

Child Care Center
&
Preschool
QRS Manual

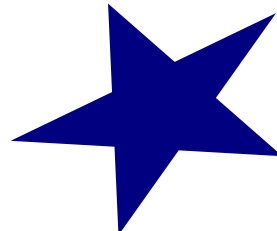
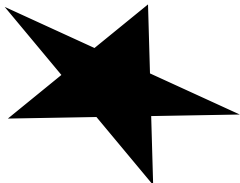
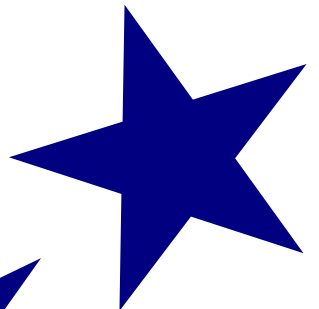
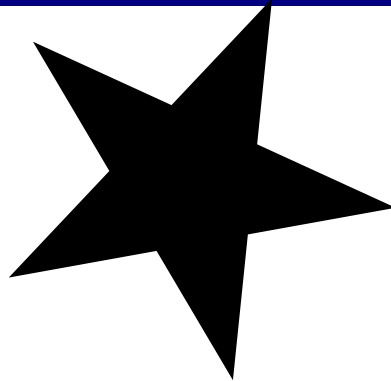
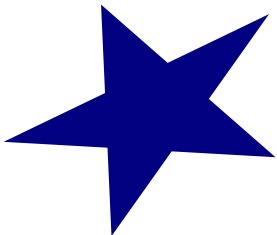


Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
The Application Process.....	4
The Application Process for Level 5.....	5
Achievement Bonuses.....	6
Explanation of QRS Levels.....	6
Level 1.....	7
Level 2.....	8
Levels 3-5.....	10
Professional Development.....	10
Health and Safety.....	13
Environment.....	15
Family and Community Partnerships.....	18
Leadership and Administration.....	20
Tips.....	22
Appendix A: Application Checklist.....	24
Appendix B: Re-Application Checklist.....	28

Introduction

Iowa's Quality Rating System (QRS) was implemented by the Department of Human Services (DHS) in February of 2006 as a means of improving the quality of care that children receive in early care and education settings. After 5 years certain areas were identified as needing "recalibration". Changes were made in order to provide more options for participating programs and assure more equitable services throughout the state. These new guidelines were effective in February of 2011. All programs are now required to apply under the new guidelines which are outlined in this document. The purpose of this manual is to guide you through the QRS process and help you complete your application. It is recommended that you read it in its entirety in order to fully understand the requirements for meeting each criteria.

Thank you for your interest in participating in Iowa's QRS. Your effort to join with early care and education professionals throughout Iowa to improve the quality of care that we provide to our youngest citizens is commendable.

The Application Process

- You will be provided with a form entitled, "Quality Rating System Application for Licensed Centers, Preschools, and School Based Programs". This application form is a guide for submitting a complete application. **Carefully read through all of the instructions on the application form.**
- Please be sure you review the required documentation carefully for each item. If you do not provide the required documentation, you will not receive the points for that item. The required documentation will be identified as items that must be attached to your application as evidence that you meet specific criteria or items that must be kept on file in your facility.
- If you are applying for Levels 3-5, it is important to indicate items on your application for which you are applying to receive points.
- When you submit your completed application, please note that you must include this application form with the director's original signature. Complete each section of the application form that is pertinent to the level for which you are applying. **It is not necessary to submit additional documentation that is not required on the application.**
- The application and other forms are available on the website www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs, but it is recommended that you contact your Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Child Care Consultant for an application packet. This will ensure that you receive updates and information regarding training opportunities.

- **Keep a copy of your application and supporting documents for your own files.**
- Your QRS Application will be reviewed at CCR&R for completeness. If there are items missing from your application, you will be contacted and asked to submit additional documentation. When your application is complete, it will be forwarded to DHS who will issue a rating.
- Once your completed application is submitted to DHS, it may take up to 60 days for you to receive a rating. Your rating is effective for two years from the month that your application is **received** by **DHS**.

Application Process for Level 5

In order to achieve a Level 5 QRS rating, you must earn the minimum amount of points necessary, and must also have an Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessment completed by Iowa State University (ISU). You must earn a minimum score of 5.0 to earn a Level 5 QRS rating. If you do not earn a 5.0 ERS score, you will receive a Level 4 QRS rating.

- If you are applying for a Level 5 rating you will submit your complete application and all needed documentation to CCR&R. Your application will be reviewed for completeness and forwarded to DHS Central Office.
- DHS will review the application and determine if enough points have been earned to achieve a Level 5 rating. If enough points are earned, DHS will notify CCR&R and ISU by e-mail.
- CCR&R will contact the child care program with information about contacting ISU to schedule an Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessment. You will then contact ISU and schedule your ERS assessment.
- ISU will complete the assessment and send results to both you and DHS. If your assessment score is a minimum of 5.0 in every assessed classroom, DHS will issue QRS Level 5 certificate. If your assessment score is lower than 5.0 in any classroom, DHS will issue QRS Level 4 certificate.
- If you receive a Level 4 Rating you will be eligible to re-apply for a Level 5 rating again after 1 year.

Achievement Bonuses

In recognition of your accomplishment, you will receive a bonus from DHS for achieving levels 2-5. The following schedule of bonuses applies to Child Care Centers, Preschools, and school-based programs:

QRS Level	Center licensed to care for up to 25 children	Center licensed to care for 26-50 children	Center licensed to care for 51-100 children	Center licensed to care for more than 100 children
2	\$400	\$800	\$1200	\$1600
3	\$600	\$1200	\$1800	\$2400
4	\$800	\$1600	\$2400	\$3200
5	\$1000	\$2000	\$3000	\$4000

When you receive your rating certificate, you will receive instructions and a voucher that must be completed and returned in order for DHS to send you a bonus. Achievement bonuses will be paid each time the rating is re-determined or renewed. You will receive 100% of the bonus if you achieve a higher level or maintain your level 5 rating. You will receive 50% of the bonus if you achieve the same level or a lower level.

Explanation of QRS Levels

When you initially apply for a QRS rating, you may apply at any level. Your rating will be issued for two years at which time you **must** re-apply to maintain your participation in the QRS. However, if you would like to re-apply to increase your rating, you are eligible to do so after one year.

In order to achieve QRS Levels 1 and 2 you are required to meet all of those level's criteria. Level's 3-5 require that you meet all of the Level 1 and 2 criteria and then earn a specific number of points from 5 different categories. You must earn at least 1 point from each of the 5 categories. They are Professional Development, Health and Safety, Environment, Family and Community Partnerships, and Leadership and Administration. The point requirements for Levels 3-5 are:

Level 3: 17-26 points Level 4: 27-33 points Level 5: Minimum of 34 and an ERS
Assessment score of 5.0 or greater
in each room from ISU assessor.

Please note that points in each category cannot be multiplied if the criteria is met in more than one way. (Examples: If a program director is a member of more than one professional organization, they will receive 1 point for that criteria. If both the center director and the assistant director complete an approved environment rating scale training, the program will receive 2 points from that category).

The specific criteria that must be met and documentation required to achieve each level is described on the following pages. Also included are resources that will assist you in meeting each criteria and hints for submitting the correct documentation.

Level 1

Program has a full or provisional license with no current action to revoke or deny by the Department of Human Services

Required Documentation:

Submit a copy of your Child Care Center License. The Department of Human Services will internally verify that you have a full license with no current action to revoke or deny your license.

OR

Program operates under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school

Required Documentation:

Submit a letter verifying your accredited district or nonpublic school identification number.

Hint: Your program will be allowed to apply for a Level 1 for one rating cycle in the recalibrated system. Each subsequent application must be for a Level 2 or higher.

Level 2

(Program must fulfill items 1-6)

1. Program has a full or provisional license with no current action to revoke or deny by the Department of Human Services

Required Documentation:

Submit a copy of your Child Care Center License. The Department of Human Services will internally verify that you have a full license with no current action to revoke or deny your license.

OR

Program operates under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school

Required Documentation:

Submit a Letter verifying your accredited district or nonpublic school identification number.

2. If eligible, the program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Required Documentation (any one of the following):

- Certificate of participation **or** a copy of your signed food program contract.
- Notification from the Department of Education that your program is not eligible for CACFP
- Documentation that children are in attendance less than 4 hours a day and meals are not served

Hints:

- If children are present less than 4 hours a day in your program and you do not serve a meal you are exempt from meeting this criteria.
- If you are a for profit child care or preschool program you will be considered eligible for CACFP if greater than 25% of the children in your program qualify for free or reduced lunch.
- If you are a non-profit child care or preschool program you are eligible for CACFP. You may be exempt from meeting the CACFP requirement for QRS if you meet two or more of the following criteria:
 1. Your capacity is less than 30
 2. Less than 5% of the children enrolled in your program qualify for free or reduced lunch

3. Children are in attendance 3 or fewer days per week
 4. No more than two meals are served each day
- You must apply directly to the QRS Program Administrator at DHS in order to be considered for an exception to the CACFP criteria.
-

3. **Each room has at all times at least one staff member present who has completed mandatory reporting of child abuse, universal precautions and infectious disease control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid.**

Required Documentation: Training certificates must be on file in the facility.

Items 4-6 will be provided to you by the Child Care Resource and Referral Child Care Consultant or is available on the QRS website.

4. **All staff complete Basic Employee Orientation Checklist (470-4307) prior to beginning work.**

Required Documentation: These forms must be on file in your facility for each staff person.

Hint: Please have current staff complete this form now and new staff complete it **prior to beginning work.**

5. **The director and staff complete Child Care Center Staff Self-Assessment (470-4234).**

Required Documentation: These forms must be on file in your facility for each staff person.

6. **The director completes Child Care Center Self-Assessment (470-4233).**

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of the completed Child Care Center Self Assessment form.

Levels 3-5

Professional Development

Maximum Points: 30

Credential: Programs may earn a maximum of 5 points

5 Points: The director has received their National Administrator Credential. The National Administrator Credential (NAC) is a forty hour comprehensive training for child care and education administrators providing the only nationally recognized director credential. The topics include program development, staff and systems management, facility, legal issues, financial management, community relations and professional/self development.

Required Documentation: Include a copy of your NAC certificate

OR

5 Points: Director has a pre-Kindergarten principal license from the Board of Educational Examiners

Required Documentation: Include a copy of your School Principal License

OR

5 Points: Director has a current Aim4Excellence™ Credential. Aim4Excellence™ is an online national director credential for early childhood administrators. The credential focuses on the essential knowledge and skills you need to deliver high-quality programming for children. The online modules are designed to help you better manage the many tasks you juggle everyday as an early childhood director. The content is specific to your work and designed around your unique needs as a busy adult learner.

Required Documentation: Include a copy of your Aim4Excellence™ credential.

OR

5 Points: Staff has completed the Head Start Management Acceleration Program. The Region VII Head Start Association Management Acceleration Program (MAP) is a 3 day accelerated training program designed to provide Directors, Managers and staff new to Head Start or their positions a solid foundation of Head Start principles and management practices.

Required Documentation: Include a copy of you MAP training certificate.

Staff Education and Training: Programs may earn a maximum of 25 points

Each staff member shall indicate the highest applicable education and experience qualification and the **total points of all staff will be divided by the number of staff.**

25 Points: Master's degree in education specific to age group for whom care is provided

20 Points: Bachelor's degree in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided

10 Points: Associate's degree in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided

8 Points: 1 year diploma in early childhood education

7 Points: Apprenticeship certificate

6 Points: Child Development Associate (CDA) credential

6 Points: Iowa Board of Educational Examiners paraeducator certificate at Level 2, early childhood, plus two years of experience in early childhood education under the supervision of a licensed early childhood teacher

5 Points: At least 9 credit hours in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided

4 Points: 30 hours annually of approved training beyond regulatory requirements AND at least 5 years of experience.

2 Points: 15 hours annually of approved training beyond regulatory requirements in the last 12 months.

Required Documentation: Copy and complete page 19 of the QRS Application for each staff person and attach a copy of the applicable credential, transcript, training certificates and/or documentation of number of years of experience.

Hints:

- Experience does not need to be consecutive and does not need to have occurred in a child care center or preschool setting.
- Staff will receive points for the highest level of education that they have received. For example, if you completed your CDA and then went on to receive an AA, you will receive credit for the AA, not both.
- Points will be awarded only for degrees or higher education in education specific to the age group for whom you provide care. If your degree is in elementary education then you will get points if you provide care to school age children, etc.
- A bachelor's degree in elementary education with an early childhood endorsement will be counted as a bachelor's degree if care is provided to preschool age children.
- Training hours must have been completed in the 12 months prior to submitting your first QRS application.

- Please use the following grid to determine the number of training hours that staff will be required to complete when subsequent applications are submitted depending on the length of time that has elapsed since you received the previous rating.

No. of ADDITIONAL training hours required to meet:	Renewing 12 months after previous QRS certificate issued	Renewing 13-17 months after previous QRS certificate issued	Renewing 18-24 months after previous QRS certificate issued
30 hours annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements	30	45	60
15 hours annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements in the last 12 months	15	23	30

Resources:

The Iowa Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Program can help you pay for college coursework, materials, and time spent preparing for class. For more information contact 515-331-8000.

Health and Safety

Maximum Points: 19

5 Points: Director, Assistant Director, or On-Site Supervisor has completed a 3 semester hour Health, Safety, and Nutrition class through community or 4-year college within the past 5 years

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of the applicable transcript.

Hint: This is a course that is designed specifically for early childhood educators and covers the topics of health, safety, and nutrition. An example is ECE 133 through Iowa's Community Colleges.

2 Points: Director, Assistant Director, or On-Site Supervisor has completed other approved Health and Safety training option within the past 2 years

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of the applicable transcript or training certificate.

Hint: Currently the Medication Administration in Iowa Child Care course is the only training series that has been approved for these points. Contact your CCR&R Child Care Consultant for more information about registering for this course.

2 Points: Development and implementation of an emergency preparedness plan

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your emergency preparedness plan form. This must be completed on the Center Emergency Preparedness Plan form found on the QRS website.

2 Points: Development and implementation of enhanced health and safety policies

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your health and safety policies. This must be completed on the QRS Hazard Mitigation Plan – Enhanced Health and Safety Policies form found on the QRS website.

Hint: These are specific documents that are available on the QRS website or can be supplied to you by your CCR&R Child Care Consultant or local Child Care Nurse Consultant. There is training and consultation available for you in completing these documents. Receiving training and consultation are not required in order to receive these points but are strongly encouraged.

Child Care Nurse Consultant Health and Safety Tools: Maximum 8 points

The Child Care Nurse Consultant's goal is to help you prevent the spread of infectious illnesses and minimize the risks of injury for children in your program. Your work with a nurse consultant as an element of the QRS is a process that is intended to be ongoing and will require multiple contacts. The following 3 tools provide a framework for your work with your nurse consultant:

Injury Prevention Checklist:

1 Point: Your Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) visits your program and completes the checklist.

1 Point: Your CCNC visits your program and documents that you have made about 50% of the corrections that were recommended.

1 Point: Your CCNC visits your program and documents that all recommended corrections were made.

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your **Injury Prevention Summary Report**. There are three signature lines on this document. You will receive one point for each of the nurse consultant's signatures.

Child Record Review:

1 Point: Your CCNC visits your program and completes the record review.

1 Point: You have developed a plan to secure health services for children in your care.

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your **Child Record Review Report of Findings** for 1 point and/or a copy of your **Child Record Review Report of Progress** for 1 point.

Health and Safety Assessment:

1 Point: Your CCNC visits your program and completes the assessment.

1 Point: Your CCNC visits your program and documents that you have made about 50% of the corrections that were recommended.

1 Point: Your CCNC visits your program and documents that all of the recommended corrections were made.

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your **Health and Safety Assessment Report of Findings**. This form will contain signatures from your CCNC that documents that recommended changes were made in multiple areas.

Hints: It is not necessary to submit copies of "Notices of Urgent Need" forms or Plan of Action worksheets that are given to you by the CCNC.

Make certain that both you and the CCNC have signed the required forms.

Resources: If you are not already acquainted with your local CCNC please contact your CCR&R Child Care Consultant for a referral.

Environment

Maximum Points: 27

Training and Self Assessment: Maximum of 9 points

Environment Rating Scales

Training 2 Points: Center Director or Assistant Director completes approved Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Training appropriate to the ages of children in care. This is a 4 part training series that is provided by Iowa State University Extension. Only the ERS training series that are provided by Iowa State University Extension will be approved for QRS. These series are:

- ECERS – Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
- ITERS – Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale
- SACERS – School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of the Certificate of Completion that you receive from Iowa State University. INDIVIDUAL TRAINING CERTIFICATES RECEIVED AT THE TRAINING ARE NOT THE CORRECT DOCUMENTS.

Resources:

You can register for ECERS, ITERS, and SACERS training on Training Registry <https://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/>.

More information regarding the Environment Rating Scales is available at www.extension.iastate.edu/childcare/qrs.

Hints:

Each registered participant MUST attend all 4 sessions and complete all class assignments.

If you miss a session you cannot make it up—you will be considered to have dropped the course and must register for the next series.

If your program includes children from multiple age groups, you will only be required to attend one training series. If you choose to attend multiple training series you will be awarded one point total – you will not receive points for each series you complete.

Self Assessment 2 Points: After completing approved ERS training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility director or assistant director completes a self assessment and score sheet of at least one third of the facility's classrooms, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility. Required forms will be provided by the trainer.

Required Documentation: Include a copy of:

- ERS Self Assessment score sheet for at least one third of your classrooms and at least one classroom from each age group. (Specifically describe how each criteria is met)
AND
- ERS Self Assessment form for at least one third of your classrooms and at least one classroom from each age group.

Hints: Make certain that each indicator is addressed. If you believe that you meet specific criteria, document HOW that criteria is met as opposed to leaving that indicator blank.

Improvement Plan 2 Points: After completing approved ERS training appropriate to the ages of children in care, the facility director or assistant director completes a Child Care Center Improvement Plan.

Required Documentation: Include a copy of Child Care Center Improvement Plan (Form 470-4288) for all classrooms in which a self assessment was completed. This form will be provided by the trainer.

Hints: This training includes classroom assignments that are required in order to receive a certificate of completion. These assignments are NOT the required documentation to receive points for completing the Self Assessments and Improvement Plans. All applicable items in each subscale must be scored in order to receive these points.

Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS)

IQPPS is based on the research of other states' early childhood program standards and comprehensive information of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) program standards and criteria. Based on this research, the Iowa Department of Education Early Learning Work Team developed state standards based on all 10 of the NAEYC program standards and 45% of the NAEYC program criteria. These standards were developed to be used for programs with 3-4 year old children.

3 points: After completing IQPPS training, center director or assistant director completes IQPPS Self Assessment and develops a Quality Improvement Plan.

Required Documentation: Copy of IQPPS training certificate, Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Plan or documentation provided by IQPPS facilitator that training, Self-Assessment, and Quality Improvement Plan has been completed.

Enhanced Ratios: Maximum of 3 points

3 Points: Meets NAEYC or NAA standards for group/class size appropriate to setting. Use the table on page 17 of your application to determine if your program meets this criteria.

Required Documentation: Complete page 21 and reproduce page 22 and complete it for each classroom.

Hint: You may receive either points for being accredited or points for meeting the group/class size standards, but not both.

Accreditation Preparation: Maximum of 5 points

5 Points: Accreditation self-assessment approved by NAEYC

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your self assessment approval letter provided by NAEYC.

Hint: You may receive either points for being accredited or points for an approved self assessment, but not both.

Accreditation: Maximum of 18 points from one of the three options below

18 Points: Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Afterschool Alliance, or the Council on Accreditation (afterschool or 8th edition standards) or the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your accreditation certificate from an approved accrediting body.

6 Points: Compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Required Documentation:

Submit a copy of a letter from the Head Start regional office verifying compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards and other Regulations.

5 Points: Program is verified by IQPPS

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your verification certificate.

Hint: If you are accredited by another entity then you may be eligible to receive points. For more information please contact the Child Care Resource and Referral Child Care Consultant. Please note that the accrediting body - *not the child care program* - needs to complete the Application to Become a Recognized Accrediting Organization.

Family and Community Partnerships

Maximum Points: 8

1 Point: Provides orientation for new parents.

Required Documentation: Copy of parent policies and procedures, including policies regarding the following:

- Fees and when they are due
- Hours of service
- Attendance policies
- Illness policies
- Number and ages of children allowed in care. **This must be very specific – outline the total number of children you are allowed to care for, as well as the number in each age group.**
- Philosophy and child development approaches used in the program (educational philosophy, discipline policy, description of activities).

Also submit an explanation of how staff has ensured that all parents can access information and clearly understand the content (translations, reading assistance, etc. provided if needed) and explain how orientation is conducted with prospective families.

1 Point: Annual conferences are held with parents

Required Documentation: Copy of a schedule of conference dates from the past 12 months.

1 Point: At least one group parent meeting is held annually

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of minutes from group parent meeting, including who attended, topics discussed, and decisions made (if applicable).

2 Points: Parent advisory board meets quarterly

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of the minutes from parent advisory board meetings for the past 12 months, including who attended, topics discussed, and decisions made. There should be minutes from at least 4 meetings in order to receive these points for your initial rating application and then quarterly minutes from each meeting held for subsequent application.

2 Points: Annual parent surveys are collected and results are used to inform program practices

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of the survey used. Also submit a summary of responses and describe how the results of the survey will be used.

1 Point: The director or program is a member of a professional organization specific to the age group that they provide care for. Approved organizations include the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National After School Association (NAA), National Child Care Association (NCCA), and the National Education Association (NEA).

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of the director's membership card or certificate.

Resources: Find membership information on the organizations websites:

NAEYC: www.naeyc.org

NAA: www.naaweb.org

NCCA: www.nccanet.org

NEA: www.nea.org

Leadership and Administration

Maximum Points: 7

Staff Evaluations

2 Points: Staff Evaluations are completed annually and meet the following criteria:

- Formal observation of staff member by supervisor must include regular, on-going documented observations with written feedback
- Parent feedback
- Review of training record
- Review of employee responsibilities
- Strengths of staff
- Suggested areas for improvement
- Staff participation in this evaluation
- Review of skill self-assessment

In addition:

- Staff person should receive a copy of the written evaluation (signed and dated)
- A copy of the written evaluation is kept by the administrator in the staff member's file.

Required Documentation: Submit a copy of your blank staff evaluation form **AND** **Summarize all evaluations and explain how evaluation information is used to improve over-all program quality. The explanation must address how the review of all evaluations in used to improve the entire program. Explanations that only address discussing the evaluation with staff and planning their professional development do not meet the criteria and will not receive points.**

New Staff Orientation

3 Points: All staff who have direct contact with children receive New Staff Orientation training within the first 4 months of beginning work. The New Staff Orientation (NSO) program provides new center staff a full, center-based orientation that can be initiated immediately, on-site, and with director supervision and input. NSO was designed by child care center directors to make their job orienting new staff easier and more effective.

Each lesson is designed to be easily completed on-site, during nap time or other small blocks of time as staff/child ratios permit. The [30 unit curriculum](#) includes:

- Fast paced, 15-minute videos demonstrating best practice.
- On-site activities to help staff practice newly learned skills.
- Brief written [assignments](#) to assess learning.
- Review of assignments, feedback and support from ISU Early Childhood Specialists.

Required Documentation: Copy of director’s NSO training certificate. Training certificates for staff must be on file in your facility.

Hints:

Directors must attend a 6-hour introduction program to learn how to implement the New Staff Orientation (NSO) curriculum. This training is available at no charge to directors.

The New Staff Orientation provided by Iowa State University Extension is currently approved for the QRS. If you believe that your current orientation curriculum meets the requirements of the ISU Extension curriculum then you are able to complete a Request for Approval of your New Staff Orientation curriculum. Please contact the Child Care Resource and Referral Child Care Consultant for more information.

Resources: Find more information about NSO training at www.extension.iastate.edu/childcare/grs.

Professional Development Plans

1 Point: All staff have a completed a Professional Development Plan. This form will be provided to you by the Child Care Resource and Referral Child Care Consultant or is available on the QRS website.

Required Documentation: These forms must be on file in your facility for each staff person.

Hint: Be certain that staff complete both the front and back of this form. If they are not able to locate the specific training opportunity they can explain what training they would like to take and what steps they are taking to locate that training.

Child Care Center Improvement Plan

1 Point: Completes and annually updates a Child Care Center Improvement Plan. This form will be provided to you by the Child Care Resource and Referral Child Care Consultant or is available on the QRS website.

Required Documentation: Submit a completed copy of the Child Care Center Improvement Plan form.

Hint: This form is different then the Child Care Center Improvement Plan for ECERS form that can be completed for the environment category.

Tips

1. Use the appended checklist to ensure that your application is complete.
2. Remember to sign and date your application.
3. Complete your application in blue or black ink.
4. Complete all relevant sections of the application.
5. Submit **only** the documentation that is required.
6. Organize your documents in the order in which they are listed in the application to reduce the likelihood that you will omit a document.
7. Remove all staples from your documents.
8. Make a copy of your entire application.
9. Contact your Child Care Resource and Referral Child Care Consultant with any questions or if you would like an on-site consultation.

Appendix A

Application Checklist

This tool was created to help you organize your documents. It is not a required form, but feel free to submit it with your application to confirm the items you have completed.

- Complete all relevant pages of the Quality Rating System Application form. Must include an original signed application.

Level 1 Requirements:

- Submit a copy of your child care center license **OR** submit a letter verifying your accredited district or nonpublic school identification number.

Level 2 Requirements:

- If you are licensed by the DHS this criteria will be internally verified **OR** submit a letter verifying your accredited district or nonpublic school identification number.
- Attach one of the following:
 - CACFP certificate of participation **or** a copy of your signed food program contract
 - Notification from the Department of Education stating your program is not eligible for CACFP
 - Documentation that children are in attendance less than 4 hours and meals are not served.
- Training certificates on file in facility for at least one staff member present having mandatory reporting, universal precautions, infectious disease control, CPR, and first aid
- Basic Orientation Checklist on file in the facility for each staff member.
- Child Care Center Self-Assessment in on file in the facility.
- Child Care Center Staff Self-Assessments are on file in the facility for each staff member and the director.

Level 3-5 Requirements:

Must meet all of Level 1 and 2 criteria and receive at least one point from each category.

Level 3: 17-26 Points

Level 4: 27-33 Points

Level 5: 34 points and ERS

assessment score in each classroom of 5.0 or greater

Professional Development:

- Attach a copy of your NAC certificate, AIM 4 Excellence Credential, or Pre-kindergarten School Principal License. (5 points)

- Copy and complete page 19 of the QRS Application for each staff person and attach a copy of the applicable credential, transcript, training certificates and/or documentation of number of years of experience. TOTAL___/Number of Staff___=___Points (maximum 25 points)

Health and Safety:

- Copy of your Injury Prevention Summary Report signed by your Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) (up to 3 points).
- Copy of Child Record Review Initial Report of Findings signed by your CCNC (1 point).
- Copy of Child Record Review Report of progress signed by your CCNC (1point).
- Copy of Health and Safety Assessment Report of Findings signed by your CCNC (up to 3 points)
- Copy of transcript reflecting 3 semester hour Health, Safety, and Nutrition class from community or 4 year college from within the last 5 years (5 points)
- Copy of transcript or training certificate from APPROVED health and safety training from within the last 2 years (2 points)
- Copy of Emergency Preparedness Plan (2 points)
- Copy of QRS Hazard Mitigation Plan - Enhanced Health and Safety Policies (2 points)

Environment:

In order to receive points for training and self assessments please submit:

- Copy of the director or assistant director's Environment Rating Scales (ERS), training certificate from ISU (2 points).
- A copy of completed self assessment score sheet and self assessment forms for at least 1/3 of your classrooms and at least one for each age group. (2 points).
- A copy of your completed Improvement Plans for at least 1/3 of your classrooms and at least one for each age group. (2 points).
- Copy of IQPPS training certificate that verifies completed self assessment and improvement plan OR Copy of training certificate and copy of IQPPS Self Assessment and Quality Improvement Plan. May provide documentation from IQPPS facilitator that the self-assessment and quality improvement plan were completed (3 points).

In order to receive points for accreditation activities please submit:

- Copy of letter from NAEYC approving self assessment (Not Accredited by NAEYC) (5 points)
- Copy of an accreditation certificate from an approved entity. (up to 18 points)
- Copy of IQPPS verification certificate from Department of Education (5 points). A letter from the Department of Education confirming that a visit took place is not sufficient. You must submit documentation that the program is IQPPS verified.

In order to receive points for enhanced ratios please submit:

- Complete page 21 and reproduce page 22 and complete it for each classroom to verify meets NAEYC ratios. (3 points – **only for programs not accredited**)

Family and Community Partnerships:

- Copy of parent policies and procedures, including policies regarding the following: (1 point)
 - Fees and when they are due
 - Hours of service
 - Attendance policies
 - Illness policies
 - Number and ages of children allowed in care.
 - Philosophy and child development approaches used in the program (educational philosophy, discipline policy, description of activities).

Also submit an explanation of how staff has ensured that all parents can access information and clearly understand the content (translations, reading assistance, etc. provided if needed) and explain how orientation is conducted with prospective families. (1 point)

- Schedule of conference dates (1 point)
- Copy of membership certificate for NAEYC, NAFCC, or NAA (1 point).
- Copy of minutes from group parent meeting (1 point)
- Copy of parent survey, results and how they were used (2 points).
- Copy of minutes from parent advisory board’s quarterly meetings including who attended and what was discussed (2 points)

Leadership and Administration:

- Copy of your blank staff evaluation form AND summarize all evaluations and explain how evaluation information is used to improve over-all program quality. (2 points)
- Copy of Child Care Center Improvement Plan. (1 point)
- Professional Development Plan forms on file in the facility. (1 point)
- Copy of director’s NSO training certificate. Staff training certificates for NSO on file in facility. (3 points)

Points:

____ Professional Development
____ Health and Safety
____ Environment
____ Family and Community Partnerships
____ Leadership and Administration

_____ **TOTAL**

Appendix B

Re-application

Re-application for QRS requires programs to submit a new application containing all of the materials for that level including the documents from previous levels. Many of the documents that were submitted with your QRS application either contain an expiration date, or are no longer valid after two years. Here are some things to consider as you continue the QRS process:

- To receive points in the Professional Development Category of levels 3-5 for having training beyond the regulatory requirement **each year** use the attached chart to determine the number of hours that you will be required to complete.
- Training certificates must be dated during the time since your last application and be from an approved agency.
- If you are applying for points in the Health and Safety category for completing the Child Care Nurse Consultant tools it is recommended that you maintain regular visits to ensure that you have an adequate amount of time to make recommended changes.
- Health and safety forms and checklists are valid for 2 years from the date of the most recent signature on the document. If two years have passed from the time that you received your final point on a tool then you will be required to complete that tool again in order to continue to receive those points.

