

## Keystone STARS Environment Rating Scale Transition

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) has made a commitment to transition to the use of the Environment Rating Scale, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (ECERS-3) as the assessment tool for Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten classrooms. This transition will begin August 2015, and continuing into the 2016-2017 Program Year. Transition to the SACERS Updated (SACERS-U) tool will also occur during this time frame.

The steps included in the transition phase will give programs serving preschool-age children and Keystone STARS staff the opportunity to learn about the new tool, allow for the collection of data that will inform the use of the ECERS-3 in Keystone STARS, and support the development and implementation of professional development and technical assistance.

**This transition does not apply to home-based programs assessed with the FCCERS-R, programs offering only school-age care, or programs not offering programming for preschool-age children.**

### Programs Requesting STARS Renewal:

Programs renewing at current STAR level in 2015-2016 or in 2016-2017, with Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and/or Kindergarten groups, that are typically assessed with the ECERS-R will instead have one assessment with the ECERS-3. The renewal site's existing ERS score will be extended for two years at the time of their renewal assessment and will allow the program to maintain their current STARS Designation.

If the site also offers infant and/or toddler programming, one assessment using the ITERS-R will be completed. If the site offers school-age programming, they will have an assessment using the SACERS-U. Selection of the classrooms assessed will be determined through a random sample and only one assessment per tool will be completed regardless of the number of groups at the site.

The site will receive feedback from the ECERS-3 and, if applicable, the ITERS-R and SACERS-U assessment. This information will assist the site in developing their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) plan and identifying professional development (and other resources) that will support overall quality improvement.

Sites are not expected to be familiar with the ECERS-3 and there is no target ECERS-3 score. OCDEL anticipates ECERS-3 scores to be lower than the site's ECERS-R scores due to the focus of the new tool. This transition is an exciting opportunity for Pennsylvania's early childhood community to think about developmentally appropriate practice and how it is reflected in the ECERS-3.

### Programs Requesting Move-Up in STARS:

In program year 2015-2016, if the site is being assessed in order to move to a new STAR level and they have Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and/or Kindergarten groups, the site will be assessed with the ECERS-R and all other ERS tools applicable to the age groups served. If the site requesting to move-up in STARS offers school-age programming, the site will have the choice of being assessed with the SACERS or the SACERS-U.

In program year 2016-2017, if the site is being assessed to move to a new STAR level and they have Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and/or Kindergarten groups, they will be assessed with the ECERS-3 and all other ERS tools applicable to the age groups served. If site offers school-age programming, they will be assessed with the SACERS-U.

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