

A B C  
*s*  
*of*  
Q R S

**A Plan for a Minnesota Quality Rating  
System for Child Care and Early Education  
and Schoolage Programs**

April 2005

Draft by the Minnesota Quality Rating System Taskforce

**DRAFT**

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Executive Summary .....	2
Minnesota’s Current Early Care and Education Environment .....	4
Closing the K–12 Achievement Gap Through Quality Early Care and Education .....	4
Business Leaders Call for More Accountability .....	5
A Systemic Solution: Program Quality Rating Systems .....	6
Minnesota QRS Task Force .....	6
Minnesota Plan for a Quality Rating System .....	6
Minnesota QRS Mission and Guiding Principles .....	7
QRS Quality Criteria and Indicators .....	7
Incentives, Grants and Awards .....	11
Alignment with Minnesota’s School Readiness Expectations for Children, Providers and Programs .....	12
Implementing a Quality Rating System in Minnesota .....	12
Rating Programs .....	13
Supports for Provider Participation and Quality Improvement .....	13
Supports for Parent Use of the QRS .....	13
Program Participation Process .....	14
Managing the QRS .....	14
QRS Monitoring and Evaluation .....	15
QRS Phase-in .....	15
Community Feedback and Final Endorsement Plan .....	15
Draft Plan Feedback Form .....	16
Appendices	
A. Family Child Care QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators .....	18
B. Center-based QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators .....	20
C. Schoolage Program QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators .....	26
D. Provider Incentives, Grants and Performance Awards .....	30
E. Provider QRS Participation Flow Chart .....	31
F. Minnesota’s School Readiness Expectations for Children, Providers and Programs .....	32
G. Research Base Supporting the Proposed Quality Indicators .....	33
H. QRS Task Force Members and Staff .....	34

## Executive Summary

This DRAFT Plan presents the recommendations of a citizen's Task Force for developing a voluntary quality rating system (QRS) for early care and education and schoolage programs in Minnesota. This QRS Plan will help parents choose quality programs for their children and help providers improve and maintain quality.

Currently, there is no clear path for providers to help them achieve higher levels of quality. National research of the private child care market documents inconsistent quality with only 20 percent of programs rated as good quality while 40 to 60 percent provide only mediocre care unlikely to foster children's development. Sadly, 20 percent of programs are rated as "poor to harmful." Parents in Minnesota have no "consumer" guide or ratings to help them distinguish the level of quality of specific programs.

### *The Need for a Quality Rating System*

Of the nearly 1 million children 0-12 in Minnesota, 68 percent spend part of their day in the care of someone other than their parents. There is no question that parents are their children's most important first teachers and are responsible for their children's healthy growth and development. It is also true that child care providers throughout Minnesota are doing the important work of helping parents provide their young children with safe, nurturing environments and opportunities for learning.

Families have many program choices from care in homes or centers to Head Start and schoolage programs. Also, many families choose informal care provided by relatives, friends or neighbors who are not required to be licensed. The QRS Plan does not address these informal child care arrangements.

Many parents are able to find child care, with which they are satisfied and comfortable. However, there are also many who want help in making child care decisions. A QRS would provide program ratings to parents who ask for this information to help them determine which of their child care options meet demonstrated quality standards linked to positive child outcomes.

### *Closing Minnesota's K-12 Achievement Gap*

We have national as well as Minnesota evidence that Head Start and accredited private child care programs help prepare children for kindergarten. Head Start significantly improves children's vocabulary, letter recognition, early writing skills and social behavior (FACES study, 2003) A recent study by the MN Department of Human Services of 22 of the 130 accredited child care centers in Minnesota showed that twice as many children who had attended accredited centers showed proficiency in the cognitive, social, emotional, creative and physical areas that prepare them for kindergarten as compared to the statewide 2003 Minnesota Department of Education School Readiness Assessment Study.

Minnesota business leaders have noted the importance of informed parents, including child care consumer information, for improving children's school readiness. Over 200 business leaders have weighed in on the issue through the Minnesota School Readiness Business Advisory Council. In their October, 2004 report, *Ready for School?*, the Minnesota School Readiness Business Advisory Council also recommends that

investments be made to improve the quality of early learning settings including, “Develop a system for rating the quality of teacher/providers’ performance against agreed upon program standards and for publishing the resulting evaluations.” (pg 32.)

*The DRAFT QRS Plan for Minnesota*

Responding to the need to help parents find quality care and education and to provide programs with resources and incentives to improve and/or maintain high quality, Ready 4 K and the Child Care Financing Project (CCFP) convened a statewide citizens’ Task Force including licensed family child care providers and child care center directors, school age programs, Head Start and Tribal child care programs, government officials, and other concerned citizens (Task Force members listed in Appendix H).

As proposed, the QRS will be voluntary and open to any licensed family child care providers, centers including proprietary, non-profit and religiously sponsored programs, Tribally licensed child care, and school sponsored schoolage programs. This plan does not promote any required curriculum but rather focuses on how a program performs on key indicators of quality related to child outcomes. . The QRS will reward quality providers, provide struggling programs with incentives to improve, and provide parents with ratings. By linking providers to financial incentives and resources, the system will encourage improvements in training and services.

The proposed QRS is a four-level system that contains quality indicators in seven categories: **Professional Development/Qualifications/Training; Learning Environments; Family Partnerships and Education; Licensing Compliance; Ratios; Management/Administrative Policies; Program Evaluation.** These categories and their indicators were selected by the Task Force because of the professional consensus and strong research base linking them to both program quality and positive child outcomes.

An essential component of the proposed QRS are the incentives, improvement grants and performance awards that programs will receive if they participate in the QRS system. QRS Performance Awards will be offered to participating programs because all parents should be able to access high quality programs, regardless of income.

This DRAFT Plan outlines four primary functions essential to the operation of an effective and efficient system: rating programs; supporting program participation in the QRS; supporting parent use of the ratings; managing the QRS improvement grants, performance awards, ratings validity, and overall system evaluation.

The QRS ratings will be available to the public and especially to parents through multiple sources including a variety of websites. A variety of supports to help programs access and use the QRS are included in the Appendices to this report.

The QRS Task Force welcomes public comment on this DRAFT Plan until May 31, 2005. Written comments may be provided to the Task Force by sending them to: QRS Plan, Ready 4 K, 2233 University Avenue, Suite 345, St. Paul, MN 55114-1629. Email comments or questions may be sent to: [qualityratingsystem@ready4K.org](mailto:qualityratingsystem@ready4K.org) or by calling Nancy Johnson, GMDCA Child Care Financing Project, 612-349-0553.

## Introduction

This DRAFT Plan provides the recommendations of a citizen’s Task Force for developing a voluntary quality rating system for early care and education and schoolage programs in Minnesota. This Quality Rating System (QRS) Plan both helps parents choose quality programs for their children and helps providers improve and maintain quality. The Task Force developed this voluntary QRS as an effective way to promote accountability as well as to elevate the important service that child care providers and teachers provide. The QRS will recognize and reward programs that meet indicators of quality linked to improving young children’s school readiness. Program incentives and supports will be available to programs who choose to participate to help them achieve and maintain quality environments that support children’s development and learning.

## Minnesota’s Families Today

Our children are our most precious responsibility. Minnesota’s parents, like parents everywhere, want their children to start their lives with the nurturing and opportunities for development and learning that will set them on successful paths for life. Minnesotans also have a strong work ethic and the highest percentage of working parents of young children of any state in the nation—79 percent of mothers in Minnesota are in the workforce.

Of the nearly 1 million children 0–12 in Minnesota, 68 percent spend part of their day in the care of someone other than their parents. According to the Department of Education’s 2003 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, 77 percent of Minnesota’s entering kindergartners attended an early care and education program.

When parents make the decision of who will care for their child, they choose a provider in the context of their child’s needs, their family situation and their religious and cultural values. Many parents are able to find child care that they are satisfied with and are comfortable knowing their child is nurtured and well cared for. This can include relatives, friends, licensed family child care, and licensed child care centers.

However, there are also many parents who want help in making their child care decisions, including knowing in more detail what programs provide high quality care. Minnesota’s 19 regional child care resource and referral agencies are able to provide parents with information on what child care is available, and have information for parents on what to look for in a quality program. The child care resource and referral network however, has no way to identify levels of quality of the child care programs, other than that they are licensed, or that they are accredited.

---

**Of the nearly 1 million children 0–12 in Minnesota, 68 percent spend part of their day in the care of someone other than their parents.**

---

---

In this QRS plan, the word “program” includes licensed family child care providers, child care centers and preschools, tribally licensed child care, Head Start programs, and school age programs. We also refer to the adults working with children 0–12 as “providers,” which includes teaching staff and directors in center settings and providers in family child care homes.

A Quality Rating System would provide additional information to those parents who choose to use it, to help them determine which of their child care options meet demonstrated quality standards linked to positive child outcomes.

## **Minnesota’s Current Early Care and Education Environment**

Child care providers throughout Minnesota are doing the important work of helping parents provide their young children with safe, nurturing environments and opportunities for learning. Families have many program choices: 35 percent of children 0–5 years old attend licensed family child care homes or center-based settings, 7 percent are enrolled in Head Start programs; 14 percent of children 5–12 years old go to school age programs. Many families choose child care provided by relatives, friends or neighbors who are not required to be licensed. This QRS plan only refers to licensed family child care homes as well as centers and school sponsored programs.

Currently, there is no clear path and comprehensive system to help programs achieve higher levels of quality. National research of the private child care market documents inconsistent quality with only 20 percent of programs rated as good quality while 40 to 60 percent provide only mediocre care unlikely to foster children’s development. Sadly, 20 percent of programs are rated as “poor to harmful.” Parents have no “consumer” guide or ratings to help them distinguish between poor, mediocre and good quality programs, resulting in ineffective market pressure for quality. Parents also shoulder most of the costs of child care and education. This means that providers must keep their costs low, undercutting quality, to remain affordable for families. While providing some relief, Minnesota’s child care subsidy program is so limited that only 9 percent of child care center spaces and 6 percent of licensed family child care spaces are subsidized.

There is no question that parents are their children’s most important teachers and are responsible for their children’s healthy growth and development. However, with so many children spending part of their early years in the care of other adults, it is necessary to support the quality of the caring and learning environments in those child care settings so that young children can arrive at kindergarten ready for school. Children in school age programs also need the supports of competent staff and a quality environment to learn and thrive in school.

## **Closing the K-12 Achievement Gap Through Quality Early Care and Education**

We have national as well as Minnesota evidence that quality programs—including Head Start and accredited private child care programs—help prepare children for kindergarten. National research in 2003 found that Head Start significantly improves children’s vocabulary, letter recognition, early writing skills and social behavior (FACES study, 2003). A recent study by the Minnesota Department of Human Services of 22

**Currently, there is no clear path and comprehensive system to help programs achieve higher levels of quality.**

accredited child care centers in Minnesota showed that twice as many children who had attended accredited centers were “Fully Prepared” for kindergarten as compared to the statewide 2003 Minnesota Department of Education School Readiness Assessment Study. Less than 1 percent of the children in these accredited child care programs were performing in the “Not Yet Prepared” range. Another significant finding in this study was that children from economically and educationally disadvantaged households who attended an accredited child care center had school readiness ratings at the same levels as children from households with higher incomes and parent education levels.

Three statistics point to the critical need to improve access for families to quality early care and education and schoolage programs for their children. In 2002 and again in 2003, the Minnesota Department of Education’s School Readiness Assessment found that nearly 50 percent of five year olds were not fully prepared for kindergarten. Ten to twelve percent of entering kindergartners were found to be “Not Yet” proficient across five learning domains; about 40 percent were found to be “In Progress,” and less than 50 percent were found to be “Fully Proficient” across the five learning domains. Second, Minnesota lags behind all other states in the K–12 achievement gap between white and black children.

Third, of the over 841 full-day child care centers in Minnesota, only 11 percent are recognized by national accreditation for providing high-quality services. Of the many quality family child care providers in Minnesota, fewer than 2 percent have sought and achieved accreditation.

Head Start serves Minnesota’s neediest children and their families. Head Start Programs are required to follow rigorous and comprehensive Performance Standards including family partnerships, language and pre-reading skills, mental and physical health and screenings, and nutritious meals and snacks. However, the current capacity of Head Start provides spaces for less than 40 percent of the eligible children in Minnesota.

Children, particularly from disadvantaged households, who attend quality early care and education and school age programs can “catch up” to their peers, have more chances to graduate from high school, and go on to lead stable, contributing lives. Quality improvement initiatives that improve the school readiness outcomes of young children entering kindergarten can be a significant strategy for Minnesota to reduce the K–12 achievement gap.

---

**Leading Minnesota economists and business leaders make the case that investment in helping parents with their children’s development has high rates of return for the public.**

---

## **Business Leaders Call for More Accountability**

Minnesota business leaders have noted the importance of informed parents, including child care consumer information, for improving children’s school readiness. Over 200 business leaders have weighed in on the issue through the Minnesota School Readiness Business Advisory Council. In their October, 2004 report, *Ready for School?*, the Minnesota School Readiness Business Advisory Council called for:

- Assured access for all children, especially for “at risk” pre-schoolers;
- Clear measures of quality and progress by individual children;
- Informed parents and parental choice;
- Coordination with other social services; and
- Accountability for results.

The report goes on to recommend that investments be made to improve the quality of early learning settings including, “Develop a system for rating the quality of teacher/providers’ performance against agreed upon program standards and for publishing the resulting evaluations.” (pg 32.)

## **A Systemic Solution: Quality Rating Systems**

A quality rating system provides a systemic approach to investing in quality so that families who choose to participate have more information about quality choices, programs have resources to achieve and maintain quality, and children whose parents work outside the home can be in settings which support parents in ensuring their children thrive and reach their potential. Nationally, 36 states use program quality ratings to help parents, including those receiving fee subsidies, to choose higher quality and to provide incentives and supports for providers to achieve quality. Wisconsin recently announced the launch of their QRS and Minnesota’s other neighboring states of Iowa, North Dakota, and Illinois are in the process of developing a QRS. For their voluntary rating systems to be successful, many states combine improvement grants, training scholarships, performance bonuses and other supports for providers.

## **Minnesota Plan for a Quality Rating System**

Responding to the need to help parents distinguish quality and to link public and private investment to quality programs that improve children’s school readiness, Ready 4 K, the GMDCA Child Care Financing Project (CCFP), and the Minnesota School Readiness Business Advisory Council have called for a voluntary system of measuring program quality. To accomplish this goal, Ready 4 K and the CCFP formed a statewide citizen’s advisory committee including licensed family child care providers and centers, school age programs, Head Start and tribal child care programs, government officials, and other concerned citizens. (Members listed in Appendix H.)

This DRAFT Plan for a voluntary QRS for Minnesota is the result of seven months of intensive work. The Plan is being disseminated for public feedback through May 31, 2005. More information about the comment period is on page 13 of this document.

The QRS will be voluntary and open to licensed providers, including Head Start programs, preschools, and school age programs. The QRS will reward quality providers, provide struggling programs with incentives to improve, and provide parents with ratings on how a program performs on key indicators of quality. By linking providers to financial incentives and resources, the system will encourage improvements in training and services.

## QRS Mission

The Minnesota Quality Rating System will provide information about the quality of early care and education and school age programs to families asking for this information. The voluntary quality rating system will identify, recognize and reward participating programs and providers who achieve levels of quality that help prepare children for school success.

## QRS Quality Criteria and Indicators

The proposed QRS is a four-level system that contains quality indicators at each level, clustered in broad categories:

Professional Development/Qualifications/Training; Licensing Compliance; Ratios; Learning Environments; Family Partnerships and Education; Management/Administrative Policies; and Program Evaluation. The QRS uses a “building block” design in which a program must meet all the criteria in one level before moving to the next level. Separate indicators were developed for licensed family child care programs, centers and schoolage programs, though efforts were made to ensure consistency across the three sets of indicators. Head Start programs are required to meet mandated Performance Standards that are rigorously monitored through a process called the PRISM. Successful fulfillment of the PRISM process qualifies Head Start programs at Level 4 of the ratings. See Appendix A, B and C for the criteria and indicators for each level of the ratings.)

The QRS Task Force formed three provider subgroups that were each charged with developing a set of type-specific (licensed family child care, centers and school age programs) indicators in seven categories of quality. The Task Force selected the categories because of the professional consensus and strong research base linking them to both program quality and positive child outcomes. Each category is described in more detail below with the research-based rationale for its inclusion in the proposed QRS. The citations for the research that was consulted are included in Appendix G.

---

## QRS Guiding Principles

Minnesota’s Quality Rating System should:

1. Ensure that more children are ready for kindergarten.
2. Provide parents with consumer information about program quality. Parents are their child’s first teacher and their best chance for success and when parents who are working or in school they need information about program quality to help inform their choice of an early care and education or schoolage program for their child.
3. Provide resources so that all parents can access and afford quality programs.
4. Create a voluntary system which builds on the foundation of Minnesota licensing.
5. Build on the strengths of the child care workforce by promoting and providing scholarships for training and education.
6. Provide program improvement grants to help programs move to higher levels of quality.
7. Provide performance bonuses to reward and recognize the higher costs of quality.
8. Promote accountability for increased private and public investments by using program quality indicators that research links to positive child outcomes.

### **Professional Development/Qualifications/Training:**

A provider's knowledge and understanding of early childhood development are central to the quality of care a child receives. While it is difficult to be precise about the benefits of various types and levels of professional development, research shows clearly that more education and training, particularly with specialization in early childhood development, are related to program quality and the sensitivity of interactions between providers and children. The indicators in this category were designed to recognize the diverse professional development pathways that may lead to high quality and thus contain options for combinations of formal education, certification, and community-based training.

**Licensing Compliance:** Licensing provides the regulatory foundation on which high quality programs can be built. Compared with other states, Minnesota's licensing requirements are generally strong in the areas of health, safety, and nutrition. The indicators in this category reflect the importance of meeting and maintaining licensing requirements by reporting compliance history. [Note that school-age programs are governed by local school boards and are legally non-licensed.]

**Ratios:** Lower ratios—that is, fewer children per provider—facilitate more positive interactions and more opportunities for individual attention. In centers, studies have documented a link between child-provider ratio and the quality of care observed in the classroom. The indicators in this category move centers and school-age programs toward better ratios at the higher levels. The requirements for family child care providers do not differ from those established by licensing.

**Learning Environments:** A substantial body of research documents the elements of the environment and interactions that are linked to high quality care and positive child outcomes. A program's learning environment encompasses a variety of features, including the nature of the interactions between providers and children, the health and safety precautions that are taken, the planning and structure of the environment, the variety and accessibility of activities and materials, and the comfort and cleanliness of the physical space. This set of characteristics has been positively linked to a range of children's social, cognitive, and language outcomes. These program characteristics make up the "curriculum" of a program. The indicators in this category require that programs align their curriculum with Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress. The QRS indicators also use three alternative tools to assess quality at different levels of the QRS—accreditation, observations of the environment, or Head Start Performance Standards.

- First, accreditation status is used as one anchor point for quality. Accreditation is widely considered

---

## **Measuring Child Outcomes**

The QRS recognizes that child observation and assessment is a critical component for monitoring and improving services. Child observation and assessment that is used by programs for planning, monitoring and program evaluation is an indicator in the QRS. In addition, to evaluate the QRS's overall effectiveness as a strategy for improving children's school readiness, child assessment data from a random sample of participating programs will also be used to measure children's progress.

to be an indicator of high quality care that has been validated by research. Accreditation criteria go beyond the learning environment and cover standards for virtually all aspects of program operations. The QRS levels for family child care providers, centers and school-age programs were designed to help interested programs progress incrementally toward meeting accreditation criteria.

- Second, the Environmental Rating scales (ERS) developed at the University of North Carolina (the Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale (for birth–2 year olds)—Revised or ITERS-R; the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (for 3–5 year olds in center based settings)—Revised or ECERS-R; the School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale or SACERS; and the Family Day Care Rating Scale or FDCRS) are used to provide an alternative anchor point for quality of the learning environment at the third and fourth levels of the QRS. The ERS are completed by a trained observer who visits programs and rates the quality of care according to established benchmarks. These scales have been used in numerous studies of child care and are a component of quality rating systems in a number of states. Similar to accreditation, the ERS go beyond assessment of the learning environment to include other important program dimensions. ERS ratings will be provided for programs that choose to attain higher levels of quality in the QRS but are not accredited or required to follow the Head Start Performance Standards.
- Third, Head Start is the only federal early childhood program structured around a set of high quality performance standards used to anchor program quality. Numerous independent reviews of Head Start have concluded that the program delivers both comprehensive family services and high quality child development. The Head Start Performance Standards are a comprehensive set of requirements for programs that cover all aspects of their services and program operations including provisions to promote optimal child development, ensure children’s health and safety, create partnerships with families and communities, and manage human resources, facilities, and equipment.

**Family Partnerships and Education:** Communication between providers and families is an essential ingredient for a successful partnership that can best meet the needs of individual children, and support the role of the parent as the child’s primary and most important relationship. Communication should facilitate the sharing of information from parents to the provider about the families’ cultural and childrearing practices, values and beliefs, as well as orient families to the program’s policies and practices. The indicators in this category assess the degree to which providers/programs have a variety of communication modes in place that can support this goal.

**Management/Administrative Policies:** There is a growing consensus among professionals in the care and education field that quality depends on the entire context of a program, not just the interactions children have with providers or materials. Program policies, procedures, and practices directly affect the overall work climate in which providers operate and can either support or undermine their efforts. For centers and school-age programs, the indicators in this category assess the degree to which staff are supported by benefits and workplace policies, including the opportunity for staff to provide input on management and

administrative practices. For family child care providers, the indicators assess the basic policies and business strategies that providers can use to support the viability of their business.

**Program Evaluation:** One important marker of quality is a commitment to continuous program improvement. When programs establish a feedback loop through which they receive information from staff and families about how well their needs are being met AND collect information about the progress of children in the program, they are better equipped to plan for and carry out quality improvements. The indicators in this category assess the degree to which programs have established these feedback loops and use the information to make program improvements.

## **Incentives, Grants and Awards**

Key to the success of the QRS will be ensuring that any interested early care and education and schoolage program is able to participate and work toward continuous improvement. An essential component of the proposed QRS are the incentives, improvement grants and performance awards that programs will be entitled to if they participate in the QRS system. Technical assistance and support, and financial assistance in the form of program improvement grants and performance awards will be offered to help programs move to higher levels of quality and to reward success.

These grants and awards will be offered to participating programs because all parents should be able to access high quality programs, regardless of income. However, programs serving significant numbers of low-income children will be eligible for slightly larger grants and awards in recognition of the increased services needed to support low-income children and families. Head Start already is funded to meet high-quality performance standards and will not be eligible for improvement grants. Their ongoing need to improve staff compensation and education would make them eligible for QRS Performance Awards.

Financial incentives and support are necessary for several reasons:

- to encourage programs to participate in this voluntary initiative, acknowledging the additional time and effort that will be required on their part,
- to ensure that providers have a means to attain the education/training they may need to provide high quality care and education,
- to improve other aspects of their program and move to higher levels of quality, including equipment and facility improvements,
- to recognize providers' achievement and higher costs for providing quality care and education.

The process of evaluating programs opens up new opportunities for quality improvement. Simply rating programs, without follow-up and consultation, is a lost opportunity. The technical assistance,

---

**An essential component of the proposed QRS are the incentives, improvement grants and performance awards that programs will receive if they participate in the QRS system.**

---

improvement grants and performance awards that the Task Force is proposing as part of the QRS are an important part of the overall design and will be included in the estimated implementation budget. This will require not only raising new funds, but also looking at how we can redirect existing resources, such as federal Child Care Development funds and state funds that are earmarked for quality improvements.

The chart in Figure A describes in more detail the technical assistance, improvement grants and performance awards being proposed.

**Figure A: Proposed QRS Incentives, Grants and Awards\***

<b>The following training, technical assistance, and recognition will be developed by the organization implementing the QRS</b>				
<b>Training and Technical Assistance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE Orientation on QRS prior to applying to participate</li> <li>• FREE training on using environmental rating scales for all programs participating in the QRS</li> <li>• Option for QRS technical assistance</li> <li>• Reduced fees for local CCR&amp;R training</li> <li>• Access to Career Guidance</li> </ul>		<b>Provider Recognition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratings provided to parents in a variety of ways: QRS website, CCR&amp;R referrals, ECFE, etc.</li> <li>• Rating Certificate for participating programs to display</li> <li>• Articles in the media</li> <li>• Donations and discounts from businesses</li> <li>• Letter from local government representatives</li> <li>• Letter from Governor</li> <li>• Recognition at professional conferences</li> </ul>		
<b>The following grants and awards are being proposed for all programs participating in the QRS</b>				
	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>
<b>Improvement Grants</b> Available on a yearly basis, maximum of 3	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000  Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000  Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000  Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000  Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000  Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000  Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000  Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000  Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000
<b>Other Supports for Quality</b>	TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses  Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS	TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses  Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS	TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses  Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS	TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses  Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS
<b>Annual Performance Awards</b> Based on Rating Level and Size and Hours		FCC—\$420 Group FCC—\$840 Small Center—\$2,520 Medium Center—\$5,600 Large Center—\$11,200	FCC—\$600 Group FCC—\$1,200 Small Center—\$3,600 Medium Center—\$8,000 Large Center—\$16,000	FCC—\$750 Group FCC—\$1,500 Small Center—\$4,500 Medium Center—\$10,000 Large Center—\$20,000
Family Child Care— 1–10 children Small Center—10–79 children		Group Family Child Care—10–14 children Medium Center—80–159 children		Large Center—160–250 children

\* Dependent on available funding.

## Alignment with Minnesota’s School Readiness Expectations

The QRS Task Force chose significant, research-based indicators shown to correlate with high quality and with positive child outcomes. The proposed QRS indicators also build on Minnesota’s early learning guidelines for children’s school readiness, the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress. These informational guidelines produced by the Minnesota Departments of Education and Human Services help to clarify for parents and providers what children should know and be able to do when they enter kindergarten.

Just as the suggested Early Childhood Indicators of Progress provide informational guidelines for parents and community members for children’s school readiness, so the recently published Minnesota Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals summarizes the expectations for what individual providers should know and be able to do to ensure children’s healthy development. The QRS adds the final component of what quality programs should be doing. Figure A shows the QRS’s alignment with the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress and the Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, providing a seamless foundation of school readiness expectations for families, children, providers and programs.

The four proposed QRS levels and indicators also align with the child development requirements of the Head Start Performance Standards and with school age care program standards supported by the Minnesota Department of Education as well as with nationally and state recognized program accreditation criteria.

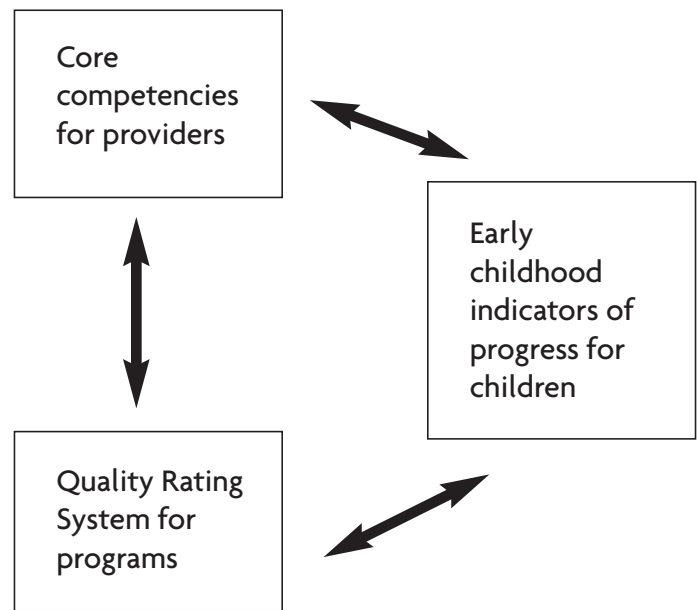
## Implementing a Quality Rating System in Minnesota

Minnesota’s QRS will require an administrative structure to carry out four primary functions essential to the operation of an effective and efficient system. The administrative structure will need to:

- Rate programs
- Support program use of the QRS
- Support parent use of the QRS
- Manage the QRS

## Figure B: Minnesota’s Expectations

*For Children, Providers and Programs*



The administrative structure must be responsive to parents, programs and communities; provide strong leadership; coordinate and maximize existing tools and supports; and provide excellent fiscal management and accountability for the system's outcomes.

### *Rating Programs*

Programs interested in participating in the QRS will apply to be rated at a level of their choosing. Rating a program involves:

Compiling documentation of indicators. Ratings are based on specific documentation of each indicator's criteria in each category of the level at which a program requests to be rated. Depending on the criteria, this documentation may be submitted by the program, accessed from an existing database or collected during an on-site observation by trained QRS observers. Monitoring to ensure that QRS observers are conducting observations in a consistent manner will be essential.

Assignment of the rating. Once documentation has been submitted, a QRS program specialist will review and verify the information. When all criteria for a specific level are met, the program will receive a rating.

Monitoring for compliance. To ensure the integrity of the rating system over time, participating programs will be monitored once per year if they choose to stay at the same level. More frequent monitoring may be triggered by changes in the child care setting or the program's desire to move to a higher level. (See Figure C.)

### *Supports for Program Participation and Quality Improvement*

A variety of supports will be included to help programs access and use the QRS. Figure C outlines the five step process. Each program who applies will be assigned a QRS program specialist to guide them through the application and rating process. As needed, programs will be referred to quality specialists for hands-on support to identify the aspects of their programs that need to be addressed in order to reach higher quality levels and for coaching on the steps they can take in order to achieve these improvements.

### *Supports for Parent Use of the QRS*

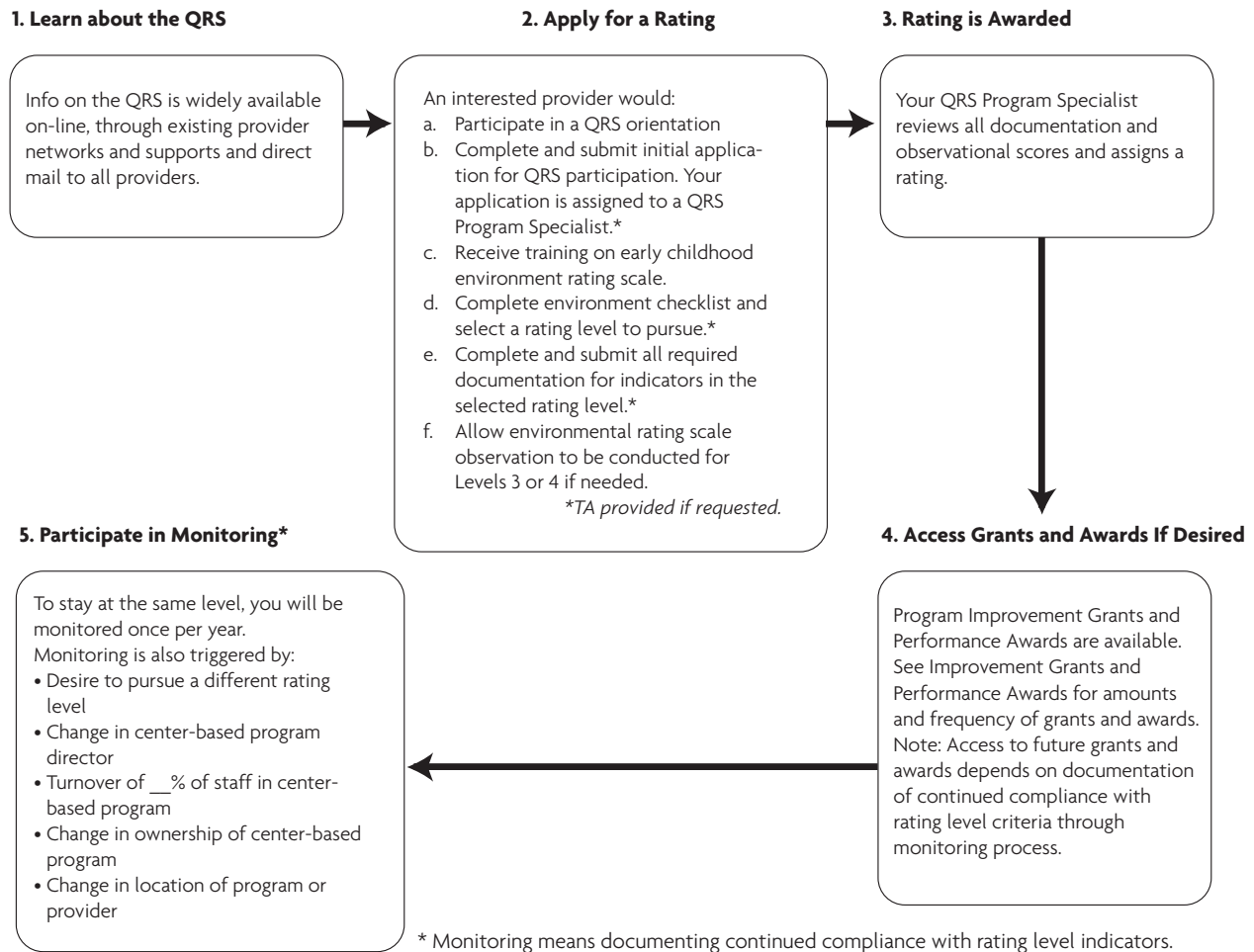
The QRS will be available to the public and marketed to parents through multiple sources including a variety of websites. Access to this information will provide parents with information to help them select care that meets their child care needs, as well as their children's school readiness needs. Parents will receive general information through a variety of sources about what to look for in a quality program, information that describes the indicators for each level of the QRS, and a listing of all of the participating programs including each program's business name, location, description of services, their quality rating and other relevant information.

---

**QRS will help child care programs demonstrate their investments in quality programming in a very public way, helping parents, funders and policy makers easily access this information.**

---

## Figure C: Program Participation Process



### *Managing the QRS*

An agency to pilot the QRS will be selected through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The agency chosen will set up the administration infrastructure and process details for implementing the final endorsed QRS Plan. They will recruit and facilitate an Advisory Committee that must include representatives of Minnesota’s major racial/ethnic groups, geographic regions, and provider auspices, including licensed family child care providers, child care centers, Head Start programs, and schoolage programs. This Advisory Committee will help oversee the first phase of the system and ensure that the QRS implementation adheres to the Mission and Goals as set forth in the QRS Plan.

The QRS “home” will be responsible for coordinating possible funding from several state agencies as well as the Early Childhood Funder’s Network and the proposed Minnesota Early Learning Foundation. It will also need to coordinate with other programs currently providing supports so that all of these projects can work together to improve the overall system. The intended result will mesh supports into a coordinated system supporting parent choice and boosting child care quality.

### *QRS Monitoring and Validation*

The organization selected to manage the system will be responsible for ensuring the validity of the QRS, that is, that the QRS levels adequately differentiate aspects of program quality that are linked to outcomes for children and families. The system must also be monitored closely to ensure that the documentation of indicators and observations of programs are conducted in a reliable, systematic, and objective way. This can be achieved through intensive training of QRS observers and program specialists, frequent reliability checks, and opportunities for presentation and review of cases by the QRS staff. The QRS monitoring and validation process will provide information that can be used to improve the indicators and the ratings process on an on-going basis.

### *QRS Phase-in*

The first phase of the QRS will focus on implementing the components required to rate the quality of the first group of child care programs, develop and provide technical assistance, disseminate improvement grants and performance bonuses, and evaluate the effectiveness of the system in both recruiting and rating providers and in improving the quality of care. The QRS system will be phased in for different areas of the state based on selection criteria to be determined and the available funds and other supports. The goal will be to enroll child care providers in each geographic area selected. Additional areas would be added as funding is secured.

Once the thresholds for ratings and provider improvement and performance awards have been met, the quality ratings of programs will be marketed to parents in the first phase geographic areas on a variety of websites and through other media. Ratings for the first group of programs in these areas will be released when an adequate pool of programs are rated, ensuring parents a sufficient number from which to choose.

## **Community Feedback and Final Endorsement Plan**

Child care and early education and school age care providers, parents and the public are invited to provide input on this plan for Minnesota Quality Rating System.

Written comments may be provided by completing and sending the attached feedback form by **May 31, 2005** to the Quality Rating System Task Force via e-mail to:

qualityratingsystem@ready4K.org

Or mail to: Ready4K – QRS Plan, 2233 University Avenue, Suite 345, Saint Paul, MN 55114-1629

If you have questions, call: Nancy Johnson, GMDCA Child Care Financing Project, 612-349-0553

The public comment period will be followed by a campaign to request endorsement of the QRS Plan from a wide range of organizations with a stake in children's early childhood development.

The final plan will be used to seek support for and implement the system. The task force hopes to release the final QRS Plan by July, 2005.

# Minnesota Quality Rating System

## DRAFT PLAN Feedback Form

*April 1st – May 31st, 2005*

Please return your feedback form by May 31, 2005

Fax: Attn. Nancy Johnson – 612-341-4356

Email: Nancy.Johnson@gmdca.org

Mail: Nancy Johnson – QRS

GMDCA

1628 Elliot Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55404

Thank you for taking a few minutes to give us your feedback on this DRAFT Plan for a Minnesota Quality Rating System.

1. Are you a (circle one):

Licensed Family Child Care Provider    Center Staff    Head Start Staff    Schoolage Program Staff

CCR&R Staff    Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Was this Draft Plan clear? YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

If not, what wasn't clear? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Is the process for provider participation in the QRS clear? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

4. If you are a PROVIDER would you participate in the QRS if this plan is implemented? YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

Why, or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. If you are a PARENT would program quality ratings be helpful? YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

Why, or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Please list changes you would suggest to this QRS Plan (use additional pages if needed):

Quality Indicators: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Improvement Grants : \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Performance Bonuses: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What else would you suggest: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Optional:** If you would like to receive updates on the QRS, please provide your contact information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A— Family Child Care QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Professional Development/Qualifications/Training			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>18 years old, 6-9 hours training in first aid and CPR, and 6 hours in child development</p> <p>Continuing education: 6 hours in one or more of 14 specified subject areas, such as child development, child abuse and parent-provider relationships.</p> <p>Provider will have been licensed in MN for a minimum of 1 year or have met all licensing standards when they become licensed in order to participate in the QRS program. (Note: FCC providers have one year to meet all licensing standards when they become licensed.)</p> <p>Provider will keep a signed copy on file of the Orientation Survey completed by all substitutes before working in their program</p> <p>Documentation: demonstrate licensing compliance.</p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>40 hrs training in the past 2 years (must be in Core Competencies starting in 2006)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Trainer for ITTI, EE, CDEP, PE, or Mentor Credential</p> <p>OR</p> <p>6 semester credits in related coursework (must be in Core Competencies starting in 2006)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Current CPR/First Aid Certification</p> <p>Substitutes must complete orientation training</p> <p>Documentation: copy of training certificates, trainer status</p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>80 hours of training in the past 2 yrs (in Core Competencies by 2006)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Trainer for ITTI, EE, CDEP, PE, or Mentor Credential plus 40 hours training (in Core Competencies by 2006)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Current CDA or CBTA</p> <p>OR</p> <p>12 semester credits in related coursework (must be in Core Competencies starting in 2006)</p> <p>Documentation: copy of training certificates, trainer status</p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>160 hours training in the past 4 years (in Core Competencies by 2006)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Trainer for ITTI, EE, CDEP, PE, or Mentor Credential plus 80 hours training (in Core Competencies by 2006)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Current CDA or CBTA plus 40 hours training or equivalent (in Core Competencies by 2006)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>AA or higher in Child Development related coursework (must be in Core Competencies starting in 2006)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Pre-K license or elementary license with pre-k certificate</p> <p>OR</p> <p>AA or 4 year degree in another field plus 12 semester credits in Child Development related coursework (undergraduate or graduate)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Current Accreditation</p> <p>Documentation: copy of training certificates, trainer status</p>

Licensing Compliance			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
No more than 1 substantiated negative licensing action within the past 3 years	No substantiated negative licensing action within the past 2 years	No additional requirements	No additional requirements

## Appendix A— Family Child Care QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Ratios			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary): Maximum ratio of 1:12 with no more than 1 infant and no more than two infants and toddlers. These requirements allow for adult to child ratio flexibility given different combinations of children's ages. For exact specifications, see Minnesota Rule 9502.0367.</p>	No additional requirements	No additional requirements	No additional requirements

Learning Environments			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>Activities must provide for the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of the child. Must have indoor and outdoor activities, must be developmentally appropriate, both active and quiet, contain both provider directed and child-initiated activity.</p> <p>Must have sufficient toys and equipment that are age-appropriate. There are specific requirements by age of child listed in regulations.</p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS) self study (with guidance that programs at this level should be reaching at least a FDCRS score of 3, or getting technical assistance to address places where they are not reaching a 3.)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Program must introduce the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress into daily activities and environment.</p> <p><i>Documentation: FDCRS self study; provide copies of learning activities or curriculum planning materials.</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Observed FDCRS score of 4 or higher.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Accreditation self-study approved by QRS program specialist.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Programs must align learning activities with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress and the information must be used in planning daily activities and the environment.</p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copies of learning activities or curriculum planning materials.</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Observed FDCRS score of 5 or higher.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Accreditation</p> <p><i>Documentation: Evidence of accreditation or outside observation of program shows a FDCRS average score of 5 or above</i></p>

## Appendix A— Family Child Care QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Family Partnerships and Education			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>Share child's activities/progress with parent(s) weekly</p> <p>Open door policy</p> <p><i>Documentation: submit memo on method of parent communication used</i></p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>Routine communication with families about their child's experiences.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Meet with parents at least 2 times per year.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Provider a policy handbook to families.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least one (1) additional <b>Family Communication</b> strategy from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent newsletter</li> <li>• Activity plans</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Share daily "memory moments" with parents</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least one (1) of the <b>Family Education</b> strategy from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide info—"ages &amp; stages," early language development, etc.</li> <li>• Info on parenting classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide home activities "home-work"</li> <li>• Provide local resources info</li> <li>• Provide WIC, immunization info as appropriate</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: memo on family communication and family education strategies used</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Must notify families of Early Childhood Screening opportunities.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Must have a family intake form and procedure to familiarize program with child's background, needs and family preferences.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Programs must utilize at least two (2) additional <b>Family Communication</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent newsletter</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Provide local resources info</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Parent Handbook</li> <li>• Share daily "memory moments" with parents</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least two (2) of the <b>Family Education</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide info—"ages &amp; stages," early language development, etc.</li> <li>• Info on parenting classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide home activities "home-work"</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: Memo on family communication and family education strategies used</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Program must provide kindergarten transition activities.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Program must utilize at least three (3) additional <b>Family Communication</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent newsletter</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Provide local resources info</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Parent Handbook</li> <li>• Share daily "memory moments" with parents</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least three (3) of the <b>Family Education</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide info—"ages &amp; stages," early language development, etc.</li> <li>• Info on parenting classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide home activities "home-work"</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: Memo on family communication and family education strategies used</i></p>

## Appendix A— Family Child Care QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Management/Administrative Policies			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>There are no Minnesota licensing requirements in this area.</b></p>	<p>Complete record keeping, tax preparation and business planning training.</p> <p><i>Documentation: training certificate</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Provider policies that are shared with parents address paid vacations, sick leave, and professional development days.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copies of policies</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Provider has at least the minimum level insurance policy.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of insurance policy</i></p>

Program Evaluation			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>There are no Minnesota licensing requirements in this area.</b></p>	<p>Child care program plan must be developed and evaluated in writing annually by the provider.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of program plan</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Program must use a <i>formal</i> process for collecting parent feedback for program improvement.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of feedback process policy.</i></p> <p>AND</p> <p>Use child observation aligned with the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress for planning daily activities and the environment.</p> <p><i>Documentation: child observation tool</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Use the parent feedback to develop a program improvement plan and a professional development plan.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copies of program improvement plan and professional development plan.</i></p>

## Appendix B—Center-based QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Professional Development/Qualifications/Training			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p><i>Director</i> Minimum: 18 years old with a high school diploma or GED and 1,040 hours experience and 9 quarter credits or 90 hours in accredited training in staff supervision, human relations, and child development.</p> <p><i>Teacher</i> Minimum: 18 years old with a high school diploma or GED and 4,160 hours experience as an assistant teacher and 24 quarter credits.</p> <p>Other options allowed through combination of education, off set by experience and quarter credits. Degrees include: Montessori diploma, CDA, MDE pre-K associate license, MDE elem. ed with a kindergarten endorsement license, cert. from a community college or technical program in child development or ECE, BA.</p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p><i>Director</i> No additional requirements for this position at this level.</p> <p><i>Teacher</i> <b>At least 75% of classrooms must have teachers with a CDA or equivalent</b></p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copies of transcripts and related teacher qualifications</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p><i>Director</i> Minimum 21 years old and at least 12 semester credits (total) in any combination of staff supervision, human relations, and child development.</p> <p><i>Teacher</i> Every classroom must have a teacher who is teacher qualified with at least a CDA or equivalent in early childhood education.</p> <p><i>Person in charge of educational program</i> <b>Minimum AA or equivalent in early childhood education and must be teacher qualified</b></p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copies of transcripts and related teacher qualifications</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs accredited by approved accreditation bodies will qualify for this level for this category, or documentation that programs meet the following professional development requirements. Head Start programs approved by the HSB PRISM monitoring process qualify for Level 4.</p> <p><i>Director</i> No additional requirements for this position at this level.</p> <p><i>Teacher</i> <b>At least 75% of classrooms must have teachers with at least an AA or equivalent in early childhood education</b></p> <p><i>Person in charge of educational program</i> <b>Minimum of a BA or equivalent in early childhood education and must be teacher qualified</b></p> <p>In large centers with both infant/toddler and preschool classrooms, programs must have both infant/toddler and preschool classroom coordinators with appropriate specialization in charge of the educational programs.</p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copies of transcripts and related teacher qualifications</i></p>

Licensing Compliance			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
No more than 1 substantiated negative licensing action within the past 3 years	No substantiated negative licensing action within the past 2 years	No additional requirements	No additional requirements

## Appendix B—Center-based QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Ratios			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>Infants: 0-18 months 1:4, group size 8</p> <p>Toddlers: 19-35 months 1:7, group size 14</p> <p>Preschoolers: 3 – 5 yrs 1:10, group size 20</p> <p>School Age: 5 and older, 1:15, group size 30</p>	<p>Same as Level 1</p>	<p>Same as Level 1 with exception of:</p> <p>Toddlers 16 – 24 months: 1:6</p> <p><i>Documentation: Documentation that ratios were met (at time of observation).</i></p>	<p>Programs accredited by approved accreditation bodies and Head Start programs approved by the HSB PRISM process will qualify for this level for this category, or documentation that programs meet the following ratio requirements:</p> <p>Infants: 6 weeks-11 months: 1:3 or 4, group size 6 or 8</p> <p>Toddlers: 12-24 months: 1:5, group size 10</p> <p>Toddlers: 24-36 months: 1:6, group size 12</p> <p>Preschoolers: (36 months and up): 1:7 – 1:10, group size 20</p> <p>School Age: 5 years: 1:12, group size 30</p> <p>School Age: 6 and older: 1:15, group size 30</p> <p><i>Documentation: Accreditation certificate or documentation that ratios were met (at time of observation).</i></p>

Learning Environments			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>Programs must have written plan with educational philosophy and methods, stated goals to promote the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual of children. Children's progress in each of these areas must be documented and conveyed to parents during conferences. Must also provide for indoor and outdoor activities, quiet and active spaces, and varied equipment and activities.</p> <p>Must have interest areas in at least 5 of the following areas: Arts and crafts; construction; dramatic or practical life; science; music; fine motor activities; large muscle activities; or sensory stimulation activities.</p> <p>Must have equipment, including: Arts and craft supplies, two books per child, 3 sets of dramatic play equipment, a music source, rhythm instruments, puzzles and games, sports equipment.</p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs must introduce the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress into the curriculum.</p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copies of lesson plans and other curriculum planning materials.</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs must adopt and use a curriculum that is aligned with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.</p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copy of lesson plans and curriculum.</i></p> <p>AND</p> <p>Observed Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)/Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) score of 4 or higher.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Accreditation self-study approved by QRS program specialist.</p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copy of ECERS/ITERS scorecard or accreditation self-study</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs must adopt and use a child assessment tool aligned with Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.</p> <p><i>Documentation: provide copy of child assessment tool.</i></p> <p>AND</p> <p>Accreditation or HSB PRISM-approved Head Start programs</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Observed Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)/Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) score of 5 or higher.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Accreditation certificate or ECERS/ITERS scorecard.</i></p>

## Appendix B—Center-based QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Family Partnerships and Education			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>Conferences with parents must be held twice a year regarding the social, emotional, cognitive and other progress of the child.</p> <p>Daily written reports are made to the parent of an infant or toddler about the child's food intake, elimination, sleeping patterns, and general behavior.</p> <p>Open door policy is required.</p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs must communicate with families daily about the child's progress by:</p> <p>Utilizing at least one (1) additional <b>Family Communication Strategy</b> from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family newsletter</li> <li>• Lesson plans</li> <li>• Monthly calendar/daily schedule</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Family handbook</li> <li>• Share daily "memory moments" with parents</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilizing at least one (1) of the <b>Family Education Strategies</b> from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information, such as "ages &amp; stages," early language development</li> <li>• Information on family education classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide home activities "home-work"</li> <li>• Provide information on local resources</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: copies of family communication and education policies and informational materials, as appropriate</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Must notify parents of Early Childhood Screening opportunities.</p> <p>Must have a family intake form and procedure to familiarize program with child's background, needs and family preferences.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Programs must provide a formal system for parent/guardian feedback, such as annually using anonymous parent/guardian surveys and providing results to families.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least two (2) additional <b>Family Communication</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family newsletter</li> <li>• Lesson plans</li> <li>• Monthly calendar/daily schedule</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Provide local resources info</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Family Handbook</li> <li>• Share daily "memory moments" with parents</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least two (2) of the <b>Family Education</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information, such as "ages &amp; stages," early language development</li> <li>• Information on family education classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide home activities "home-work"</li> <li>• Provide information on local resources</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: copies of family communication and education policies and informational materials, as appropriate</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Provide kindergarten transition activities.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>If accredited, program meets all other requirements. Head Start programs meet Performance Standards in this area.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If not accredited, program must:</p> <p>Utilize at least three (3) additional <b>Family Communication Strategy</b> from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family newsletter</li> <li>• Lesson plans</li> <li>• Monthly calendar/daily schedule</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Provide local resources info</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Family Handbook</li> <li>• Share daily "memory moments" with parents</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least three (3) of the <b>Family Education Strategies</b> from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information, such as "ages &amp; stages," early language development</li> <li>• Information on family education classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide home activities "home-work"</li> <li>• Provide information on local resources</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: copies of family communication and education policies and informational materials, as appropriate</i></p>

## Appendix B—Center-based QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Management/Administrative Policies			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>Programs must provide staff orientation, maintain personnel policies and provide staff evaluation.</p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs must have at least one (1) of the following:</p> <p>Offer health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional development, tuition reimbursement, contribute to employee retirement funds, provide discount on child care.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Programs must have a documented salary structure/compensation plan.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of administrative policy and salary structure.</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs must have at least two (2) of the following:</p> <p>Offer health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional development, tuition reimbursement, contribute to employee retirement funds, provide discount on child care.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Survey staff annually about working conditions and compensation.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of administrative policy and staff survey.</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>If accredited, program meets requirements. Head Start, programs meet Performance Standards in this area.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If not accredited, program must have at least three (3) of the following:</p> <p>Offer health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional development, tuition reimbursement, contribute to employee retirement funds, provide discount on child care.</p> <p><i>Documentation: accreditation certificate or copy of administrative policy.</i></p>

Program Evaluation			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Minnesota or tribal licensing requirements</b></p> <p>Minnesota licensing requires (tribal requirements vary):</p> <p>Programs must have a formal grievance process for families in place.</p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>Program must provide a process for collecting feedback from staff and/or parents for program improvement.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of feedback process policy.</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Program must use a <i>formal</i> process for collecting feedback for program improvement.</p> <p>For example, programs may use the staff and parent surveys to create annual improvement plan. Programs may also use a community assessment to help guide program improvement.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Use child observation aligned with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress for planning daily activities and the environment.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of feedback process policy and child observation tool.</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>If accredited, program meets requirements. Head Start, programs meet Performance Standards in this area.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If not accredited: Programs must continue activities from Level 3.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Accreditation certificate and same documentation as level 3.</i></p>

## Appendix C—Schoolage Program QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Professional Development/Qualifications/Training			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><i>Program Administrator</i> Minimum 21 years, 2,080 hours experience and 18 semester credits in relevant training</p> <p><i>Site Director</i> Minimum 21 years, 2,080 hours experience and 18 semester credits in relevant training</p> <p><i>Sr. Group Leader</i> Minimum 18 years, 1,040 hours experience, and 6 semester credits relevant training</p> <p><i>Group Leader</i> Minimum 16 years with first aid certification</p> <p><i>Assistant Group Leader</i> Minimum 16 years (This position may never supervise children alone.)</p> <p><b>Continuing education:</b> 2% of hours worked annually for all positions</p> <p><i>Documentation: copies of degrees or transcripts</i></p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p><i>Program Administrator</i> <b>Minimum AA</b> in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Site Director</i> Minimum <b>16 additional semester credits</b> in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Sr. Group Leader</i> Minimum of <b>75% of groupings must have Sr. Group Leaders with at least 12 semester credits</b> in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Group Leader</i> High school diploma or GED</p> <p><i>Assistant Group Leader</i> Minimum 16 years (This position may never supervise children alone.)</p> <p><i>Documentation: copies of degrees or transcripts</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p><i>Program Administrator</i> Minimum AA in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Site Director</i> Minimum <b>16 additional semester credits</b> in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Sr. Group Leader</i> <b>Every grouping has a Sr. Group Leader with at least 12 semester credits</b> in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Group Leader</i> High school diploma or GED <b>plus 3 semester credits</b> in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Assistant Group Leader</i> Minimum 16 years (This position may never supervise children alone.)</p> <p><i>Documentation: copies of degrees or transcripts</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs accredited by approved accreditation bodies will qualify for this level for this category, or documentation that programs meet the following professional development requirements. (The lead organization for the QRS will have a system for determining which accrediting organizations qualify.)</p> <p><i>Program Administrator</i> Must have <b>BA</b> or equivalent</p> <p><i>Site Director</i> Must have <b>BA</b> or equivalent</p> <p><i>Sr. Group Leader</i> (Level III plus) at least <b>75% of groups have Sr. Group Leaders with BA</b> in relevant area or equivalent</p> <p><i>Group Leader</i> High school diploma or GED <b>plus 6 semester credits</b> in relevant coursework or equivalent</p> <p><i>Assistant Group Leader</i> Minimum 16 years (This position may never supervise children alone.)</p> <p><i>Documentation: copies of degrees or transcripts</i></p>

### Licensing Compliance

School-age programs are governed by local boards, and therefore are legally non-licensed.

## Appendix C—Schoolage Program QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Ratios			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Grades K-6, 1: 15, group size max. 30</b>  <i>Documentation that ratios were met (at time of observation).</i></p>	<p>Kindergarten            1:12, group size max. 30</p> <p>Grades 1-6            1: 15, group size max. 30</p> <p>K-6            1:12, group size max. 30</p> <p><i>Documentation that ratios were met (at time of observation).</i></p>	<p>Kindergarten            1:12, group size max. 30</p> <p>Grades 1-6            1: 15, group size max. 30</p> <p>K-6            1:12, group size max. 30</p> <p><i>Documentation that ratios were met (at time of observation).</i></p>	<p>Programs accredited by approved accreditation bodies will qualify for this level for this category, or documentation that programs meet the following ratio requirements:</p> <p>Kindergarten            1:12, group size max. 30</p> <p>Grades 1-6            1: 15, group size max. 30</p> <p>K-6            1:12, group size max. 30</p> <p><i>Documentation: Accreditation certificate or documentation that ratios were met (at time of observation).</i></p>

Learning Environments			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Self-study using School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS).</b>  <i>Documentation: Completed SACERS scorecard</i></p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b>            Observed SACERS score of 3.            AND            When indicators of progress (similar to the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress that are available for children 3-5) are available for school-age programs, <b>programs must introduce them into the curriculum at this level.</b></p> <p><i>Documentation: SACERS scorecard and copies of lesson plans and other curriculum planning materials (when School-age Indicators of Progress are available).</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b>            Observed SACERS score of 4 or higher.            AND            When indicators of progress (similar to the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress that are available for children 3-5) are available for school-age programs, <b>programs must adopt and use curriculum aligned with the indicators of progress.</b></p> <p><i>Documentation: SACERS scorecard and copies of lesson plans, curriculum, and child assessment tool (when School-age Indicators of Progress are available).</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b>            Accreditation            OR            Observed SACERS score of 5 or higher.            AND            When indicators of progress (similar to the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress that are available for children 3-5) are available for school-age programs, <b>programs must adopt and use a child assessment tool aligned with indicators of progress.</b></p> <p><i>Documentation: Accreditation certificate or SACERS scorecard. When School-age Indicators of Progress are available, copies of lesson plans, curriculum, and child assessment tool will be required.</i></p>

## Appendix C—Schoolage Program QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Family Partnerships and Education			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Programs must have an open door policy.</b></p> <p><i>Documentation: information about and evidence of a family sign in and out system</i></p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b></p> <p>Programs must have a system for regular communication with families about their child's experiences by:</p> <p>Utilizing at least one (1) <b>Family Communication</b> strategy from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family newsletter</li> <li>• Lesson plans</li> <li>• Monthly calendar/daily schedule</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Informal observation forms</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Special events for families</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilizing at least one (1) <b>Family Education</b> strategy from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on child development</li> <li>• Provide information on family education classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide information on local resources</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: copies of family communication and education policies and informational materials, as appropriate</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b></p> <p>Must have a family intake form and procedure to familiarize program with child's background, needs and family preferences.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Programs must provide a formal system for family feedback, such as an annually using anonymous parent/guardian and child surveys and providing results to parents/guardians.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least two (2) additional <b>Family Communication</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family newsletter</li> <li>• Lesson plans</li> <li>• Monthly calendar/daily schedule</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Informal observation forms</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Special events for families</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least two (2) <b>Family Education</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on child development</li> <li>• Provide information on family education classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide information on local resources</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: copies of family communication and education policies and informational materials, as appropriate</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b></p> <p>If accredited, program meets requirements.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Utilize at least three (3) additional <b>Family Communication</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family newsletter</li> <li>• Lesson plans</li> <li>• Monthly calendar/daily schedule</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Video tape children</li> <li>• Informal observation forms</li> <li>• Keep a "book" for each child</li> <li>• Special events for families</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>Utilize at least three (3) <b>Family Education</b> strategies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on child development</li> <li>• Provide information on family education classes and workshops</li> <li>• Develop a lending library of magazines, books, tapes, videos</li> <li>• Provide information on local resources</li> <li>• Other, upon approval</li> </ul> <p><i>Documentation: copies of accreditation certificate or family communication and education policies and informational materials, as appropriate</i></p>

## Appendix C—Schoolage Program QRS Rating Criteria/Indicators

Management/Administrative Policies			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p>Programs must provide staff orientation, maintain personnel policies and provide staff evaluation.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copies of staff orientation, personnel and staff evaluation policies</i></p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b> Programs must have at least one (1) of the following:</p> <p>Offer health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional development, tuition reimbursement, contribute to employee retirement funds, provide discount on child care.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Programs must have a documented salary structure/compensation plan.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of administrative policy and salary structure</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b> Programs must have at least two (2) of the following:</p> <p>Offer health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional development, tuition reimbursement, contribute to employee retirement funds, provide discount on child care.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Survey staff annually about working conditions and compensation.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of administrative policy and salary structure</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b> If accredited, program meets requirements.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If not accredited, program must have at least three (3) of the following:</p> <p>Offer health insurance, 5 days of paid leave, paid professional development, tuition reimbursement, contribute to employee retirement funds, provide discount on child care.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of administrative policy and salary structure</i></p>

Program Evaluation			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p>Programs must have a formal grievance process for families in place.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of family grievance policy</i></p>	<p><b>Level I, plus:</b> Program must provide a process for collecting feedback from staff and/or parents for program improvement.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of feedback process policy</i></p>	<p><b>Level II, plus:</b> Program must use a <i>formal</i> process for collecting feedback for program improvement.</p> <p>For example, programs may use the staff, parent/guardian and child surveys to create annual improvement plan. Programs may also use a community assessment to help guide program improvement.</p> <p><i>Documentation: copy of feedback process policy</i></p>	<p><b>Level III, plus:</b> If accredited, program meets requirements.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If not accredited, program must continue activities from level 3.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Copy of accreditation certificate and same as level 3.</i></p>

## Appendix D—Provider Incentives, Grants and Performance Awards

**Figure A: Proposed QRS Incentives, Grants and Awards\***

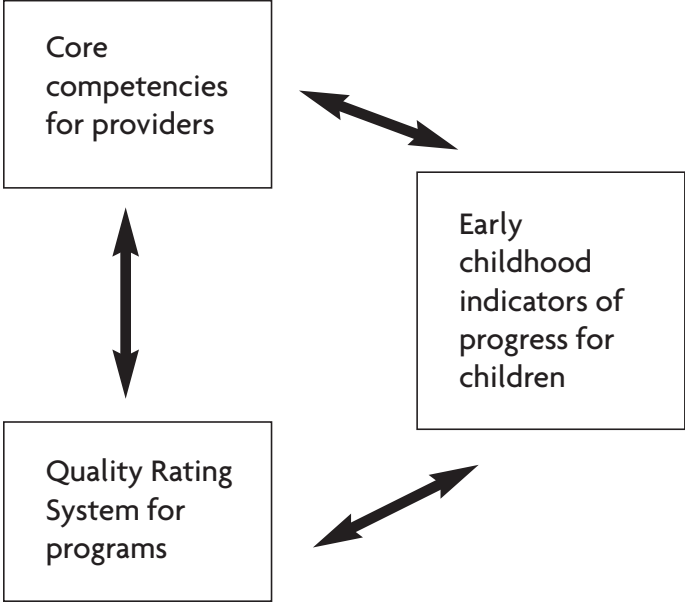
<b>The following training, technical assistance, and recognition will be developed by the organization implementing the QRS</b>				
<b>Training and Technical Assistance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE Orientation on QRS prior to applying to participate</li> <li>• FREE training on using environmental rating scales for all programs participating in the QRS</li> <li>• Option for QRS technical assistance</li> <li>• Reduced fees for local CCR&amp;R training</li> <li>• Access to Career Guidance</li> </ul>		<b>Provider Recognition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratings provided to parents in a variety of ways: QRS website, CCR&amp;R referrals, ECFE, etc.</li> <li>• Rating Certificate for participating programs to display</li> <li>• Articles in the media</li> <li>• Donations and discounts from businesses</li> <li>• Letter from local government representatives</li> <li>• Letter from Governor</li> <li>• Recognition at professional conferences</li> </ul>		
<b>The following grants and awards are being proposed for all programs participating in the QRS</b>				
	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>
<b>Improvement Grants</b> Available on a yearly basis, maximum of 3	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000 Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000 Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000 Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000 Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000 Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000 Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000	Family child care providers \$100–\$2,000 Centers up to 80 children \$500–\$5,000 Centers with over 80 children \$1,000–\$10,000
<b>Refocusing Existing Sources of Financial Support for Quality</b>	CCR&R Program Improvement Grant for educational, cultural materials, fences, training etc. Given priority if part of QRS. TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS	CCR&R Program Improvement Grant for educational, cultural materials, fences, training etc. Given priority if part of QRS. TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS	CCR&R Program Improvement Grant for educational, cultural materials, fences, training etc. Given priority if part of QRS. TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS	CCR&R Program Improvement Grant for educational, cultural materials, fences, training etc. Given priority if part of QRS. TEACH and REETAIN Scholarships and Bonuses Accreditation validation reimbursement dollars through MN DHS
<b>Annual Performance Awards</b> Based on Rating Level and Size and Hours of Operation		FCC—\$420 Group FCC—\$840 Small Center—\$2,520 Medium Center—\$5,600 Large Center—\$11,200	FCC—\$600 Group FCC—\$1,200 Small Center—\$3,600 Medium Center—\$8,000 Large Center—\$16,000	FCC—\$750 Group FCC—\$1,500 Small Center—\$4,500 Medium Center—\$10,000 Large Center—\$20,000
Family Child Care— 1–10 children Small Center—10–79 children		Group Family Child Care—10–14 children Medium Center—80–159 children		Large Center—160–250 children

\* Dependent on available funding.

**Appendix E—Minnesota’s School Readiness Expectations for Children, Providers and Programs**

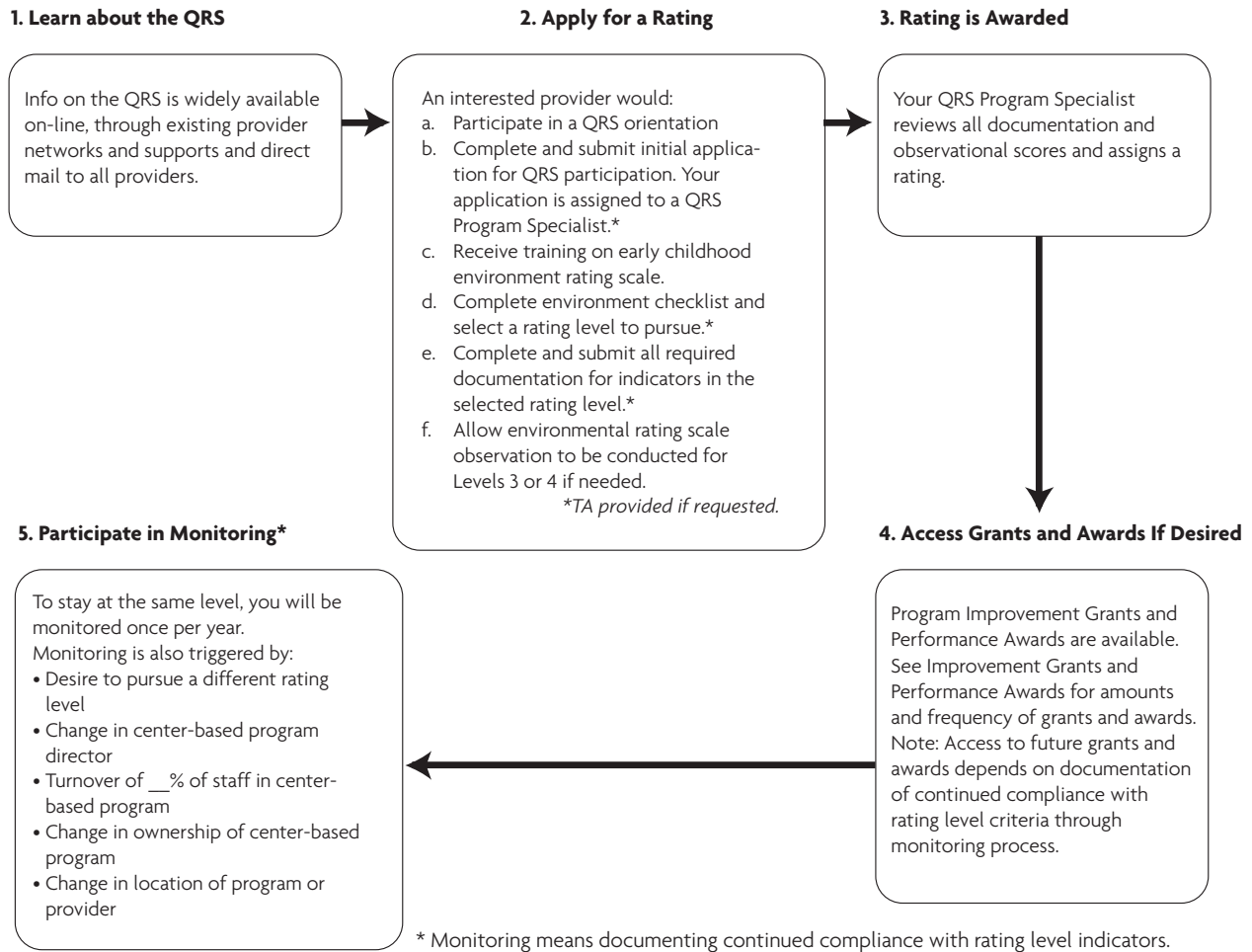
**Figure B: Minnesota’s Expectations**

*For Children, Providers and Programs*



# Appendix F—Provider QRS Participation Flow Chart

**Figure C: Program Participation Process**



## Appendix G—Research Base Supporting the Proposed Quality Indicators

- Burchinal, M. R., Cryer, D., Clifford, R. M., & Howes, C. (2002). Caregiver training and classroom quality in childcare centers. *Applied Developmental Science, 6*(1), 2-11.
- Burchinal, M. R., Howes, C., & Kontos, S. (2002). Structural predictors of child care quality in child care homes. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 17*, 87-105.
- Clarke-Stewart, K. A., Vandell, D. L., Burchinal, M. R., O'Brien, M., & McCartney, K. (2002). Do features of child care homes affect children's development? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 17*, 52-86.
- Galinsky, E., Howes, C., Kontos, S., & Shinn, M. (1994). *The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care. Highlights of Findings*. New York, NY: Families and Work Institute.
- Helburn, S. W. (Ed.). (June 1995). *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers, Technical Report*. Denver, Department of Economics, Center for Research in Economic and Social Policy, University of Colorado at Denver.
- Honig, A. S., & Hirallal, A. (1998). Which counts more for excellence in childcare staff – years in service, education level or ECE coursework? *Early Child Development & Care, 145*, 31-46.
- Howes, C. (1997). Children's experiences in center-based child care as a function of teacher background and adult:child ratio. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 43*(3), 404-425.
- Howes, C., James, J., & Ritchie, S. (2003). Pathways to effective teaching. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 18*, 104-120.
- Howes, C., Whitebook, M., & Phillips, D. (1992). Teacher characteristics and effective teaching in child care: Findings from the National Child Care Staffing Study. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 21*(6), 399-414.
- Lamb, M. E. (1998). Nonparental child care: Context, quality, correlates, and consequences. In W. Damon, I. E. Sigel, & K. A. Renninger (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4, Child psychology in practice* (5th ed., pp. 73-133). New York: Wiley.
- Love, J. M., Schochet, P. Z., & Meckstroth, A. L. (1996). *Are they in any real danger? What research does –and doesn't–tell us about child care quality and children's well-being*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.
- Marshall, N. L., Creps, C. L., Burnstein, N. R., Glantz, F. B., Robeson, W. W., & Barnett, W. S. (2001). *The cost and quality of full day, year-round early care and education in Massachusetts: Preschool classrooms*. Wellesley, MA: Wellesley Centers for Women and Abt Associates.
- Marshall, N. L., Creps, C. L., Burnstein, N. R., Cahill, K. E., Robeson, W. W., Wang, S. Y., Keefe, N., Schimmenti, J., & Glantz, F. B. (2003). *Massachusetts' family child care today: A report on findings from the Massachusetts Cost and Quality Study*. Wellesley, MA: Wellesley Center for Women and Abt Associates.
- Minnesota Department of Human Services. (February, 2005). *School readiness in child care settings: A developmental assessment of children in 22 accredited programs*. DHS- 4362-ENG. St. Paul, MN: Author.
- National Research Council. (2001). *Eager to learn: Educating our preschoolers*. Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy. B. T. Bowman, M. S. Donovan, & M. S. Burns (Eds.). Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press.
- National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. J.P. Shonkoff & D.A. Phillips, eds. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (NECCRN). (1996). Characteristics of infant child care: Factors contributing to positive caregiving. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 11*(3), 269-306.
- NECCRN. (1999). Child outcomes when child care center classes meet recommended standards for quality. *American Journal of Public Health, 89*(7), 1072-1077.
- NECCRN. (2000). Characteristics and quality of child care for toddlers and preschoolers. *Applied Developmental Science, 4*(3), 116-141.
- NECCRN. (2002). Child-care structure—process—outcome: Direct and indirect *13*(3), 199-206.
- Norris, D. J. (2001). Quality of care offered by providers with differential patterns of workshop participation. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 30*(2), 111-121.
- Pence, A., & Goelman, H. (1991). The relationship of regulation, training, and motivation to quality of care in family day care. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 20*(2), 83-101.
- Phillips, D., Mekos, D., Scarr, S., McCartney, K., & Abbott-Shim, M. (2000). Within and beyond the classroom door: Assessing quality in child care centers. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 15*(4), 475-496.
- Phillipsen, L. C., Burchinal, M. R., Howes, C., & Cryer, D. (1997). The prediction of process quality from structural features of child care. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 12*, 281-303.
- Talan, T. N. & Jorde Bloom, P. (2004). *Program Administration Scale*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Weaver, R. H. (2002). Predictors of quality and commitment in family child care: Provider education, personal resources, and support. *Early Education and Development, 13*(3), 265-282.
- Tout, K., & Sherman, J. (in press). *A snapshot of quality in Minnesota's child care centers*. The Minnesota Child Care Policy Research Partnership. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Department of Human Services.
- Tout, K., Zaslow, M. & Berry, D. (in press). Quality and qualifications: Links between professional development and quality in early childhood settings. In (M. Zaslow & I. Martinez-Beck, Eds.), *Critical issues in early childhood professional development*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.
- Vandell, D. L., & Wolfe, B. (2000). *Child care quality: Does it matter and does it need to be improved?* Report prepared for the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.
- Whitebook, M., Sakai, L., Gerber, E., & Howes, C. (2001). *Then & Now: Changes in child care staffing, 1994-2000. Technical Report*. Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce.

## Appendix H—Minnesota QRS Task Force Members and Staff

Name	Organization/Affiliation	Workgroup
Tammy Anderson	Children's Corner Learning Center	Centers
Bob Benes	Lakes and Pines Head Start	Infrastructure
Nancy Berndt	Scott County Child Care Licensing	Infrastructure
Sarah Burks	Family Child Care Provider	Family Child Care
Deb Colling	Professional Learning Alternatives, Inc.	Family Child Care
Nancy Dougherty	Minnesota School Age Care Alliance	School Age Care
Chad Dunkley	New Horizon/MCCA	Centers (co-chair)
Tamie Finn	MN Tribal Resources for Early Childhood Care (MNTRECC)	Centers
Patty Finstad	University of MN Child Care Center	Centers
Deb Fitzwater-Dewey	Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children (MNAEYC)	Infrastructure
Karen Fogolin	MN Child Care Resource & Referral Network	Infrastructure (co-chair)
Tracy Frederick	Early Childhood Resource and Training Center	Infrastructure
Michelle Galvan	DHS	Centers
Nancy Jost	West Central Initiative	Infrastructure
Jane Kretzmann	Bush Foundation	Infrastructure
Matthew Majeski	Olmstead County Child Care Licensing	Family Child Care
Sue Molstad	Resources for Child Caring	Family Child Care (co-chair)
Beth Mork	Minnesota Licensed Family Child Care Association	Family Child Care (co-chair)
Bryan Nelson	Minnesota Assoc for the Education of Young Children (MNAEYC)	Infrastructure (co-chair)
Charlotte Nitardy	Metropolitan State University—EC Program	Family Child Care
Cindy Pic	Tri-Valley Opportunity Council CCR&R	Infrastructure
Brian Siverson-Hall	MNSACA	School Age Care
Cheryl Smoot	MN Dept of Health	Infrastructure
Deb Swenson-Klatt	DHS	Infrastructure
Mary Szlaius	Woodview Terrace Montessori	Centers
Mary Terrass	New Horizon	Centers (co-chair)
Michelle Thole	MN Licensed Family Child Care Association	Infrastructure
Lisa Walker	MN School Age Care Alliance	School Age Care
Katie Williams	YWCA Child Care Programs/Child Care WORKS/ Congregations Concerned for Children	Centers

### Task Force Staff

Name	Organization/Affiliation	Workgroup
Nancy Johnson	Child Care Financing Project	Task Force Staff
Zoe Nicholie	Ready 4 K	Task Force Staff
Vicki Thrasher-Cronin	Ready 4 K	Task Force Staff
Kathryn Tout	Child Trends	Consultant