsite assistance frequency</b>	Varies
<b>Length of onsite sessions</b>	Varies
<b>Total duration of onsite assistance:</b>	Varies
<b>Formal approval for onsite assistance provider:</b>	The Center for Early Childhood Professional Development has an approval process.
<b>Target population for onsite assistance:</b>	All providers
<b>Comments about improvement process:</b>	There are 13 consultation and technical assistants that provide on-site assistance. Resource and Referrals also provide assistance based on the service needed.

## Financial Incentives

A variety of strategies may be used to provide financial incentives to providers to participate in the QRS or to support quality improvement efforts. This section provides information about different financial incentives.

<b>Tiered reimbursement:</b>	Reimbursement rates increase with each star level and are highest for the youngest children. (See attachment for daily rates).
<b>Quality award/bonus:</b>	No
<b>Startup award:</b>	No
<b>Scholarship:</b>	The Scholars for Excellence in Child Care Program awards scholarships to eligible child care

	professionals to complete coursework in the area of child development or early childhood education. This scholarship is a partnership between the teacher/family child care provider, child care center, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS).
<b>Wage enhancement</b>	A Reward Program is available (in other states, called WAGES). In Oklahoma, there is education based salary supplement to encourage providers to achieve higher levels of education. Directors and teachers must be employed at least 6 months and maintain employment in child care in order to be eligible.
<b>Retention bonus:</b>	No
<b>Improvement grants:</b>	No
<b>Comments on financial incentives:</b>	A facility may be eligible for community-based grants, but there is no statewide grant program.

## Administration Details

This section provides details about the QRS administration and funding.

<b>QRS lead :</b>	Oklahoma Department of Human Services.
<b>QRS lead type:</b>	State government agency
<b>Overall funding amount for most recent fiscal year:</b>	\$179,870,942
<b>Overall funding sources:</b>	Child Care and Development Fund (\$91,561,759), State (\$39,566,224), TANF (\$48,672,959).
<b>Administration funding for most recent fiscal year:</b>	\$2,725,684
<b>Administration funding source:</b>	Child Care and Development Fund, State, TANF.
<b>Quality improvement funding for most recent fiscal year:</b>	\$12,134,036
<b>Quality improvement funding source:</b>	Child Care and Development Fund, State, TANF.
<b>Evaluation funding for most recent fiscal year:</b>	Not available
<b>Evaluation funding source:</b>	Child Care and Development Fund, State, TANF.

## Partners

This section provides information about the roles and responsibilities of partners in the QRS.

<b>Partner 1 type :</b>	Community colleges
<b>Partner 1 name:</b>	
<b>Partner 1 function:</b>	Collect and validate information/documentation to assign rating, provide technical assistance and quality improvement services, manage



	communication or information dissemination, and provide financial Incentives.
<b>Work plan in place:</b>	Yes
<b>Partner 2:</b>	Resource and Referral Agencies
<b>Partner 2 name:</b>	Statewide Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral (in 8 regions)
<b>Partner 2 function:</b>	Provide technical assistance and quality improvement services, and manage communication or information dissemination.
<b>Work plan in place:</b>	Yes
<b>Partner 3 type :</b>	Other Non-Profit
<b>Partner 3 name:</b>	Center for Early Childhood Professional Development
<b>Partner 3 function:</b>	Collect and validate information/documentation to assign rating, conduct observational assessments, provide technical assistance and quality improvement services, manage communication or information dissemination, provide financial incentives through Reward Program, provide ongoing training in the community, and recognition for providers.
<b>Work plan in place:</b>	Yes

## Linkage of QRS with Other Systems

This section provides information about how the QRS is linked with other systems/standards including child care subsidies, professional development, state early learning guidelines, and core knowledge /competencies for providers.

<b>Child care subsidies :</b>	Yes
<b>Description:</b>	Must be 1-Star Plus or higher to contract with the Department of Human Services.
<b>Professional development:</b>	Yes
<b>Description</b>	Reaching for the Stars works closely with the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD). In addition, Reaching for the Stars has a contract with the Oklahoma State Board of Regents to provide a scholarship program for community colleges and local technology centers.
<b>Incorporation of other standards:</b>	No
<b>Description:</b>	Training by Resource and Referrals and the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development is

linked to core competencies but is not specified in QRIS criteria at this time. Training is available specific to Early Learning Guidelines for preschool children, but it is not linked to QRIS criteria at this time.

## Evaluation

<b>Status of evaluation :</b>	Periodic Evaluation
<b>List research questions for periodic evaluation:</b>	Does quality improve at each star level; and, how many master teachers are employed by rated programs and what are their qualifications.
<b>Evaluator type:</b>	External
<b>Evaluator name (if external)</b>	University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State
<b>If external, was RFP issued:</b>	N/A
<b>Published reports to date :</b>	<p>Norris, D.J., Dunn, L. &amp; Eckert, L. (2003). "Reaching for the Stars" Center Validation Study Final Report. Stillwater, OK and Norman, OK: Oklahoma State University and University of Oklahoma, Early Childhood Collaborative of Oklahoma.</p> <p>Herrerias, C., Harden, A., Bond, S. (2001) "Child care in Oklahoma: The Reaching for the Stars Program." Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology, 29(1) 47-64.  <a href="http://staging.childcareresearch.org/childcare/resources/817">http://staging.childcareresearch.org/childcare/resources/817</a>.</p> <p>Dunn, Loraine and Norris, Deborah (2003) ""Reaching for the stars": Center validation study final report." Early Childhood Collaborative of Oklahoma (ECCO): An OSU/OU Partnership.  <a href="http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/4489FF5C-643F-4F02-AA51-DF57D764137A/0/ReachingForTheStarsCenterValidationStudyExecutiveSummary_dcc_05092007.pdf">http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/4489FF5C-643F-4F02-AA51-DF57D764137A/0/ReachingForTheStarsCenterValidationStudyExecutiveSummary_dcc_05092007.pdf</a>.</p> <p>Norris, Deborah and Dunn, Loraine. (2004) Early Childhood Collaborative of Oklahoma (ECCO): An OSU/OU Partnership. <a href="http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/32D79DE6-D21B-4B9A-A629-C423AB062597/0/ReachingForTheStarsFamilyChildCareValidationStudyFinalReport_dcc_05092007.pdf">http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/32D79DE6-D21B-4B9A-A629-C423AB062597/0/ReachingForTheStarsFamilyChildCareValidationStudyFinalReport_dcc_05092007.pdf</a>.</p>

## Key Contacts

<b>Category :</b>	<b>Overall management</b>
<b>Contact name:</b>	Jennifer Towell
<b>Organization:</b>	Program Manager, Division of Child Care

**Email:** Jennifer.towell@okdhs.org  
**Phone:** 405-522-0256

**Category :** Tiered reimbursement and connections with subsidy  
**Contact name:** Debi Ream  
**Organization:** Program manager for contracts  
**Email:** debi.ream@okdhs.org  
**Phone:** 405-521-3500

**Category :** Distribution of financial incentives  
**Contact name:** LuAnn Faulkner (contracts)  
**Organization:**  
**Email:**  
**Phone:** 405-521-3561, 521-2075

**Category :** Data systems, monitoring and evaluation  
**Contact name:** Joni Riley-data monitoring  
**Organization:** Fiscal manager  
**Email:**  
**Phone:** 405-522-1512

## References

Norris, D.J., Dunn, L. & Eckert, L. (2003). "Reaching for the Stars" Center Validation Study Final Report.. Stillwater, OK and Norman, OK: Oklahoma State University and University of Oklahoma, Early Childhood Collaborative of Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Department of Human Services (ND). Stars Criteria Family and Large Family Child Care Homes. <http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/stars/>.

Oklahoma Department of Human Services (ND). Stars Criteria Child Care Centers. <http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/stars/>.

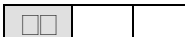
Oklahoma Department of Human Services (2008). 340:110-1-8.3. Certification of facilities to receive a differential quality rating. <http://www.okdhs.org/library/policy/oac340/110/01/0008003.htm>.

Oklahoma Department of Human Services (2009). Child Care Provider Rate Schedule. <http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/2E81F077-8947-487B-A406-D6DC4A313D67/0/C4B.pdf>.

## STARS CRITERIA CHILD CARE CENTERS

**One star** A facility automatically receives a **one star** rating when a license (□ month permit, license, provisional license) is issued.

In order to receive a higher star rating, the owner of a center has to apply for and submit documentation showing they meet the criteria:

**One star plus**  **All 1+ criteria is met.**

**Two star**  **All 1+ and 2 star criteria must be met.**

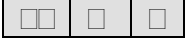
Another way a facility may qualify for **two star** is by earning and maintaining accreditation with one of the national accrediting agencies approved by Oklahoma Child Care Services (OCCS).

**Three star**  **All 1+, 2, and 3 star (accreditation) must be met.**

**Important note: A center may only operate on one star plus status for a total of 24 months. At the end of two years, the center must be approved as a two or three star, approved for an extension of time to comply or return to one star status.**


### **A. Licensing status and compliance with licensing requirements**

 The program has a license, provisional license or permit. (All)

 Center is compliant with licensing requirements. The program must not have numerous, repeated, or serious non-compliance with licensing requirements. (All) See clarification note number 1.

*Rationale: Meeting and maintaining minimum licensing requirements ensures the basic health and safety of children in care. A foundation of the Reaching for the Stars program is compliance with licensing requirements.*

### **B. Director**

 The director has documentation of 60 clock hours of job-related training within the last 12 months. In subsequent years, documentation of 60 hours of training per employment year is required. (All) See clarification note number 2.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The director has a written professional development plan that is reviewed annually and updated as needed. (All)

*Rationale: Professional development is ongoing training and a plan to gain the knowledge and skills needed to best serve children and families. Having a written professional development plan helps individuals stay organized, meet training deadlines, plan for and track training needed to renew credentials, and provides a road map to progress in the field of early education.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The director is a member of an early care and education professional organization. (1 and 2 star)

*Rationale: Membership in a professional organization provides excellent opportunities for early childhood educators to get together, network, and exchange ideas. Involvement demonstrates a commitment to professional growth and improvement in the lives of young children, supports and gives legitimate voice to the profession, serves as a conduit for dialogue and strengthens professional relationships.*

### **C. Learning Environment**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The center has and follows current weekly lesson plans appropriate for the developmental needs of all groups of children. Lesson plans are readily available in the classroom. (All)

*Rationale: Quality learning experiences for children are enhanced by a well-planned curriculum. Lesson plans help teachers select and prepare for activities, projects and themes that are appropriate for the age and development of children in their care, as well as organize content, materials, and methods.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Teachers read to children a minimum of 15 minutes each day. (All)

*Rationale: Reading aloud to young children is important because it helps them acquire the information and skills they need to succeed in school and life. Vocabulary (knowing the names for things) begins to develop at birth and reading to children is the single most important activity for building the foundation required for eventual success in reading.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Space for children 3 years of age and older is arranged and equipped in at least these **five** interest areas: blocks, dramatic play, manipulative, art, book-reading. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Space for children 3 years of age and older is arranged and equipped in at least these **seven** interest areas: blocks, dramatic play, manipulative, art, book-reading, **math, and science/nature**. (1 2 star)

*Rationale: Interest centers are an important part of the early childhood environment. They are thoughtfully designed/planned areas of space. Learning is an interactive process and children learn through doing. The environment in which children play and learn should provide them with opportunities to explore and interact with a variety of activities and materials, and allow for each child's individual temperament, moods, and development. See clarification notes number 3.*

At least two learning centers are available outdoors for children's use. ( and  star)

*Rationale: Outdoor centers offer learning opportunities just as they do inside. An outdoor classroom is ideal for emergent curriculum that is planned in response to children's interests. The outdoors is also a good place to provide experiences that are sometimes too messy for indoors, such as sand/water table.*

The center has and follows a schedule that allows time for children to complete tasks and reflects a balance and variety of activities. The schedule includes time for indoor/outdoor play, active/quiet play, rest periods, and meals. ( and  star)

*Rationale: A daily schedule is the basic plan for the day. It helps the day flow better for the teacher and it builds consistency and routine which allows children to feel secure. A well planned and consistent schedule may minimize behavior problems as children know what to expect and when.*

#### **D. Staff**

Staff who have been employed at the facility for at least  months must have 0 clock hours of job-related training per employment year. (All)  
See clarification note 4.

All full-time staff have a written professional development plan on file at the center. The professional development plan is reviewed annually and updated as needed. (All)

*Rationale: The level of quality found in child care largely depends on the knowledge and skills of the people who work with children. Everyone who works with young children and their families needs a basic understanding of child development and early education, how children learn. A written professional development plan serves as a map to progress in the field of early education, helps individuals stay organized and meet training deadlines, plan for and track training needed to renew credentials and other certifications like CPR.*

## E. Parent Involvement

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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A system is established and maintained for sharing and communicating to parents the happenings, activities and related issues about a child's physical and emotional state. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Parents are welcomed in the center at all times, for example, to observe, eat lunch with a child or volunteer in the classroom. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Individual parent conferences are arranged for and documented at least annually and at other times as needed to discuss children's progress, accomplishments, challenges and set goals together. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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A written report about the child is given to parents at the annual conference. ( and  star)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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There is a parent resource area with books, pamphlets and articles on parenting that are accessible and available to parents. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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At least two parent meetings with guest speakers or special events are held each year, for example, open house, brown bag lunch, family potluck dinners and children's programs. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Parents are informed of the center's program by two of these methods: bulletin board, newsletter, parent handbook, website specific to each center location, or e-mails. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Parents participate in program and policy development through board involvement or planning meetings or are given the opportunity to complete yearly questionnaires. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The program makes a copy of applicable licensing requirements available to parents. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Program maintains a current list of available community resources and assists parents in locating and connecting with these services. ( and  star)

*Rationale: Parents are a child's first teacher and are the link between the educational setting and home. A strong connection between child care staff and parents is critical for building a positive environment for young children, allowing children to feel more secure, confident and self assured. In addition, high quality of parent involvement reduces the number of complaints made. Everyone, but especially children, benefits when providers and parents work together.*

## F. Program Evaluation

Health and safety checklists for both indoor and outdoor spaces are completed annually and kept on file at the center. (All)

Staff and parents are surveyed every two years to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and evaluate the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children, parents, and staff. (All)

All methods of program evaluation described below are initially completed **within one year** of receiving two star status and then repeated as noted.

An approved self-assessment tool is completed every two years and kept on file at the center. (1 and 2 star)

The program is assessed within one year of two star status and every three years thereafter using an assessment tool approved by the CCS to determine the day-to-day quality of care provided to children. (3 star)  
This assessment is not required for programs accredited through an approved national accrediting body.

Program goals are established and updated every two years based on information gathered from all program evaluation items. (1 and 2 star)

The program has a written plan for meeting established goals. (1 and 2 star)

*Rationale: Taking the time to evaluate your program is universally recognized as one of the key indicators of quality in child care. Evaluating your program helps you identify the strengths and weaknesses in your program, grow as a professional, provide a quality environment for the children in your care, and increase parent awareness regarding the importance of their child's care.*

## G. Administrative

All staff have access to licensing requirements. (All)

*Rationale: Licensing requirements are the minimum standard of care; in order for staff to improve practices and build quality, they need to know the starting point.*

The director evaluates staff in writing at least once a year. (All)

*Rationale: No matter the size or type of business, your program and staff can benefit from regular employee performance evaluations. Evaluations can be used to clearly*



*communicate expectations, document and improve performance, recognize accomplishments, and develop and motivate staff.*

The program has and follows a salary scale with increments based on job title, level of education, credentials, and years of early childhood experience. ( and  star)

*Rationale: Research shows that well educated and compensated teachers and providers are key elements to early childhood program quality and outcomes for children. The child care field is plagued with high teacher turnover rate and low wages are part of the problem. The level of education and training attained by a child care provider is one of the strongest predictors for the provider's ability to offer high quality care, yet most child care teachers and providers earn poverty-level wages. Improved services for children require better compensation for the child care workforce.*

A policy and procedure manual that includes job duties and responsibilities for all staff is maintained on site. ( and  star)

*Rationale: A policy and procedure manual specifically communicates the policies and procedures that govern the operation of the program, helps a business clarify the tasks and systems as well as the people designated to carry out the organization's mission.*

A minimum of two staff meetings are conducted each year. ( and  star)

*Rationale: Meetings are the glue that holds the center together and serve as a way to communicate information, make and relay decisions, build teams, identify and resolve problems.*

## **H. Master Teacher**

There must be a staff person who meets master teacher qualifications for every 10 children of the licensed capacity. During the second and subsequent years of star status, there must be a master teacher for every 10 children of the licensed capacity. ( and  star) In school age programs or programs where the majority of children are school age, there must be a staff person who meets master teacher qualifications for every 10 children of the licensed capacity. See clarification note 5.

Master teachers must be employed and on-site at the facility on a full-time basis and meet and maintain one of the qualifications listed: ( and  star)

- A. an occupational child care competency certificate for a master teacher or lead teacher through an Oklahoma technology center and three months of satisfactory full-time experience in a licensed or legally exempt child care setting
  - . a current Child Development Associate (CDA) or Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) credential
- C. Certificate of mastery in early childhood education or child development from an accredited Oklahoma college or university
  - . 60 credit hours from an accredited college or university including 30 credit hours in early childhood education, child development or other coursework that supports working with children.
  - . a four year degree from an accredited college or university with six college credit hours in early childhood education, child development, or coursework that supports working with children.
  - . a two- or four-year degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or child development.
  - . A valid teaching certificate in early childhood education from the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

In centers licensed as school-age programs or programs where *the majority* of children are school-age, the master teacher must be employed and on-site at least 50% of the weekly operating hours. The master teacher must meet and maintain either:

- . one of the qualifications above (A – C), however a degree or coursework may also be in elementary education, recreation, or other coursework that supports working with children, families, and the community.
- I. 600 clock hours of school-age related training within the last five years, one year of full-time experience in a licensed school-age child care program or legally exempt school-age child care program, and a minimum score of 5.0 on the School-Age Environment Rating Scale in a classroom where the master teacher is the lead teacher. In order to keep master teacher status via this option, staff must maintain 600 clock hours of school-age related training on an ongoing basis, and every two years receive a minimum score of 5.0 on the School-Age Environment Rating Scale.

### **I. Accreditation**

To qualify for a three star center, the facility must meet all of the two star criteria listed above A-D

Have current accreditation by one of these agencies:

- Association of Christian Schools International's Preschool Accreditation (ACSI)
- Council on Accreditation (COA)
- National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education (NACE)
- National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)

## Notes for Clarification

□ Numerous, Repeated, Serious

A. Numerous non-compliance is any monitoring visit with six or more items documented as non-compliant on the monitoring report for a facility with a licensed capacity of less than 10 or seven or more items for a facility with a licensed capacity of 10 or more for Family Child Care homes it is any visit with five or more areas of non-compliance. Each numbered item on the monitoring report that has been marked as non-compliant is counted once even though there may be more than one non-compliance included in that item.

□. Repeated non-compliance is three or more documented incidents of non-compliance with the same requirement within the last 12 months. For missing immunizations to be considered a repeat non-compliance, they must be regarding the same child.

C. Serious non-compliance is a non-compliance with licensing requirements that exposes children to conditions that present an imminent risk of harm. Some examples of serious non-compliance are violations of requirements for: Staff-child ratio-supervision of children-sleep position-prohibited disciplinary actions-licensed capacity-use of passenger restraints-water activities-pools and other water hazards-multiple hazards-weapons-reporting child abuse-prohibited access to children by a person with a criminal record or health or behavior risk or failure to obtain background investigations-administering medication to children-room temperature-heat sources and loss of any utility service-compliance file and/or posting-cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid training-liability insurance-or vehicle liability insurance.

**A reduction in your star certification may occur when violations are not corrected in the agreed upon time frame, the facility has serious non-compliance with licensing requirements; a serious incident occurs resulting in injury or imminent risk of injury to a child; or an Emergency Order or notice of proposed denial or revocation of license is issued.**

**Repeated, and/or Serious licensing violations may prevent a facility from being approved for a higher star level.**

□ Director Training

Director: For initial approval, the director must have documentation of 10 hours of formal training within the last 12 months. For subsequent years of star certification and years of employment, the director must have 10 clock hours of training each employment year. **Reading does not count for stars training.**

If a new director is hired, the director must have documentation of 60 hours of training within the last 12 months prior to employment. If the new director does not have the 60 hours of training, the facility is required to submit a written plan to licensing staff for correcting the violation within 90 days of the new director's hire date.

Only six hours of in-service training (videos, on-site training) may be counted each year.

## Interest Centers

Research indicates that children who play learn to regulate their own emotions and ideas, take more initiative, engage in higher level thinking, and develop an understanding of symbolic relationships that are a precursor to reading and mathematical thinking. Interest centers are thoughtfully designed/planned areas of space that are designated for certain activities like or similar toys, materials, equipment are displayed and readily available.

### Interest Center Basics:

- well defined: areas can be separated with low shelves/partial walls, rugs, etc.
- have a basic supply of materials organized so that children can use them effectively
- have an adequate number of play slots with no more than 1 to 2 children per center area.
- should be developmentally appropriate
- situated in such a way to afford visual supervision
- should be changed on a regular basis
- labeled with words and or pictures.

**Dramatic play** helps children understand themselves and others allows them to work out feelings, and practice language and social skills.

**Manipulative** – allows children to test problem solving, practice eye/hand coordination.

**Blocks** building with blocks gives children the opportunity to think, plan and solve problems.

**Art** express feeling and ideas, fosters imagination and creativity, improve self image and provides practice for fine motor skills.

**Book** language is enhanced reading readiness skills are learned and practiced, children learn to tell stories and manipulate materials.

**Science/Nature** - Science knowledge is developed through experiences with real animals, plants and objects in the home, classroom and the environment. A science or nature center provides tools and materials for children to explore the world and how it works. By nurturing this sense of wonder, we help children to become scientific thinkers.

**Math** - Mathematics helps young children make sense of the world around them and understand their physical world. Children are inclined to make comparisons, notice similarities and differences in objects, and group their toys and materials. This ability to organize information into categories, quantify data, and solve problems helps children to learn about time, space and numbers.

#### Staff

At initial application, training may be counted if training was obtained within the last 12 months or within the staff's employment year. After initial approval for certification, the training criteria must be met within staff's employment year. Staff may count a total of six (6) hours of in-service training each year. **Reading does not count for star training.**

#### 5. Master Teacher

The number of master teachers needed is based on capacity. School age children may be deducted from the total capacity if the majority of children in care are younger than five years of age. For example:

Center's capacity is 55

minus 15 school age slot

40 capacity 1 master teacher the first year of two star

One master teacher would be needed when first applying for 2 star to meet the 40. After utilizing 12 months of two star status, there must be a master teacher for every 40 children of the licensed capacity.

A person is not counted as a master teacher or qualified caregiver in more than one facility or considered a master teacher in one facility and a director of another facility unless the facilities are programs that do not operate concurrently at any given time. For an exception to this rule to be considered, a written request must be submitted by the provider and approved by the stars program manager or designee.

The director is not counted as a master teacher in centers licensed for more than 40 children. The director may only be counted as a master teacher if the licensed capacity minus school-age children is 40 or less.

Centers licensed as school-age programs or programs where the majority of children are school-age must have a master teacher for every 40 children of the licensed capacity.

The director may be counted as a master teacher in centers licensed as school-age programs or programs where the majority of children are school-age.

## STARS CRITERIA FAMILY and LARGE FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

**One star** A facility automatically receives a **one star** rating when a license (□ month permit, license, provisional license) is issued.

In order to receive a higher star rating, the owner of a family child care home has to apply for and submit documentation showing they meet the criteria.

**One star plus**    **All 1+ star criteria must be met.**

**Two star**    **All 1+ and 2 star criteria must be met.**

(Another way a facility may qualify for **two star** is by earning and maintaining accreditation with the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC).

**Three star**    **All 1+, 2, and 3 star (accreditation) must be met.**

**Important note: A home may operate on one star plus status for a total of 24 months. At the end of two years, the home must be approved as a two or three star, approved for an extension of time to comply or return to one star status.**

### **A. Licensing status and compliance with Licensing Requirements**

The program has a license, provisional license or permit. (All)

Home is compliant with licensing requirements. The program must not have numerous, repeated or serious non-compliance with licensing requirements. (All) See clarification note number □

*Rationale: Meeting and maintaining minimum licensing requirements ensures the basic health and safety of children in care. A foundation of the Reaching for the Stars program is compliance with licensing requirements.*

### **B. Primary Caregiver**

The primary caregiver must have documentation of □0 clock hours of □b□ related training within the last □□ months or within the caregiver's employment year. (All) See clarification note number □

The primary caregiver has a written professional development plan. (All)

### C. Assistant Caregiver

Any assistant caregiver, employed  months or more, must have documentation of 0 clock hours of ob-related training. (All)

The assistant caregiver has a written professional development plan. (All)

*Rationale: Professional development is ongoing training and a plan to gain the knowledge and skills needed to best serve children and families. Having a written professional development plan helps individuals stay organized, meet training deadlines, plan for and track training needed to renew credentials, and provides a road map to progress in the field of early education.*

The primary caregiver has a written ob description that defines the assistant's responsibilities for any assistant caregiver. ( and  star)

The provider evaluates the assistant in writing on an annual basis. ( and  star)

*Rationale: A written list of job responsibilities outlines tasks and expectations and establishes staff's role in providing quality care. Written job responsibilities serve as a starting point for evaluation. Evaluating staff will promote learning, build confidence and develop staff's understanding of themselves and their abilities.*

### D. Learning Environment

A written daily schedule that reflects a balanced program of opportunities for learning, indoor/outdoor play, rest periods and meals is posted and followed. (All)

*Rationale: A daily schedule is the basic plan for the day. It helps the day flow better for the caregiver and it builds consistency and routine which allows children to feel secure. A well planned and consistent schedule may minimize behavior problems as children know what to expect and when.*

Children are read to a minimum of 5 minutes each day. (All)

*Rationale: Reading aloud to young children is important because it helps them acquire the information and skills they need to succeed in school and life. Vocabulary (knowing the names for things) begins to develop at birth and reading to children is the single most important activity for building the foundation required for eventual success in reading.*

Children have opportunities during the day to access dramatic and manipulative play, blocks, art, and books. ( and  star)

*Rationale: Learning is an interactive process and children learn through play. The environment in which children play and learn should provide them with opportunities to explore and interact with a variety of activities and materials, and allow for each child's individual temperament, moods, and development. See clarification notes number 3.*

The provider has a plan for transition times. ( and  star)

*Rationale: Transition means change. Children experience many changes during their day, such as changes in activity, place, materials, etc. Having plans for positive, fun, transitions provides predictability for children, prepares children to listen, relax, sit down, or move from place to place. Good transitions help children feel secure and can reduce or prevent behavior problems.*

## **E. Parent Involvement**

The primary caregiver must provide the following methods of parent communication:

Has a signed contract on file for each family that includes, but is not limited to policy about hours, fees, payment schedule, vacation and termination. (All)

Encourages parents to visit any time their children are present, and provides access to all parts of the home used for child care. (All)

Arranges for and documents a conference at least once per year with each child's parents. They discuss the child's current progress, accomplishments, challenges, and set goals together. Documentation is kept with the child's records. (All)

Makes opportunities available for parents to be involved in the program's activities. (All)

Has information available about common childhood issues and resources that provide services to parents and children and makes referrals as needed. (All)

Makes a copy of the Licensing Requirements for Family Child Care Homes and Large Child Care Homes book available to parents. (All)

Has at least two provider references, including contact information available to parents. References from relatives are not accepted. ( and  star)



	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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has and uses a system (such as a daily care sheet) for sharing and communicating with parents the happenings, activities, and related issues about their child's physical and emotional state. (1 and 2 star)

*Rationale: Parents are a child's first teacher and are the link between the educational setting and home. A strong connection between child care providers and parents is critical for building a positive environment for young children, allowing children to feel more secure, confident and self assured. In addition, high quality of parent involvement reduces the number of complaints made. Everyone, but especially children, benefits when providers and parents work together.*

## F. Program Evaluation

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Complete health and safety checklists for both indoor and outdoor spaces annually. (All)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Survey parents every two years to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and evaluate the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and parents. (All)

**All methods of program evaluation listed below are completed within one year of receiving two star status.** (For example, a home receiving two star status on 01/01/09, has to complete all program evaluation methods below by 01/01/10.)

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An approved self-assessment tool is completed every two years. (1 and 2 star)

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The program is assessed within 1 year of receiving 2 star status and every three years thereafter using an assessment tool approved by the CCS. (2 star) This assessment is not required for programs accredited through the National Association for Family Child Care.

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Program goals are established and updated every two years based on information gathered from the completed health and safety checklists, parent surveys, self assessment, and assessment tool. (1 and 2 star)

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The provider has a written plan for meeting established goals. (1 and 2 star)

*Rationale: Taking the time to evaluate your program is universally recognized as one of the key indicators of quality in child care. Evaluating your program helps you identify strengths and weaknesses in your program, grow as a professional, provide a quality environment for the children in your care, and increase parent awareness regarding the importance of their child's care.*

## **G. Primary Caregiver Qualifications**

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The primary caregiver must be on-site on a full time basis and meet and maintain one of the caregiver qualifications listed: (1 and 2 star)

- A. an occupational child care competency certificate for a master teacher or lead teacher through an Oklahoma technology center and three months of satisfactory full-time experience in a licensed or legally exempt child care setting
  - a current Child Development Associate (CDA) or Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) credential
- C. a Certificate of Mastery in early childhood education or child development from an accredited Oklahoma college or university
  - 30 credit hours from an approved college or university including 10 credit hours in early childhood education, child development or other coursework that supports working with children
  - a four year degree from an accredited college or university with six college credit hours in early childhood education, child development, or other coursework that supports working with children
  - a two or four year degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or child development.
  - A valid teaching certificate in early childhood education from the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

*Rationale: The level of quality found in child care largely depends on the knowledge and skills of the people who work with children. All children are ready to learn from birth and what caregivers do or don't do can help or hurt a child's success in life. In order to meet children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs, caregivers need to have a thorough understanding of child development and be able to implement developmentally appropriate practices. See clarification notes number 4.*

## **H. Accreditation**

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A facility must meet all two star criteria **AND** have current accreditation by the National Association for Family Child Care.

*Rationale: Accreditation reflects a process of extensive self-study and external review of a program and how it compares to benchmark standards of quality set by the accrediting agency.*

## Notes for Clarification

□ Numerous, □epeated, Serious

A. Numerous non-compliance is any monitoring visit with six or more items documented as non-compliant on the monitoring report for a facility with a licensed capacity of less than 10 or seven or more items for a facility with a licensed capacity of 10 or more. For Family Child Care homes it is any visit with five or more areas of non-compliance. Each numbered item on the monitoring report that has been marked as non-compliant is counted once even though there may be more than one non-compliance included in that item.

□. Repeated non-compliance is three or more documented incidents of non-compliance with the same requirement within the last 12 months. For missing immunizations to be considered a repeat non-compliance, they must be regarding the same child.

C. Serious non-compliance is a non-compliance with licensing requirements that exposes children to conditions that present an imminent risk of harm. Some examples of serious non-compliance are violations of requirements for: Staff-child ratio, supervision of children, sleep position, prohibited disciplinary actions, licensed capacity, use of passenger restraints, water activities, pools and other water hazards, multiple hazards, weapons, reporting child abuse, prohibited access to children by a person with a criminal record or health or behavior risk or failure to obtain background investigations, administering medication to children, room temperature, heat sources and loss of any utility service, compliance file and/or posting, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid training, liability insurance or vehicle liability insurance.

**A reduction in your star certification may occur when violations are not corrected in the agreed upon time frame, the facility has serious non-compliance with licensing requirements; a serious incident occurs resulting in injury or imminent risk of injury to a child; or an Emergency Order or notice of proposed denial or revocation of license is issued.**

**Repeated, and/or Serious licensing violations may prevent a facility from being approved for a higher star level.**

## □ Primary Caregiver and Assistant

Additional information: At application, the training may be counted if training was obtained within the last 12 months or within the provider's employment year. In subsequent years, the provider and any assistant employed 12 months or more, must have 100 clock hours of training each employment year.

- The employment date for the licensed provider is the date of application for a license.
  - Only six hours of in-service training (videos, on-site training) may be counted each year.
- Reading does not count for stars training.**

## □ Learning Environment

**Dramatic play** □ helps children understand themselves and others □ allows them to work out feelings, and practice language and social skills.

**Manipulative** – allows children to test problem solving, practice eye □ hand coordination.

**Blocks** □ building with blocks gives children the opportunity to think, plan and solve problems.

**Art** □ express feeling and ideas, fosters imagination and creativity, improve self image and provides practice for fine motor skills.

**Book** □ language is enhanced, reading readiness skills are learned and practiced, children learn to tell stories and manipulate materials.

## □ Primary Caregiver

Scholars for □ Excellence in Child Care provides educational opportunities for child care professionals to earn the credentials or degrees required for the □ Teaching for the Stars program. Scholars award scholarships to eligible child care professionals to complete coursework in the area of child development or early childhood education, as well as the Child □ evelopment Associate (C□A) and Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) Credential Assessment. □ hese scholarships enable child care providers in □ klahoma to improve their skills through education, receive an educational stipend and continue the availability of □ uality child care in local communities.

□ or more information, visit <http://www.okhighered.org/scholars> □ or call the □ klahoma State □ eponents for □ igher □ ducation, at □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ (toll free) or □ 05.□ □ 5.9 □ 9 □ .

### **Tiered Reimbursement Daily Rates**

#### One Star-Center

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-12 months	\$15.50	\$11.00
13-24 months	\$15.50	\$11.00
25-48 months	\$13.25	\$9.00
49-72 months	\$13.50	\$9.00
73 months-13 years	\$11.25	\$7.00

#### One Star-Homes

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-24 months	\$14.50	\$10.00
25-48 months	\$12.25	\$8.00
49-72 months	\$12.25	\$8.00
73 months-13 years	\$10.25	\$6.00

#### One Star Plus-Centers

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-12 months	\$18.25	\$12.00
13-24 months	\$18.25	\$12.00
25-48 months	\$16.00	\$11.00
49-72 months	\$15.00	\$10.00
73 months-13 years	\$12.75	\$9.00

#### One Star Plus-Homes

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-24 months	\$17.25	\$12.00
25-48 months	\$15.00	\$10.00
49-72 months	\$15.00	\$10.00
73 months-13 years	\$12.75	\$9.00

#### Two Stars-Centers

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-12 months	\$24.00	\$14.00
13-24 months	\$23.00	\$14.00
25-48 months	\$20.50	\$12.00
49-72 months	\$18.00	\$11.00
73 months-13 years	\$14.00	\$10.00

#### Two-Star Homes

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-24 months	\$20.00	\$13.00
25-48 months	\$19.00	\$11.00
49-72 months	\$19.00	\$11.00
73 months-13 years	\$14.00	\$10.00

#### Three-Star Centers-

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-12 months	\$35.00	\$21.00
13-24 months	\$32.75	\$19.00
25-48 months	\$27.75	\$17.00
49-72 months	\$22.50	\$15.00
73 months-13 years	\$18.25	\$12.00

Three-Star Homes

Ages	Full-Time	Part-Time
0-24 months	\$27.75	\$19.00
25-48 months	\$23.75	\$16.00
49-72 months	\$23.75	\$19.00
73 months-13 years	\$18.25	\$12.00