

Fiscal Year 2024

Office of Early Learning

**GUIDE TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FOR EARLY
CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN DELAWARE**



December 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Universal Support (Tier 1)

Targeted Support (Tier 2)

State-Funded Early Care and Education Programs (Tier 3)

QUALITY INDICATORS AND KEY PRACTICES

Family Child Care

Classroom-Based

DRAFT School-Age (under review)

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Data Gathering

Quality Improvement Planning

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Quality Improvement Award (QIA)

Quality Improvement Supports

Office of Early Learning Follow-Up

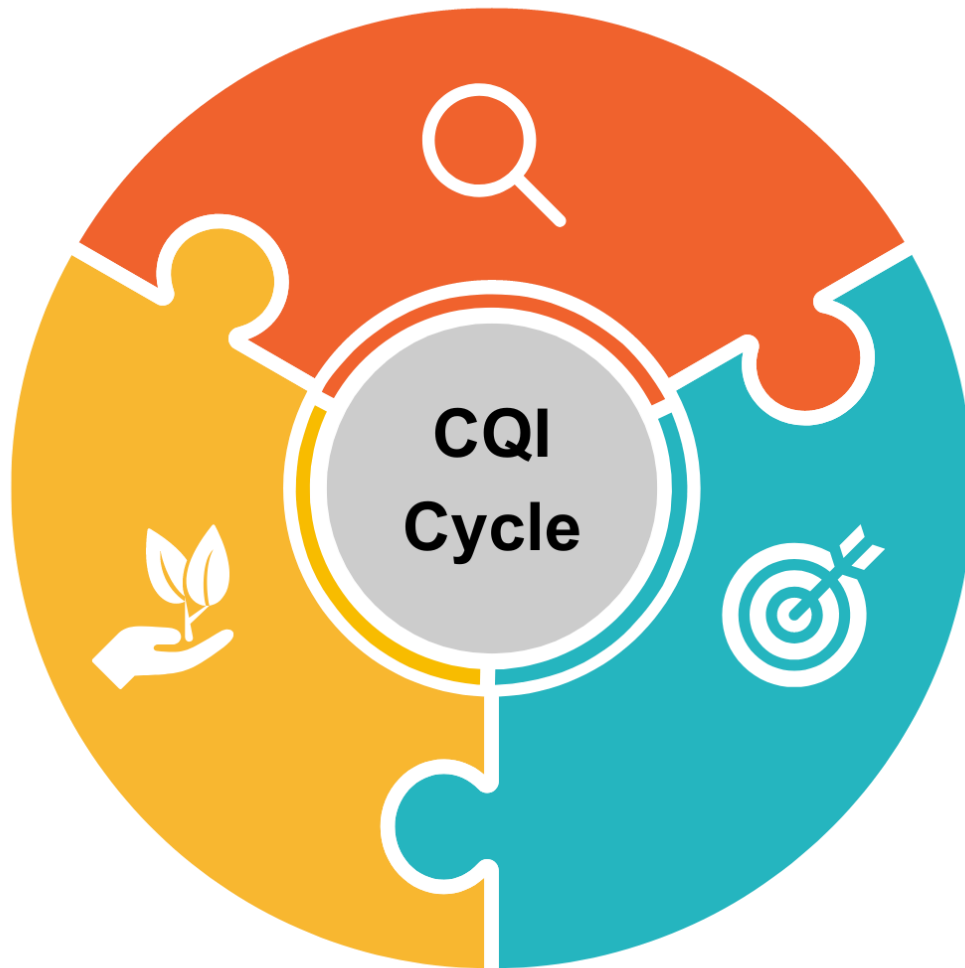
Opportunities to Provide Feedback

PROGRAM PROFILES

General Program Information

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

APPENDIX B: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM VISUAL



DATA GATHERING
How are we doing?



QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN
What do we want to work on?



QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SUPPORTS
What do we need to get there?

Please note that this guide will be updated to incorporate feedback from the field

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Universal Support (Tier 1)

All early care and education programs licensed by the Office of Child Care Licensing are eligible for two levels of support offered as part of Delaware Stars for Early Success. Tier 1, or universal support includes access to monthly e-newsletters, introductory training on diverse topics, technical assistance, as well as resources on the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood's (DIEEC) website.

Targeted Support (Tier 2)

Licensed programs are also able to opt into periods of Tier 2, or targeted support. To receive targeted support, programs will identify an area of program operations in which they would like to work with a Quality Improvement Specialist to undergo a cycle(s) of quality improvement (see Continuous Quality Improvement for details on the cycle).

Targeted support will include the development of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Action items on the QIP may include participating in professional learning experiences that offer a series of training and coaching on a related topic, enhancements to program policies and procedures and review of vetted materials from nationally recognized organizations.

During fiscal year 2024 programs will have access to targeted support on the following schedule:

- *July 15:* State-Funded Early Care and Education Partners
- *October 1:* Historical Stars 3 – 5 Programs
- *January 1, 2024:* All other licensed or school district early care and education programs

State-Funded Early Care and Education Programs (Tier 3)

State-Funded Early Care and Education Programs are expected to be consistently engaged with targeted support offered as part of Delaware Stars for Early Success. Programs participate in an induction program that orients participants to State-Funded Early Care and Education's policies and procedures. Group Reflective Experiences follow each procedural topic encouraging program leaders to ask questions and share strategies for implementation. These programs also develop QIPs and collaborate with a Quality Improvement Specialist to implement.

QUALITY INDICATORS

Family Childcare Programs

Creating Conditions for Quality (CQ)

Programs implement policies, procedures, and systems that support children, families, and early childhood professionals in the provision of early care and education.

Positive Climate and High-Quality Interactions (PCHQ)

Programs create culturally responsive, playful learning environments, using intentional and responsive interactions to promote relationships between educators and children and build a sense of community, while using developmentally appropriate approaches to support each child's learning and development.

Family Engagement and Community Services (FECS)

Programs promote families in their roles as their child's first teacher and engages in collaborative relationships with community organizations to holistically support children and their families.

Prioritized Key Practice(s) for FY24

**Priority Key Practices were selected using Teaching Strategies GOLD checkpoint data submitted by state-funded early care and education programs and information collected from partners during fall site visits. The same data will be used to prioritize Key Practices for fiscal years 2025 and 2026.*

CQ-KP6: Implements practices to recruit, maintain, and orient high-quality educators, consultants, and contractors (as needed)

CQ-KP7: Provides effective and meaningful supervision on teaching practices (LFCC)

PCHQ-KP1: Incorporates a whole child approach, intentionally supporting children through positive interactions

PCHQ-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and identity affirming practices to build meaningful connections and foster a sense of community in the classroom

PCHQ-KP5: Implements inclusive practices and provides environments that are responsive to the developmental needs of all children enrolled in the program

Future Key Practices

Quality Indicator: Creating Conditions for Quality (CQ)

CQ-KP1: Develops and implements a vision, mission, and program goals with meaningful input from families and the community

CQ-KP2: Implements an effective financial management system

CQ KP3: Implements a comprehensive risk management plan

CQ-KP4: Promotes professional growth and personal well-being for self and Large Family Childcare (LFCC) staff

CQ-KP5: Promotes positive relationships with other adults within the childcare program and home

Quality Indicator: Positive Climate and High-Quality Interactions (PCHQ)

PCHQ-KP3: Implements a comprehensive and research-based developmental screening process that is linked to follow-up

PCHQ-KP4: Implements a research-based, comprehensive curriculum individualized through use of a curriculum-based developmental assessment

PCHQ-KP6: Provides accessible indoor and outdoor learning environments that promote curiosity and playful exploration

Quality Indicator: Family Engagement and Community Services (FECS)

FECS-KP1: Implements policies and practices that encourage families to be involved and connected with their children's development and learning

FECS-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and anti-bias strategies to intentionally engage with and respond to the needs of both the children and families enrolled in the program

FECS-KP3: Engages with community organizations to support and promote child and family well-being

FECS-KP4: Supports children and families with transitions to and from new learning environments

QUALITY INDICATORS

Classroom-Based Programs

Quality Indicator: Creating Conditions for Quality (CQ)

Programs implement policies, procedures, and systems that support children, families, and early childhood professionals in the provision of early care and education.

Quality Indicator: Positive Climate and High-Quality Interactions (PCHQ)

Programs create culturally responsive, playful learning environments, using intentional and responsive interactions to promote relationships between educators and children and build a sense of community, while using developmentally appropriate approaches to support each child's learning and development.

Quality Indicator: Family Engagement and Community Services (FECS)

Programs promote families in their roles as their child's first teacher and engage in collaborative relationships with community organizations to holistically support children and their families.

Prioritized Key Practice(s) for FY24

**Priority Key Practices were selected using Teaching Strategies GOLD checkpoint data submitted by state-funded early care and education programs and information collected from partners during fall site visits. The same data will be used to prioritize Key Practices for fiscal years 2025 and 2026.*

CQ-KP4: Implements practices to recruit, maintain quality educators, consultants, and contractors

CQ-KP7: Provides effective and meaningful supervision on teaching practices

PCHQ-KP1: Incorporates a whole child approach, intentionally supporting children through positive interactions

PCHQ-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and identity affirming practices to build meaningful connections and foster a sense of community in the classroom

PCHQ-KP5: Implements inclusive practices and provides environments that are responsive to the developmental needs of all children enrolled in the program

Future Key Practices

Quality Indicator: Creating Conditions for Quality (CQ)

CQ-KP1: Develops and implements a vision, mission, and program goals with meaningful input from families and the community

CQ-KP2: Implements an effective financial management system

CQ-KP3: Implements a comprehensive risk management plan

CQ-KP5: Implements procedures to orient staff

CQ-KP6: Promotes professional growth and personal well-being for all educators and staff

CQ-KP8: Creates an effective and positive organizational climate

Quality Indicator: Positive Climate and High-Quality Interactions (PCHQ)

PCHQ-KP3: Implements a comprehensive and research-based developmental screening process that is linked to follow-up

PCHQ-KP4: Implements a research-based, comprehensive curriculum individualized through use of a curriculum-based developmental assessment

PCHQ-KP6: Provides accessible indoor and outdoor learning environments that promote curiosity and playful exploration

Quality Indicator: Family Engagement and Community Services (FECS)

FECS-KP1: Implements policies and practices that encourage families to be involved and connected with their children's development and learning

FECS-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and anti-bias strategies to intentionally engage with and respond to the needs of both the children and families enrolled in the program

FECS-KP3: Engages with community organizations to support and promote child and family well-being

FECS-KP4: Supports children and families with transitions to and from new learning environments

QUALITY INDICATORS

DRAFT School-Age Programs (*under-review*)

Quality Indicator: Creating Conditions for Quality (CQ)

Programs implement policies, procedures, and systems that support children, families, and professionals in the provision of school-age care and youth camps.

Quality Indicator: Positive Climate and High-Quality Interactions (PCHQ)

Programs create culturally responsive, playful learning environments, using intentional and responsive interactions to promote relationships between educators and children and build a sense of community, while using developmentally appropriate approaches to support each child's learning and development.

Quality Indicator: Family Engagement and Community Services

Programs promote families in their roles as their child's first teacher and engages in collaborative relationships with community organizations to holistically support children and their families.

Prioritized Key Practice(s) for FY24

**Priority Key Practices were selected using Teaching Strategies GOLD checkpoint data submitted by state-funded early care and education programs and information collected from partners during fall site visits. The same data will be used to prioritize Key Practices for fiscal years 2025 and 2026.*

CQ-KP4: Implements practices to recruit, maintain quality educators, consultants, and contractors

CQ-KP7: Provides effective and meaningful supervision on teaching practices

PCHQ-KP1: Incorporates a whole child approach, intentionally supporting children through positive interactions

PCHQ-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and identity affirming practices to build meaningful connections and foster a sense of community in the classroom

PCHQ-KP5: Implements inclusive practices and provides environments that are responsive to the developmental needs of all children enrolled in the program

Future Key Practices

Quality Indicator: Creating Conditions for Quality (CQ)

CQ-KP1: Develops and implements a vision, mission, and program goals with meaningful input from families and the community

CQ-KP2: Implements an effective financial management system

CQ-KP3: Implements a comprehensive risk management plan

CQ-KP5: Implements procedures to orient staff

CQ-KP6: Promotes professional growth and personal well-being for all educators and staff

CQ-KP8: Creates an effective and positive organizational climate

Quality Indicator: Positive Climate and High-Quality Interactions (PCHQ)

PCHQ-KP3: Implements inclusive practices and provides environments that are responsive to the developmental needs of all children enrolled in the program

PCHQ-KP4: Aims to empower youth by offering leadership roles within the program, opportunities for choice within activities, and problem-solving activities

Quality Indicator: Family Engagement and Community Services

FECS-KP1: Implements policies and practices that encourage families to be involved and connected with their children's development and learning

FECS-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and anti-bias strategies to intentionally engage with and respond to the needs of both the children and families enrolled in the program

FECS-KP3: Engages with community organizations to support and promote child and family well-being

FECS-KP4: Supports children and families with transitions to and from new learning environments

FECS-KP5: Creates opportunities for children to learn about and support their communities through activities, service projects, or field trips

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

DATA GATHERING

Programs deciding to embark on a journey towards quality will collaborate with a Quality Improvement Specialist to gather data on current practices from various sources, including, and when possible, an evidence-based tool. Programs may collect information frequently, as part of the continuous quality improvement process, to demonstrate growth and determine when they have fully met goals and are implementing new practices within program services.

Programs can request the assistance of a Quality Improvement Specialist through the Delaware Early Care and Education (ECE) portal.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Based on the information collected, programs will have a more comprehensive view of the program's strengths and opportunities for growth when considering the targeted Key Practice(s). Programs will collaborate with their Quality Improvement Specialist to use the initial data collected to develop a QIP. All data should be uploaded into the Delaware ECE portal with the quality improvement plan under Pre-Assessment.

As programs work through the activities on their QIP, plans to initiate change could be occurring throughout all levels of the program. Educators might make changes to the indoor and outdoor environments, prompting changes to program policies and procedures to reflect program enhancements. As programs move through the various stages of implementation, they should begin to document the changes in their program. Some examples of documentation might include pre-assessment data, before and after policies and procedures, before and after pictures of the learning environment, etc. (see Table B). Programs should use the Key Practice's Pathway as a guide.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SUPPORTS

Programs will use their Quality Improvement Award and a menu of supports to achieve Key Practices. When programs feel they have fully implemented Key Practices in their services for children and families, programs will conduct a post assessment, using the same tool(s) and/or survey(s) they have used throughout the continuous quality improvement process, to determine if targeted enhancements to program practices occurred. They will need to log onto the Delaware ECE portal to upload post assessment data, as well as any evidence of growth and implementation of targeted Key Practice(s).

Programs can choose to share evidence of the implementation of Key Practice(s) in a variety of ways. For example, submitting a narrative, policies and procedure in writing, and pictures may work best for some programs. Other programs may choose to provide evidence verbally through video. Programs can also choose a combination. There are multiple ways for programs to provide evidence of meeting a Key Practice. It will be up to the program to determine what information best tells their story of growth.

On the QIP, there will be a tab to "Upload Post Assessment Data and Evidence of Growth." The supporting documentation will serve as program evidence of growth and implementation of target Key Practice(s). After uploading all documentation, programs will click "Submit."

Office of Early Learning Follow-Up

Programs will receive an email notification within 30 calendar days of evidence submission indicating the successful meeting of the Key Practice(s), the need for additional evidence, or the need to align evidence more closely with the goals of the

QIP. Programs should work with their Quality Improvement Specialist to submit additional evidence, and to align evidence effectively with goals.

Quality Improvement Awards (QIA)

Quality Improvement Awards are available to programs to support efforts to increase quality programming for children and families in the state of Delaware. These are one-time funds; however, programs will be able to apply for additional QIAs as new QIPs are developed in future fiscal years, as funding allows. Programs will submit a budget narrative to the Office of Early Learning that is aligned with their QIP to apply for a QIA (see Table A). This will be done through the Delaware ECE portal.

During fiscal year 2024, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) has identified five Key Practices of priority. Programs can receive targeted support and funding if collaborating with a Quality Improvement Specialist to enhance program services around the following Key Practices:

CQ-KP7/CQ-KP8: Provides effective and meaningful supervision on teaching practices

CQ-KP7: Implements practices to recruit and maintain high quality educators, consultants, and contractors

PCHQ-KP1: Incorporates a whole child approach, intentionally supporting children through positive interactions

PCHQ-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and identity affirming practices to build meaningful connections and foster a sense of community in the classroom

PCHQ-KP5: Implements inclusive practices and provides environments that are responsive to the developmental needs of all children enrolled in the program

To be eligible for a QIA, programs must:

- 1) Be licensed by the Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing
- 2) Be open and available to provide services
- 3) Have a QIP that was co-created with a Quality Improvement Specialist and aligned with Quality Indicators and state prioritized Key Practices
- 4) Use a formative assessment tool with fidelity (as intended by the publisher) to inform curriculum planning, teaching, and individualization across all developmental domains
 - a. Implementing a formative assessment tool with fidelity is a marker of high-quality programming. The Office of Early Learning's goal is for Delaware early care and education programs to meaningfully promote children's development. Implementing a formative assessment tool with fidelity requires developing and coordinating multiple intentional processes. Licensed early care and education programs may use Fiscal Year 24 as a timeframe to work towards fidelity - establishing and fine-tuning the processes required to fully implement a formative assessment tool. DIEEC

Quality Improvement Specialists are available to support programs working towards this quality improvement goal.

Eligible Amounts (Based on OCCL Capacity)

Family Childcare: \$15,000

Large Family Childcare: \$15,000

Small Center (less than, or equal to 59 children): \$40,000

Large Center (greater than, or equal to 60 children): \$50,000

Eligible Amounts for State-Funded Early Care and Education

Family Childcare: \$20,000

Large Family Childcare: \$20,000

Small Center (less than, or equal to 59 children): \$45,000

Large Center (greater than, or equal to 60 children): \$55,000

Additional Information

Documentation is required for all expenditures (see Table C). Documentation for all expenditures must be submitted to the Office of Early Learning via the Delaware ECE portal by *May 15, 2024*.

As part of accepting a QIA, programs are agreeing to collaborate with Stars Quality Improvement Specialists to implement a Quality Improvement Plan. Payments will be distributed by WELS Systems Foundation through the Delaware ECE Portal. Award approvals will be sent via email to a designated program contact. If further clarifications are needed, an OEL review team member will contact your program to discuss and resolve via telephone and/or email.

Quality Improvement Award Application Timeline for Fiscal Year 2024

- *August 21*: Test applications open for State-Funded Early Care and Education Partners
- *October 1*: Applications open for Historical Stars 3 – 5 programs
- *January 1, 2024*: Applications open for all other licensed or school district early care and education programs
- *April 1, 2024*: Last day to apply for a QIA
- *May 15, 2024*: Documentation for expenditures due to OEL by the close of business – Forward documentation to early.learning@doe.k12.de.us

Tips and Tricks for Applying for a Quality Improvement Award (QIA)

There are seven sections to the QIA application. You will add information to 6 of the 7 sections to complete the application.

1. Program
2. Eligibility
3. Budget

4. Evidence – *Programs will not complete this section during the application process. This is where you will upload documentation sharing how the funds were spent.*
5. Payment
6. Tax
7. Agreement

Answering Eligibility Questions

When responding to the questions in the “Eligibility” section of the application, it is important to answer each question correctly. If there is an incorrect response, you will receive an email asking for clarification, additional information, or you will receive a message indicating that you are not yet eligible to apply.

*Please note, any requests for additional information will extend the amount of time needed to process the application.

Requests for Clarification and Additional Information

Please allow five business days for the Office of Early Learning to review any clarification or additional information submitted to the Delaware Early Care and Education Portal.

Budget Narratives

Budget narratives should reflect how programs plan to spend the full amount of the award. More information may be requested if the budget is above or below the amount the program is eligible to receive.

Additional Tips:

1. Bonuses - Share information about how you plan to spend bonuses. Include the number of staff and the bonus amount for each staff member during each bonus period.
2. Salary Increases - Share how you plan to distribute salary increases for each staff member. Include the number of staff members and the salary increase each staff member will receive.
3. DIEEC Template for QIP and Budget Narratives – Use the templates provided by your Quality Improvement Specialist. Programs that utilize the templates, and fill them out completely, provide enough information for the Office of Early Learning to process the QIA application.
4. Total Award Requested – Include this amount on the Budget Narrative. All line items should add up to equal the total amount requested.
5. Connections Between Line Items and Narrative – Be sure to include a monetary breakdown of all areas presented in the narrative. For example, if you would like to use some of the funds to enhance cozy corners in classrooms, include each item being purchased, the number of classrooms, and the associated amount.

Examples for *FCC Providers* – Use the ECE Compensation Scale to insert information needed in the narrative.

Sample Narrative - Bonus

“I am requesting the QIA to support the additional time and effort needed to work towards my quality improvement goal of (insert goal) within the quality indicator (insert QI and key practice). The ECE Compensation scale recommends a salary of (Box K)/week for a (Box I) with (list your education level). The current minimum wage is (Box H) creating a difference of (Box L)/week. These funds will be used to provide a weekly bonus to lessen the gap between the current minimum wage and the recommended salary based on my level of education.”

A. Line Item within the Budget:

Weekly bonus for FCC Educator for time and effort needed to (list quality improvements on QIP)

- i. $\$333 \times 44 \text{ weeks (7/1/23 to 5/4/24)} = \$14,652$
- ii. $\$348 \times 1 \text{ week - 3 days (5/5/24 to 5/15/24)} = \348
- iii. Total Requested (\$15,000)

6. Sample Narrative - Salary

“I am requesting the QIA to support the additional time and effort needed to work towards my quality improvement goal of (insert goal) within the quality indicator (insert QI and key practice). The ECE Compensation scale recommends a salary of (Box K)/week for a (Box I) with (list your education level). The current minimum wage is (Box H) creating a difference of (Box L)/week. These funds will be used to provide an increased salary to lessen the gap between the current minimum wage and the recommended salary based on my level of education.

A. Line Item within the Budget:

Weekly salary increase for FCC Educator for time and effort needed to (list quality improvements on QIP)

- i. $\$333 \times 44 \text{ weeks (7/1/23 to 5/4/24)} = \$14,652$
- ii. $\$348 \times 1 \text{ week and 3 days (5/5/24 to 5/15/24)} = \348
- iii. Total Requested (\$15,000)

Payment and Tax Sections of the Application

Additional information may be requested in these sections if:

- SSN (or EIN) entered does not match the document provided.
- If the account and routing numbers provided are not in the correct field. In many cases, programs enter these numbers incorrectly in the application and we cannot match the numbers entered with the voided check attached to the application.
- The address on the W9 does not match other documents.

Signature for Agreement

After reading the agreement in the last section of the application, please enter your first and last name. Additionally, the signature should match the program administrator's name listed in the "Program" section of the application.

After Submitting an Application

- To check the status of your application, visit the first page of the Quality Improvement Award in your Early Childhood Program Portal.
- If additional information is requested, please add that information to your application as soon as possible.
- Allow 30 business days from the date the application was approved for funds to be disbursed to the bank account shared in the application.

Evidence due by 5/15/23 - Examples of Appropriate Documentation

Please upload documents to the "Evidence" section of the application. Direct questions regarding documentation for expenses not listed below to

Takeisha.Edmonds@doe.k12.de.us .

Possible Expense(s) from Budget	Evidence of Spending
Salary Increases	Payroll documentation accounting for new salaries, bonuses, leave and/or retirement contributions
Bonuses	
Paid Sick or Family Leave	
Retirement Contributions	
Technology	<u>FCC Providers</u> Documentation of education level aligned with ECE Compensation Scale (transcripts with conferral date when appropriate, diploma)
Professional Development or Training for Staff	Receipts showing purchase date *Purchase dates should be between 7/1/23 and 5/14/23
Contracts/Partnerships with Experts (example – Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant)	Invoice with training date(s) and name of organization Proof of payment (example – canceled check) Certificates of Completion
Program/Classroom Enhancements	Receipts for each item purchased *Purchase dates should be between 7/1/23 and 5/14/23

Table A – Sample Budget Narrative (Small State-Funded Early Care and Education)

- A. Staff Supports (**\$17,000**):
- Program will recruit and retain high quality staff
 - Recruitment Bonuses for 1 Lead and 1 Assistant Teacher (\$500 upon hire) **\$1000**
 - Retention Bonuses for 4 Lead Teachers and 4 Assistant Teachers (\$2000/year) – \$1000 after six months of employment; \$1000 after twelve months of employment) **\$16,000**
- B. SEL Supports for Classrooms (**\$631.10**)
- Preschool Classrooms will create cozy corners designed to support the positive social-emotional development by...
 - Emotions Wheel – 4.25 * 5 classrooms - **\$21.25**
 - Small Carpet - \$39 * 5 classrooms - **\$195**
 - Comfy Chair/Bean Bag - \$25 * 5 classrooms - **\$125**
 - Problem Solver Kit - \$57.97 * 5 classrooms - **\$289.85**
- C. Practice- Based Coaching Institute (**\$490**)
- One Lead Teacher will participate in Practice-Based Coaching training to implement the research-based strategies necessary to support and sustain classroom practices.
- D. TOTAL REQUESTED **\$18,121.10**

Opportunities to Provide Feedback

In an effort to engage in the continuous quality improvement process at the state level, the Office of Early Learning will offer many opportunities for programs and professionals to provide feedback following experiences with the Quality Improvement System. Programs will be asked to provide feedback after their initial engagement with the continuous quality improvement process.

Your feedback will be valuable as we adjust to ensure the system operates efficiently for programs and professionals; ultimately ensuring increased child outcomes for children in Delaware.

Table B – Evidence of Growth

**Multiple
Data
Points:**

Pre and Post Data collected from surveys and/or classroom assessment tools

Artifacts – Before/After Policies and Procedures, Certificates of Completion, Diplomas, Transcripts, Before/After Pictures of the Learning Environment, etc.

Table C – Documentation of Expenditures

Key Practice(s) of Priority for FY24	Documentation
<p>CQ-KP7/CQ-KP8: Provides effective and meaningful supervision on teaching practices</p> <p>PCHQ-KP1: Incorporates a whole child approach, intentionally supporting children through positive interactions</p> <p>PCHQ-KP2: Uses culturally responsive and identity affirming practices to build meaningful connections and foster a sense of community in the classroom</p> <p>PCHQ-KP5: Implements inclusive practices and provides environments that are responsive to the developmental needs of all children enrolled in the program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificates of completion (trainings) • Receipts from purchases • Canceled Checks <p><i>All documentation must include incurred dates, names, organization</i></p>
<p>CQ-KP7: Implements practices to recruit and maintain high quality educators, consultants, and contractors</p>	<p>Recruitment and Retention Bonuses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payroll documentation indicating bonus was awarded

Table D – Acceptable Expenses

Key Practice(s) of Priority for FY24	Documentation
CQ-KP4 (Classroom-Based) CQ-KP6 (Family Child Care) CQ-KP7 PCHQ-KP1 PCHQ-KP2 PCHQ-KP5	Mental Health Services/Social-Emotional Supports. Non-exhaustive examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Infant and early childhood mental health consultation or another evidence-based strategy that teams mental health professionals to improve the social, emotional, and behavioral health and development in settings where children learn and grow• Mental health consultations or other types of mental health supports for staff
CQ-KP6 (Family Child Care) CQ-KP4 (Center-Based)	Personnel Costs. Non-exhaustive example include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in compensation for any staff in program• Recruitment/retention bonuses for educators• General staff bonuses• Contributions to health, dental, and vision insurance• Individual scholarships for professional development• Paid sick or family leave• Retirement contributions• Ongoing professional development or training for staff

Program Profiles

Program Profiles will be available for families to browse on the Mychildde.org website when searching for early care and education programs for infants, toddlers, and preschool age children. The profiles will include general information about individual programs such as hours and contact information. It is anticipated that profiles will also highlight levels of continuous quality improvement within the fiscal year.

APPENDIX A

Glossary

Delaware Early Care and Education (ECE) Portal – a website providing access to quality improvement plans, quality improvement awards, and many other offerings provided by the Office of Early Learning and its partners (delawareece.com)

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) – ongoing efforts to enhance program services for children and families

Key Practice – a set of concrete, actionable methods and techniques known to increase the quality of early care and education programming

Menu of Supports – a list of resources, aligned with Key Practices, which increases one's knowledge base and practices

Pathway – a resource assisting programs in movement from what is required by licensing to implementing a Key Practice in program services

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) – an action plan describing how a program will manage, implement, and assess a goal

Quality Improvement Specialist (QIS) – A Delaware Stars for Early Success professional that collaborates with programs opting to receive tier two, targeted support to develop and implement a quality improvement plan

Quality Indicator – a standard, established by the Office of Early Learning, as a rule for a measure of excellence in early care and education settings

Targeted Support – resources available to programs undergoing the continuous improvement process with an identified goal

Technical Assistant (TA) – A Delaware Stars for Early Success professional that collaborates with programs to provide tier one, universal support

Tiers of Support – Levels of support, categorized by intensity, offered by Delaware Stars for Early Success professionals. There are three levels of support.

Universal Support – resources available to all licensed and school district early care and education programs

