



A Guide for Early Learning and Development Programs





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Introduction

Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) is Ohio's quality rating and improvement system for early learning and development programs. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) use a comprehensive, one- to five-star rating system to assess ODJFS- and ODE-licensed early learning and development programs that choose to exceed minimum health and safety standards. As of September 2020, all early learning and development programs that receive state funding will be required to participate in Step Up To Quality. Ratings are posted online, and parents can use them to choose the program that is best for their child.

Rated programs require ongoing professional development for teachers and staff, use child assessments to guide learning and development, and take additional steps to help prepare children for kindergarten. In return, they may receive additional funding and all programs receive free marketing materials to help spread the news about their SUTQ rating and attract new families.

This guide is designed for early learning and development programs working to achieve star ratings. This includes:

- Early learning and development programs registering for SUTQ for the first time
- Early learning and development programs that already have at least one SUTQ star but want to achieve higher ratings

How to Use This Guide

The SUTQ program standards are spelled out in rule 5101:2-17-01 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) and are available at manuals.jfs.ohio.gov/ChildCare/ChildCareManual/Chapter17/. The standards include four domains:

- Learning and Development
- Administrative and Leadership Practices
- Staff Qualifications and Professional Development
- Family and Community Partnerships

This booklet explains each of those domains in detail, with explanations of their sub-domains and summaries of key terms, tips for meeting the standards and frequently asked questions.

Please refer to the Step Up To Quality rules for more information about eligibility criteria and registration procedures in addition to the program standards requirements.

For the purposes of this document, all program types will be referred to as “programs,” including child care centers, family child care providers, preschools and school-age child care programs.

Non-Rated Programs

If you are registering for SUTQ for the first time, use this booklet to become familiar with the requirements of the star rating for which you plan to apply. It can help you determine the best way to meet the higher quality standards.

Rated Programs

If you already have at least one SUTQ star, use this booklet to continuously improve your program and work toward a higher star rating.

Forms

The SUTQ program uses two types of forms: prescribed forms and sample forms. Prescribed forms must be used, and no substitutions will be accepted. Sample technical assistance forms are not required but can help you better understand and/or show implementation of the specific standard.

The Ohio Child Licensing and Quality System (OCLQS)

Early learning and development programs in Ohio use OCLQS to submit licensing applications, amendments to their program licenses, corrective action plans, and SUTQ registrations. State and county staff use the system to review submitted documentation and to conduct inspections. For more information, visit **Homepage (force.com)**.



Learning and Development Domain

High-quality learning and development programs provide a strong foundation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to give children a well-rounded experience that will benefit them now and in the future. The Learning and Development domain focuses on the learning environment and the experiences children have while at the program. The Learning and Development sub-domains include:

- Curriculum and Planning
- Child Screening and Assessment
- Interaction and Environment

Curriculum and Planning Sub-Domain

The Curriculum and Planning sub-domain includes obtaining and implementing a curriculum that will be used to plan daily activities that support a child's development and learning. A chosen curriculum must address a broad range of developmental and learning outcomes across all learning objectives, domains, and subject matter areas.

- Curriculum
- Teacher Access to Standards
- Activity Plans

Child Screening and Assessment Sub-Domain

The Child Screening and Assessment sub-domain includes a process to obtain and implement child screening and assessment tools. Teachers use the assessment process to make, adjust, and refine instructional decisions and to evaluate a child's progress. Information about the child's development and progress is shared with families. Assessment information is also used to help programs plan and continuously improve their programs.

- Child Screening
- Child Assessment
- Child Educational and Developmental Goals

Interaction and Environment Sub-Domain

The Interaction and Environment sub-domain includes a process to complete a classroom self-assessment tool. Teachers identify an area for improvement and create an action plan with goal(s) and action steps based on the results of the self-assessment. This domain also includes the Ohio Classroom Observation Tool (OCOT). Teachers use classroom self-assessment information to improve staff-child interactions and learning environments.

- Classroom Self-Assessment
- Ohio's Classroom Observation Tool

Curriculum (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Curriculum: A plan providing guidance on what and how to teach. To meet SUTQ requirements, the curriculum must be written, research-based, comprehensive, and aligned to the Early Learning and Development Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written: Typed and legible. • Research-based: A curriculum that is in line with current studies and best practices on how children develop and learn. It focuses on domain-specific, developmentally appropriate content and skills. • Comprehensive: Provides learning goals, activities, and opportunities in all the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social-Emotional Development • Approaches Towards Learning • Physical Well-Being & Motor Development • Cognitive Development and General Knowledge (including Mathematics, Science and Social Studies) • Language and Literacy <p>Alignment: The degree to which a program's curriculum and assessments complement one another to help achieve required or desired standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Standards Assessment Alignment Tool: This tool, created by ODJFS and ODE, is required to be used by programs that have obtained and/or implemented a curriculum. <p>Implement: To put a decision or plan into effect.</p>	<p>Ensure teachers are aware of where the curriculum is centrally located within the program. (2-star and above)</p> <p>Ensure that all age groups served have an age-appropriate curriculum and lead teachers or family child care providers can explain how their program implements the curriculum. (2-star and above)</p> <p>Share the completed ODJFS/ ODE alignment tool with staff to ensure they understand each part and why it meets the SUTQ requirements. (2-star and above)</p> <p>Train staff on the expectations of how to use curriculum in the program's planning process. (2-star and above)</p> <p>Use the prescribed JFS 01590, "Curriculum Standard Assessment Alignment Tool: Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers for Step Up To Quality," or the publisher's alignment with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards for each age group(s) served. (2-star and above)</p> <p>For published tools that are aligned by the author, the program can use a copy of the publisher's tool or a weblink to the tool to meet this requirement.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01507, "Curriculum Selection Process for Two- to Five- Star Rated Programs for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used to better understand the curriculum selection.</p>	<p>How do I obtain the state provided curriculum?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a JFS 01598 "Curriculum and Assessment Request for SUTQ" and submit via email to curriculum-request@jfs.ohio.gov <p>Who is eligible to obtain the state provided curriculum?</p> <p>For a program to be eligible to request a state-purchased curriculum and assessment, it must meet all the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an ODJFS or an ODE licensed program with an active publicly funded child care provider agreement. • Have provided publicly funded child care services to at least one child within 90 days prior to the request date. • Not be currently using a curriculum or not using curricula purchased by the state for the age group for which you are making the request. • Be currently SUTQ rated or pursuing SUTQ as evidenced by a currently submitted registration for any star rating. <p>For more information, please see Child Care Manual Procedure Letter No. 148-A.</p> <p>Is the state-provided curriculum required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, programs have the option to choose any curriculum that meets the SUTQ requirements. <p>Is "The Fidelity Tool" from Teaching Strategies accepted as a curriculum?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, "The Fidelity Tool" is a self-assessment tool that helps programs assess whether the Creative Curriculum is being fully implemented. <p>Does the curriculum have to be stored or located in the classroom?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, one copy is required for the program and must be centrally located and accessible to all staff. Staff must know where the curriculum is located and be able to access the curriculum at any time during the program's operation.

Teacher Access to Standards (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS): The ELDS are unique to Ohio. This is a set of shared standards that provide key concepts and skills that a child should develop. They are applicable to children ages birth through 5, no matter what kind of setting they attend.</p> <p>Standards: A set of ideas used to measure.</p>	<p>Staff are aware of the location of the ELDS in each classroom/family child care (FCC) home and the program's selected curriculum that is centrally located.</p> <p>Keep an additional copy available in the classroom/FCC home that is not removed for other purposes or have additional copies available in a resource area to use while planning. Maintain accessible electronic copies to replace a printed copy that may be lost or destroyed.</p> <p>Ensure ELDS is the most updated version using the link to BOLD Beginning</p>	<p>Does having a copy of the standards in the resource room meet the requirement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, a copy must be available in each classroom, electronic or printed, and must be available for the ODJFS/ODE licensing reviewer to review at the time of an inspection. <p>Where can I find a copy of the most recent version of the ELDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELDS: boldbeginning.org <p>Why am I required to have a copy or access to an electronic copy in each classroom/FCC home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is required so all teachers can access and become familiar with the ELDS and can use them during the group planning process.

Activity Plans (All Ratings)		
Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Activity Plan: The detailed written plan of daily activities, experiences and/or opportunities to support children's development.</p> <p>Minimum Instruction Time: The definition for minimum instruction time can be found in rule 5101:2- 17-01, of the OAC.</p>	<p>Use the activity plan as a working document, updating as changes occur within the classroom and to continually meet the needs and interests of children in the group.</p> <p>The administrator or program owner should periodically review activity plans to ensure that the current plan is readily available, reflects the activities in the room and is completed appropriately.</p> <p>For family childcare providers, the planning process also should consider allowing for activities and experiences that meet the needs of a greater range of ages. This would include taking into consideration children's varying schedules and any safety or social emotional factors for mixed age groups.</p> <p>If more than one curriculum is being used for the same family child care group, the activity plan format may need to be adjusted to accommodate.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01513, "Activity Plan for Step Up To Quality," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement for an activity plan. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01513</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01592, "Individual Child Plan for Step Up To Quality," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement for an individual child plan. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01592</p> <p>Administrators or other appropriate staff may talk with the teaching staff and give them the opportunity to explain and verbalize their planning process. This will help prepare for the SUTQ interview. (3-star and above)</p> <p>During the planning process, teachers must use the following: knowledge of appropriate standards and curriculum goals, the child assessment process, and the learning and development levels of the children for whom they are planning. (3-star and above)</p> <p>It is a best practice to note the children's interests or current individualization on the activity plan. Examples are noting the child's initials next to a specific activity, noting a reflection or observation on the plan, and/or color coding or adding a letter/number code for various learning objectives or standards. (4 and 5-star)</p> <p>Consider the children's assessment results, their interests, and their developmental and educational goals during activity planning to help earn points toward a 4 or 5-star rating and to engage in a best practice to support children's learning.</p>	<p>Do I need an activity plan for each group I serve?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, each group of children must have an activity plan that is specific to their needs and interests. <p>Do I need an infant and toddler activity plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, all age groups of children must have planned activities to assist them in achieving their goals and developmental milestones. <p>How much detail needs to be on the activity plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The activity plan must include items as defined in the appendices of OAC rule 5101:2-17-01 for your program type and star rating. Other items may be included to assist the teacher's planning process but are not required. When activities are noted on the plan, they must include enough of a description to allow the domain and the activity to be identified. For instance, just listing "nature walk" does not give enough information to determine if this is being used as a motor activity, science/ cognitive activity, social/emotional activity or all three. Noting "collect & classify nature items from our walk" would allow identification of both the actual activity and the intent (learning objective or domain of learning). <p>Does every domain need to be listed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, however the teacher must explain that all domains are included in the planning process and each can be identified over time. <p>Does every child's name need to be on each week's activity plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, teachers must be able to explain and show how the documentation is kept if it is not noted on the activity plan. <p>Do I have to code my activity plan to show alignment to the ELDS ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, while it is required that activity plans are aligned to the developmental domains within the standards it is not required to be shown by code. Coding is best practice but not a requirement. <p>How can I show alignment on my activity plan? (2-star and above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many programs choose to use a code with letters, colors or numbers next to each activity to represent standards. The program may choose any code they wish, as long as the teacher can understand and explain the process used and reasoning behind coding for activities. There are many ways programs may meet this standard. Some programs choose to code by ELDS domain. Some may use abbreviations, and others may use color coding.

Child Screening (3 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Developmental Screening: A screening that shows how a child's development compares to other children of the same age; typically administered when a child enrolls in a program to identify areas of concern and allow information to be used for the initial planning cycle. If a concern is identified, the appropriate action, which may include a referral to an appropriate resource, must be taken. The results of annual developmental screenings are used to make instructional decisions and to monitor children's developmental progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive, developmentally appropriate screening instrument must address the following domains: language, cognitive, motor, social /emotional skills and behavior. Programs may choose to use a combination of screening tools that address a single domain, or they may select a tool that addresses all domains. <p>Individualized Education Plan (IEP): A plan or program developed to ensure that a child over age 3 who has a disability identified under the law receives the required specialized instruction and related services. IEP law is found in three federal statutes: The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act. IDEA is a federal law that is binding in all states.</p> <p>Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): A plan for special services for children under age 3 with developmental delays. Once a child turns 3, an IEP is put into place.</p>	<p>Create a tracking method similar to that on the required licensing forms for children's medical care and enrollment to ensure that screenings are completed and scored within 60 days of enrollment. Tracking also should include 90 days from identification of need for referrals, if required. This tracking method should include all requirements for each family at the time of enrollment, so staff may ensure all licensing, SUTQ and program requirements are met. If the child's family completes the screening, the program is required to review the screening and complete the scoring portion or review the scoring the family provided for accuracy. The program must notify the family only if the scores are different than what was initially determined by the family.</p> <p>After the screening tool is complete, the results must be formally shared with the family. Programs may choose to do this through a letter, conversation and/or conference.</p> <p>If a screening does not show an area of concern, the program may refer to an appropriate resource based on additional observations.</p> <p>Programs also may choose to provide support and re-screen within the 90-day period prior to making a referral.</p> <p>School-age children are not required to be screened.</p> <p>The standard requires that programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01378, "Developmental Screening Referral Process for Three to Five Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," as noted in the standard.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01517, "Developmental Screening Child Summary for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement.</p>	<p>What can I use to document that staff that have been trained on the screening tool?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the sample JFS 01378, "Developmental Screening Referral Process for Three to Five Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," as noted in the standard other acceptable documentation. This could be professional development documentation such as an in-service training form, a verified item in the Ohio Professional Registry, or a certificate or form provided by the author of the tool. <p>If a referral is needed, who do I refer to?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals must be sent to partners or professionals such as the local school district, social service agency or pediatrician. <p>Do I need to purchase multiple copies of the screening tool, or can I print my own?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program must follow the publisher's requirements about copying materials. <p>If I use an online tool, do I need something printed in the child's file to show my reviewer, or can I show them the online tool?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The screening must be able to be viewed during the inspection. If the reviewer has access to a computer during the verification visit, they can review the online tools. Please note that the reviewer will not extend the visit to view these items. <p>If the child is on an IEP or IFSP, are additional screenings required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child has a current IEP or IFSP, they must receive a screening in the areas that are not included in the IEP/IFSP, or the specific instructions in the IEP/IFSP must be followed. If all areas are not being screened due to a current IEP/IFSP, the IEP/IFSP must be kept on file at the program. <p>Do I need parent permission to refer a child to services?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals to services should be made in collaboration with families.

Child Assessment (3 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Assessment: Ongoing formative assessment is a process used to identify children's developmental strengths, instructional needs, intervention needs and progress over time.</p> <div data-bbox="168 512 646 653"> <p>See the list of Commonly Used Child Assessment Tools in the "SUTQ Resources" section</p> </div> <p>Formal Assessment: Formal assessments are used to report information to others, such as families and program administrators. They also give teachers information to adjust individual and group instruction. Formal assessments must follow a standardized set of learning objectives for all children and must use a specific standardized tool or instrument.</p> <p>Informal Assessment: Informal assessments are conducted by observing and recording children's behavior and progress. To create an informal assessment, teachers can use tools such as developmental checklists, anecdotal records, work sampling and portfolios. This information can be used to better design instructional activities that support a range of developmental levels across all domains.</p> <p>Child Portfolio: Portfolios contain student work reflecting their accomplishments toward significant curriculum goals, particularly those that require complex thinking and the use of multiple resources. An assessment of the portfolio can provide valuable evidence of the child's accomplishments and support the instructional process. In addition, portfolios invite children to reflect on their progress and take pride in their accomplishments. Finally, portfolios provide parents and the wider community with credible evidence of the child's achievements and inform policy and practice at every level of the educational system.</p> <p>Early Learning Assessment (ELA): This is a state assessment for all preschool-aged children that must be completed in accordance with the schedule prescribed by ODE or the ODJFS.</p>	<p>Create a tracking plan that aligns with the publisher's requirements for the child assessment selected or to the program's chosen schedule. Two complete assessment cycles are required annually for 3- to 5-star rated programs.</p> <p>The results of the child assessment must be formally shared with the families of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Programs may choose to do this through a letter, conversation and/or conference.</p> <p>Ensure that the assessment is aligned to the program's chosen curriculum and age- appropriate standards.</p> <p>All administrators, FCC program owners and lead teachers must be able to explain the assessment process.</p> <p>School-age children are required to receive only informal assessments, but educational and developmental goals must be set for them. It is a best practice to discuss the progress reflected in their informal assessments with their families.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01519, "Child Assessment Process for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01519.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01588, "Process to Use Child Assessment Results for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01588.</p> <p>Child assessment results must be used to create activity plans and classroom goals. (at 3 stars and above)</p>	<p>My program serves only school-age children. Do I need to do child assessments?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Informal assessments are required for school-age children. <p>How often do I need to complete the child assessment tool?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least twice annually following the recommended schedule of the tool (if applicable). <p>If a child has an IEP or IFSP, are additional assessments required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may use an amended or adjusted assessment process for the areas identified in the IEP or IFSP, based upon the determination of the professionals who created the IEP or IFSP. The areas not covered by the IEP or IFSP still must be assessed. <p>Can a program use more than one assessment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Programs are encouraged to use more than one assessment if doing so helps meet children's needs. A program may use any combination of summative, diagnostic or formative assessments but must complete a comprehensive, formative, formal assessment at least twice annually for each child. <p>When will the Early Learning Assessment be required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs must follow the schedule prescribed by ODE and ODJFS. The most recent schedule may be found at education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/ Kindergarten/ Early- Learning- Assessment/ Early-Learning- Assessment- for-Programs- 1#Rollout and Timeline.

Child Educational and Developmental Goals (3 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): "An approach to teaching grounded in research on how young children develop and learn and in what is known about effective early education." (National Association for the Education of Young Children)</p>	<p>This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01514, "Developmental and Educational Goals for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)."</p> <p>All children enrolled must have developmental goals. If child-related goals are included in an IEP or IFSP, they may be used to meet this standard.</p> <p>Meet with the family multiple times throughout the year to review any family changes and educational goals.</p>	<p>When is it best to complete the goals with the parents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals should be completed after the first developmental screening so that the results may be used to create the goals. Goals must be created within 60 days of the child's enrollment and updated annually. <p>How many goals must be created?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two. <p>Is this something that should be created for all children?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. All children enrolled must have developmental goals. If child-related goals are included in an IEP or IFSP, they may be used to meet this standard.

Classroom Self-Assessment (2 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Classroom Self-Assessment Tool: An annual process that addresses the quality of the classroom environment and staff/child interactions and that is developmentally appropriate for each age group served.</p> <p>See the list of Commonly Used Classroom Self-Assessment Tools in the “SUTQ Resources” section</p> <p>Indicator: A measure of quality.</p> <p>Environmental Indicators: A set of indicators specific to the space children use and the interactions within that space. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space and Furnishings • Personal Care Routines • Child and Teacher Interaction • Program Structure <p>Action Plan: A proposed list of steps to achieve a goal</p>	<p>Create a tracking plan that aligns to the publisher’s requirements for the program’s selected classroom self- assessment.</p> <p>Create a tracking system to ensure that all classrooms complete the self- assessment at least annually, and that they are completed by individuals who can use the tool fully and accurately according to the publisher’s requirements.</p> <p>When working with mixed-aged classrooms, ensure that the appropriate classroom self-assessments are completed. Multiple assessments may be required if the ages in the group require separate assessments according to the publisher. There are tools available for a wide range of ages. Please contact your local resource and referral agency or state support team for guidance.</p> <p>Family child care providers are required to complete one environment self-assessment for the program if all children are part of the same group.</p> <p>If a provider has separate groups, an environment self-assessment must be completed for each group.</p> <p>Once the classroom self-assessment is complete, allow time for the results/ outcomes to be reviewed and discussed by the classroom or program staff and administrator/owner, as applicable. This discussion should take place with the intent to complete the lead teacher’s classroom action plan. (3-star and above)</p> <p>A copy of the goals is readily available in each classroom/FCC home and, at a minimum, must be updated each time a new classroom self-assessment is completed. (3-star and above)</p> <p>The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01518, “Classroom Self-Assessment Action Plan for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ),” as noted in the standard. (3-star and above)</p>	<p>If my program uses another agency/ organization to complete the classroom self-assessment, what must the program have on file?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All scoring sheets, graphs or materials; the notes taken by the observer; and a signed statement that the self-assessment was completed and reviewed with the program. <p>Does my score on my classroom self-assessment affect my SUTQ rating?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. The self-assessment must be completed, but the outcome does not impact the rating. <p>Can I reuse my classroom self-assessment tool?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, if the publisher allows the program to copy the scoring materials, the printed books may be reused. <p>Can the OCOT be used as the classroom self-assessment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, the OCOT must be completed by a reliable ODJFS or ODE reviewer as a part of the verification process. (3-star and above)

Ohio Classroom Observation Tool (OCOT) (3 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Ohio Classroom Observation Tool (OCOT): Measures the quality of both the classroom/FCC home environment and staff/child interaction.</p> <p>The OCOT consists of seven elements. Four elements assess the classroom /FCC home environment, and three elements assess staff/ child interactions. Each element includes several indicators. For each element, programs will obtain one of three designations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Not Met” — did not meet a specified number of indicators • “Met” — met a specified number of indicators but not all • “Fully Met” — met all indicators <p>For a program to obtain a 3 to 5-star rating, all classrooms or FCC homes observed must have met or fully met six of the seven elements.</p> <p>Indicator: A measure of quality</p>	<p>In some cases, it may not be possible to observe an indicator during a 30-minute observation. In those instances, reviewers will interview the FCC program owner/ and or lead teacher to assess whether the indicator was met.</p> <p>Use formal teacher observations to assist staff to implement appropriate interactions with children.</p> <p>While completing formal observations, the observer should move throughout each room or the FCC home and help teachers prepare and be comfortable for the OCOT.</p> <p>Use classroom self-assessment results to ensure the environment is appropriate to the needs of the children in the room or FCC home.</p> <p>Administrators should frequently observe staff and address issues as they are observed.</p> <p>Programs may complete a mock OCOT and teacher interviews. Contact your local resource and referral agency or state support team for assistance in this process.</p> <p>Create program expectations for interactions with children specific to the age groups served.</p> <p>Administrator should share the OCOT with staff prior to the onsite visit and after its completion.</p>	<p>Which classrooms will be observed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reviewer will randomly select groups for the OCOT observation. At least one group per age group served will be selected. The program may not select the rooms that are observed. The reviewer will complete one multi-age group OCOT for FCC homes. <p>What happens if one classroom does not meet the OCOT?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If one classroom or the FCC home does not meet the OCOT, the program will be unable to receive a 3, 4 or 5-star rating. The OCOT is not required for 1 and 2-star programs. <p>What should be expected during an OCOT visit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODJFS or ODE reviewers will observe the environment and staff-child interactions by moving throughout the classroom for 30 minutes. If the group leaves the classroom/FCC home, the reviewer may follow. The observer may ask the teaching staff where to find the activity plan and the classroom/FCC home schedule for review. If the observer has questions after the OCOT for items that could not be observed, the observer will ask the teaching staff. <p>Should I alter my programming while I am being observed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, the OCOT is designed to be completed during any activity. Staff should keep their normal routine.



Administrative and Leadership Practices Domain

The Administrative and Leadership Practices domain focuses on the continued improvement of the program. This includes individual staff development, improvements to program policies and procedures, and supports designed to increase the staff retention. The sub-domains include Staff Supports, Program Administration and Staff Management.

Staff Supports Sub-Domain

The Staff Supports sub-domain requires the program to have a written process for determining staff compensation based on established criteria. (Does not apply to family child care homes).

- Staff Supports and Wage Structure

Program Administration Sub-Domain

The Program Administration sub-domain requires completion of a program self-assessment. The program self-assessment is a standardized tool of the program's choice, which is used to assess the program's administrative policies, procedures and practices.

- Program Self-Assessment
- Formal Observations
- Continuous Improvement Plan

Staff Management Sub-Domain

The Staff Management sub-domain requires administrators, family child care providers, lead teachers and assistant teachers to have annual professional development plans.

- Professional Development Plan

Program Self-Assessment (All Ratings)		
Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Program Self-Assessment: A standardized tool that measures a program's administrative policies, procedures and practices regarding the following: Human Resource Leadership and Development, Family and Community Partnerships, Program Development and Evaluation, and Business Operations and Management.</p> <div> See the list of Commonly Used Program Assessment Tools in the "SUTQ Resources" section </div>	<p>ODJFS/ODE staff do not use these self-assessment scores. They're for the benefit of the program, to foster continuous improvement.</p> <p>Ensure that the tool includes the required elements.</p> <p>If the tool is completed for an agency or multiple sites with the same owner, each program administrator must have access to the results for site-specific items.</p>	<p>Can the OCOT be used by the program as a self-assessment tool?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, the OCOT evaluates programs' environment and interactions, not administrative and leadership practices. <p>What resources are available to help with the assessment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs can visit the website or contact the author of the tool they select. They also may contact their local resource and referral agency or state support team. <p>Who needs to complete the program self-assessment tool?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person(s) who completes the tool must be an administrator of the program or agency or owner of the program or FCC program owner/provider.
<p>Formal Observation: A standardized, written assessment of strengths and areas for improvement.</p>	<p>Create a tracking system to monitor the completion of the formal observations within 30 days of hire and annually thereafter.</p> <p>It is a best practice to complete more than one observation of staff annually. Completing more than one observation may also help a program earn points toward a 4 or 5-star rating.</p> <p>The formal observation must include the observation of staff and may include additional areas to support improvement such as staff interactions with families, or the way that they have arranged learning materials.</p> <p>It is important for the person completing the assessment tool to record the specific observations that the program could use for planning both program improvement and greater support.</p> <p>Family child care providers must use the Administrator CKC Self- Assessment as a formal observation tool. It is best to print it in color for easier scoring.</p> <p>The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01521, "Teacher Observation Form for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," as noted in the standard.</p>	<p>Can I use my classroom self-assessment to meet the formal observation requirements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. A classroom self-assessment may be completed an additional time for each staff member to meet the formal teacher observation requirement. When used for this purpose, the classroom self-assessment must include an observation by the administrator, program owner, or designee. It may not be completed by the individual being observed. <p>Can ODE programs use the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) to meet the formal observation requirements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. ODE programs also may use the walk-through, pre- and post-conference observations. <p>How much evidence should be collected for my formal observations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no rule requirement for documentation other than the formal observation itself. If the FCC program owner employs a lead teacher(s), at least one formal observation for all staff must be completed annually. (2-star) Please note: Extra points for 4 and 5-star ratings may not be requested for two annual formal observations if the program does not employ a lead teacher other than the program owner.

Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) (2 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP): A documented set of goals and action steps to improve the program over time.</p> <p>Goal: A desired outcome.</p> <p>Action Step: A measurable task that leads to an associated goal.</p> <p>SMART Goal: S-Specific M-Measurable A-Attainable R-Realistic T-Timely</p> <div> <p>See the list of SUTQ Required Goals in the “SUTQ Resources” section</p> </div>	<p>Use the prescribed JFS 01509, “Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ).”</p> <p>Action steps must be very specific. For example, an action step to “purchase additional materials” is not acceptable. An action step to “purchase additional dramatic play materials for the toddler room” would meet the requirements.</p> <p>Reflect on the previous year’s goals to help create new goals for the next year. Think about why a goal was met or not met and if it should be included or adjusted moving forward.</p> <p>Be sure program goals relate to items/ indicators found within the formal observation, program self-assessment tool, or surveys completed by parents, and staff.</p> <p>For family child care providers, goals may be created for the program instead of each individual group, even if there are multiple groups in the home.</p> <p>The CIP is required to be updated annually. Best practice is to use it as a working document and update as needed. It is recommended that the CIP be reviewed at least quarterly or when new formal teacher observations and/or classroom self-assessment tools are completed.</p> <p>Programs can add new goals if previous goals have been completed.</p> <p>Set short- and long-term goals that are realistic and attainable.</p> <p>There may be some areas in which a program cannot improve its score – for example, if a room configuration would be improved by removing a wall, but the program cannot remove the wall. This would not be an achievable goal and should not be included.</p> <p>Provide the annual survey to families in a variety of formats – for example, on paper, verbally and online. Regardless of the format, the survey should be easy to complete.</p>	<p>Who completes the JFS 01509 “Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)” form?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrator or designee. <p>If a goal was not accomplished, can the dates be updated on the current CIP to remove the requirement for a new JFS 01509?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan is required to be updated annually. It may be updated on the previous form. <p>Can ODE programs use the CIP for the district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, as long as the district plan includes goals and improvements for the preschool. <p>How can families be encouraged to complete the survey?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make the survey as easy as possible to complete. Include simple, straightforward questions and multiple formats (printed or online) that are easy to access. <p>Offer an incentive for participating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show families evidence that the survey results are used and affect the program.

Staff Supports & Wage Structure (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Staff Supports: Additional benefits given to staff by the program. Approved SUTQ staff supports may be found in the appendices to OAC rule 5101:2-17-01.</p> <p>T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood® OHIO: A compensation and retention program for child care professionals. For more information, see occr.org/wd/.</p> <p>Planning Time: A time set aside for teachers to complete group activity plans.</p>	<p>Determine which staff are eligible to receive supports.</p> <p>Create a written policy regarding staff supports and wages that also states how this policy is shared with staff.</p> <p>Ensure that your budget can sustain the wage structure and staff supports offered for all identified staff.</p> <p>Research programs in your area to determine what pay rates and staff supports they offer, to help you obtain and retain qualified staff.</p> <p>If your program is part of a larger organization, determine whether the organization has a standard that you are expected follow.</p> <p>Staff supports and wage supports do not apply to family child care providers.</p>	<p>If staff supports are available only to full-time staff, does that meet the requirement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, the requirement is for programs to have a staff support policy. Programs are responsible for selecting who may receive supports. <p>What if my program does not have both full- and part-time staff?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A program does not have to have a wage structure for a category of workers it does not employ. However, its written policy must state the types of staff it employs and include a wage structure for those staff.

Professional Development Plan

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Professional Development Plan: A written statement of the goals, action steps and outcomes for advancing a staff member's learning.</p> <p>Goal: A desired outcome.</p> <p>Action Step: A measurable task that leads to an associated goal.</p> <p>SMART Goal: S-Specific M-Measurable A-Attainable R-Realistic T-Timely</p>	<p>Employees should be involved in creating their own professional development plans, which are updated annually.</p> <p>Use formal observations, classroom self-assessments, program assessments, and a consideration of the individual teacher's interests and needs when creating a plan.</p> <p>Professional development can be more than attending a training. It can include job shadowing, visiting programs, joining a professional organization and/or obtaining additional education.</p> <p>Consider including trainings outside the individual's specialization area if that might be helpful. For example, a training about preschool transitions may be helpful for a toddler teacher who has children approaching preschool age.</p> <p>A goal must be more specific than the general SUTQ requirements. For example, a goal that states "complete the two required courses and obtain an additional 15 hours of professional development during the biennium" would not be accepted.</p> <p>Use professional development plans as working documents that can be updated/adjusted at any time but must be created within 30 days of hire.</p> <p>Revisit the professional development plan if the individual's role has changed.</p> <p>The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01587, "Professional Development Plan for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," as noted in the standard.</p>	<p>What if no training meets my goal/age group/specialization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff should plan far enough in advance to have a better chance at finding professional development opportunities that are applicable to their work and goals. <p>Do the professional development plans need to address the requirements needed to achieve the PD Certificate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While it is a best practice to use the professional development plan to address training requirements that will help an individual earn their professional development certificate, it is not required. The plan may be used to address any performance goals that support the individual's learning. <p>Can ODE programs use the OTES to meet professional development plan requirements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A growth plan can be used as a professional development plan if it includes details about planned professional development. However, growth plans typically include only goals set because of the self-assessment. This would not be accepted. <p>Do floaters, paraprofessionals, part-time aides or individual aides need professional development plans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, unless they are used in a lead or assistant teacher capacity for more than 90 consecutive days. <p>Do FCC residents, employees, and substitute child care staff members need professional development plans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, only lead teachers and child care staff members serving in a SUTQ role are required to complete professional development plans.



Staff Qualifications and Professional Development Domain

Children's learning and development are greatly influenced by the educational qualifications and experience of their teachers. Ongoing professional development gives teachers the opportunity to increase their knowledge of current best practices while building on experience. Sub-domains in the Staff Qualifications and Professional Development domain include Staff Education and Professional Development.

Staff Education Sub-Domain

The Staff Education sub-domain includes education-level requirements for administrators, lead teachers, assistant teachers and family child care home providers. Education requirements may be met with Career Pathways Levels calculated by the Ohio Professional Registry.

- Staff Education

Professional Development Sub-Domain

The Professional Development sub-domain includes professional development requirements for administrators, lead teachers, assistant teachers and family child care home providers, all of whom must obtain a professional development certificate each biennium.

- Professional Development
- Ohio Professional Registry

Staff Education (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Child Development Associate Credential (CDA): The Council for Professional Recognition issues this nationally recognized credential based on a core set of competency standards to guide early care and education professionals toward becoming qualified teachers of young children.</p> <p>Minimum Instruction Time: The definition for minimum instruction time can be found in the appendices to OAC rule 5101:2-17-01.</p> <p>SUTQ Professional: A lead or assistant teacher, administrator, or family child care home provider.</p> <p>Career Pathways Level (CPL): A measure of an individual's formal education, credentials, certificates, experiences and ongoing professional development, based on data entered in the Ohio Professional Registry.</p>	<p>Encourage staff to seek higher levels of education.</p> <p>If your program has not yet applied for a rating and serves children receiving publicly funded child care, individual staff may be able to participate in the POWER OHIO program and receive monetary stipends to increase their education levels.</p> <p>Individuals in your program may be eligible to participate in T.E.A.C.H., a program that provides scholarships to assist with the cost of attaining a CDA, an associate or bachelor's degree in early childhood education.</p> <p>Ohio offers a free educational resource for programs or groups that only serve school age children. Our School Age Professional Endorsement may be used to meet the administrator and lead teacher education requirement for programs or groups that serve only school age children. You may access the School Age Endorsement on-line modules at occrpa.org.</p> <p>When applying for SUTQ star ratings, use CPLs for staff without related degrees. For more information, contact the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association.</p> <p>When replacing staff, make sure the education levels of the new staff are the same or higher than the education levels of the former staff.</p>	<p>If a staff person who is used to meet SUTQ staff education requirements leaves my program, do I have to report it to ODJFS/ODE?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. However, the education level of staff must be maintained to remain qualified for the star level awarded. Please note: Programs are required to report administrator changes to meet licensing requirements. <p>What happens if I lose a staff member during the verification process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A deferral will be awarded so you can replace qualified staff needed for the rating. <p>What if a substitute is filling in for a lead or assistant teacher for longer than 90 days?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If subbing for longer than 90 days, the substitute becomes the lead or assistant teacher and must meet all the requirements for that role. <p>What if my college degree is not in Early Childhood Education?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your degree is in a related field such as family studies, human development, or elementary education you may still meet the SUTQ requirement. Please see the definitions in rule 5101:2-17-01 for a complete list of all of the approved related fields.

Ohio Professional Registry (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Ohio Professional Registry (OPR): A centralized information system for early childhood and after-school professionals.</p> <p>Organization Dashboard: Part of the OPR; contains information related to a child care program, including current and past employees, upcoming trainings, and current enrollment. This is a dashboard that is available to administrator(s) of the program.</p> <p>Ohio Professional Registry Profile (OPR): A profile that must be completed through the OPR for all lead and assistant teachers, including administrator(s) and family child care owners. Registry Profiles must be completed prior to applying for a SUTQ rating.</p> <p>Career Pathways Level (CPL): A measure of an individual's education, credentials, certificates, experiences and ongoing professional development; the OPR calculates CPLs based on entered data.</p> <p>Administrator Credential Level (ACL): A credential awarded through the OPR after completion of the Administrator Core Knowledge and Competencies Training Series. Three ACLs are available.</p> <p>Ohio's School-Age Professional Endorsement: An endorsement awarded through the OPR based on experience and completion of required coursework and professional development course. Assistant Teacher, Lead Teacher and Administrator level endorsements are available.</p> <p>Exemption—Child Development: Signifies that an individual is not required to complete a course because he or she completed a post-secondary course in child development within the past six years and received a grade of C or higher or a passing grade if the course was taken pass/fail.</p> <p>Dual Role: An administrator or teacher who serves in two different capacities at a program. For example, an individual may be the lead teacher and the administrator, or they may be the lead teacher for two part-time sessions. One person may not serve dual roles at two different programs.</p> <p>College Transcripts: Official record of completed coursework. Official transcripts are the only acceptable forms of verification for the completion of college coursework.</p>	<p>Staff must manage their own profiles in the OPR.</p> <p>Staff should submit their training documentation directly to the OPR.</p> <p>Staff concerned about the verification timeline should contact the OPR directly.</p> <p>Administrators should create a system to regularly manage their program's dashboard in the OPR.</p>	<p>Who do I contact for assistance with the OPR?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association at (877) 547-6978 or support@occrra.org.

Professional Development (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Biennium: A specified two-year period.</p> <p>Professional Development (PD) Certificate: A certificate that must be obtained by all administrators, lead teachers, assistant teachers and family child care providers each biennium, after completing 20 hours of qualifying professional development. This must include the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ohio's Overview of Child Development: This three-hour course explores the basics of child development and explains how to use that knowledge to provide quality care for children. Ohio's Approach to Quality: This two-hour course explores the basics of SUTQ and what it means for classroom staff and administrators. Participants gain a better understanding of the purpose behind SUTQ and how their actions affect the quality of care. <p>Ohio Approved: Signifies acceptance by SUTQ, the ODE Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, and the Ohio Department of Health's Help Me Grow program.</p> <p>Any post-secondary child development course completed (with a grade of C or better or a passing grade from a pass/fail course) within the previous six years from an accredited institution of higher education is to count toward the Ohio's Overview of Child Development regardless of degree. Documentation of the course is to be submitted to the OPR no later than 60 days prior to the end of the biennium.</p> <p>Clock hour: 60 minutes</p>	<p>As part of the hiring process, request information about the status of a candidate's PD certificate.</p> <p>Ask candidates to bring a printed copy of their OPR profile to their interview.</p> <p>Schedule PD early in the biennium to allow time to reschedule courses due to unforeseen circumstances.</p> <p>If a staff member has planned leave, ensure that PD is completed prior to the leave period, if possible.</p> <p>Encourage staff to complete at least 10 hours of PD each year.</p> <p>Take PD courses that meet both SUTQ and licensing requirements.</p> <p>If an individual is taking CDA courses, Ohio Approved courses may count toward their PD requirement.</p> <p>Administrators can allow staff members to choose their PD but should ensure that it applies to their position.</p> <p>Include staff in the planning and execution of their PD.</p> <p>Staff must manage their own profiles in the OPR.</p> <p>The standard requires that the program is to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01587 "Professional Development Plan", as noted in the standard.</p> <p>All PD hours used to earn extra SUTQ points must be obtained prior to the registration date. (4 and 5-stars)</p>	<p>Are staff members on leave required to complete professional development during that time?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone serving in a role that requires SUTQ professional development is required to obtain a professional development certificate regardless of attendance or work schedules. <p>What if I hire someone that is employed at more than one program during the biennium?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The earliest hire date shall be used for determining the required number of hours for their PD certificate. <p>What if I hire someone during the biennium?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The individual must follow the proration schedule for the quarter in which they were hired. Proration schedule here If there are additional staff in a program, what are their requirements? There are no requirements for professional development for staff who are not serving in a role that is identified in the appendices to OAC rule 5101:2-17-01. <p>What are the PD requirements for an initial registration?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no requirements for professional development hours prior to submitting a registration



Family and Community Partnerships Domain

Programs that provide a strong foundation of community resources, promote the family's role as the child's first educator, and acknowledge and value all types of diversity will provide a well-rounded experience for children. The Family and Community Partnership domain focuses not only on children's well-being, but also on families and communities. Sub-domains are Transitions and Communication/Engagement.

Ohio's Family Engagement Goals:

- For programs to communicate clearly and regularly with families
- Assist families to access available resources within the community
- Guide families to have positive interactions with their children

The Administration for Children and Families defines Family Engagement as an interactive process through which early childhood education (ECE) programs and other ECE providers and professionals, family members, and their children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. Building and maintaining these relationships is a shared responsibility of families and professionals that require mutual respect for the role and strengths each has to offer. Family Engagement means doing with, not doing to or for, families.

At the program level, Family Engagement involves parents' engagement with their children and with programs as they work together toward the goals that families choose for themselves and their children. At state systems levels, ECE leaders partner with parent leaders and programs to promote family well-being, positive parent-child relationships, and ongoing learning and development for programs and families. At both the program and state systems levels, ECE programs work together with families, other professionals, and community partners in ways that promote equity, inclusiveness, and cultural and linguistic responsiveness.

Community Engagement refers to the mutually respectful, strengths-based interactions of ECE staff and families with community members and agencies at all levels. These partnerships support parents' roles as valued community members and their progress toward their goals for themselves and their children.

Community partners provide tangible child development supports and resources that families and staff want and need. They can work with families and ECE staff toward such goals. These include parents' educational advancement, economic mobility, and other aspects of family well-being. ECE staff actively seek out and respond to community voices, strengths, and needs. They collaborate with families, community members, and other local agencies to identify common goals, align resources, and share data for continuous improvement and effective partnerships.

Transitions Sub-Domain

The Transitions sub-domain promotes effective communication and activities to prepare children and families for transitions into and out of a program and—for programs that serve more than one group of children—transitions within the program.

- Children's Records Transferred
- Transition Plan

Communication and Engagement Sub-Domain

The Communication and Engagement sub-domain encourages programs to reach out to families and community members to seek information that will benefit not only the child, but the family and community. Effective communication, whether written or electronic, must be used to identify opportunities for the families and the program to work collaboratively and to effectively use the resources around them.

- Communication
- Health Screening
- Community Engagement/Parent Resources

Child's Records Transferred (2 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Child's Records: All documentation maintained by the program related to the child's education and development. This does not include attendance or payment records.</p>	<p>Ensure that written parent consent has been provided prior to transferring child records to another program.</p> <p>Store records alphabetically by child so documents are easy to find when needed. Written consent is not required to transfer a child's file within the same agency or program.</p> <p>Organize each child's records chronologically to show progression.</p> <p>Offer to communicate with the new program if the family desires assistance with the child's transition.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01369, "Records Transfer Policy/Request for Two- to Five-Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used by the program to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires that the program is to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01369.</p>	<p>Can my program have a policy that we do not transfer files to another program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, however, this will meet only a one-star requirement. Standards for two stars and above require the transfer of files to other programs. <p>How long is the program required to maintain files after a child has left?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no rule requirement for maintaining SUTQ documents after the child has left the program, but programs must be able to show that they have met licensing requirements. Best practice is to maintain files for at least a year after a child leaves the program.

Transition Plan (All Ratings)		
Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Transition: A child moving from one group or room to another or to a new educational setting.</p> <p>Transition Plan: A document that outlines what steps will be taken to prepare a child and family for a new group or setting</p>	<p>Provide clear communication through the program's parent handbook on how and when transitions occur and how best to support the child.</p> <p>Provide families with activities to help their children transition successfully. This will not only help the child, but also strengthen the family's connection to the program and increase their involvement in their child's learning.</p> <p>Be flexible with the transition plan, based on the child's needs. Staff should observe how well the child is adapting and modify the transition plan with input from the family, if necessary.</p> <p>Communicate with families and staff prior to the transition and schedule a meeting or tour of the new classroom/FCC home, with teachers present if possible.</p> <p>Provide the schedule and classroom/FCC home activities to the family prior to the transition.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01363, "Written Transition Information for One- to Five- Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the JFS sample 01363.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01368, "Sample Transition Activities for Two- to Five-Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the JFS sample 01368.</p> <p>The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01373, "Transition Plan for Three- to Five-Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)."</p> <p>The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01381, "Program Transition Policies for Four- to Five-Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," as noted in the standard.</p>	<p>Can my transition plan be the same for all children? (3-star and above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. The base plan may be the same, but it must be individualized based on each child's needs, temperaments and personality. It should also take parent preferences into consideration. <p>How do I transition children that do not give notice prior to leaving the program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child leaves the program without notice, the program is not expected to provide a transition out of the program. <p>Do transitions apply to family child care settings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes. Transitions into and out of the program. <p>How do transitions apply to school-age children?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitions for school-age children are required in the same manner as all other children. <p>How do transitions apply to programs that close for the summer?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs that do not operate all year must have a transition plan each year for children who are not planning to return the following year. If children do not transition between groups during the year, there would be no transition during the year.

Communication (All Ratings)		
Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
Two-way communication: When both the program and family share information.	<p>Communication Methods (2 star and above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give families information about resources and community services in the program's parent handbook, on its Facebook page and on the program website. Please note: You must have written parent permission before posting photos of children or information about them. • Inform families about all the ways communication is distributed so they can identify the best way to exchange communication. • Programs may meet this requirement with parent-teacher conferences, electronic notification systems or daily information sheets. At least one of these methods must promote two-way communication. 	<p>What if a program offers parent-teacher conferences as a two-way communication and parents decline?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program would meet the requirement by offering the conferences. The program may wish to obtain a parent's signature when families decline and may also consider scheduling a conference via telephone if a parent is not available to meet in person.

Health Screening (2 Star and Above)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Health Screening: A medical evaluation to identify potential health issues.</p> <p>Comprehensive Health Screening: A medical evaluation that includes checks of blood lead and hemoglobin levels, as well as vision, dental, height, weight and hearing.</p>	<p>If a program chooses to provide health screenings, they should be completed at the time of enrollment.</p> <p>If a program chooses not to provide health screenings, the program must give families information on the importance of health screenings and available community resources for families to obtain the screenings.</p> <p>A best practice is to give families a list of community referrals, e.g. a list of health screenings which might include websites that have comprehensive, reliable health information, such as cdc.gov or KidsHealth.org.</p> <p>Work with local organizations to offer health screenings at the program.</p> <p>Partner with an organization to host a health fair.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01379, "Health Screening Process for Three- to Five-Star Ratings for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01379.</p>	<p>Does the program have to offer to do the screenings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. The program is required to provide information and resources. <p>Does the program have to make the families complete health screenings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. The program cannot require families to complete health screenings. <p>Will my rating be impacted if a family doesn't complete the medical screening?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. The program is responsible only for providing information, not for whether families choose to participate.

Community Engagement / Parent Resources (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
<p>Family Engagement Model: A planned, ongoing partnership between families and programs.</p> <p>Educational Training: An event organized by a program to teach families about children's learning and development.</p> <p>Community Resource: Any organization or service available to support families and/or children.</p> <p>Community Partner: A local, state, national, international, public, community-based, public or private organization or individual that works with the program.</p>	<p>Give families information about "211," a free, confidential phone number that can connect them to local health and human services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Families can call the number for referrals to local food pantries, employment and training services, support groups, resources for aging parents, addiction services, or many other services.</p> <p>Make sure all engagement/educational activities address all age groups. (2-star and above)</p> <p>Host a celebration that involves community members and families to showcase accomplishments. (2-star and above)</p> <p>Research topics and presenters that may interest families or meet a program need. (3-star and above)</p> <p>Continued..</p>	<p>What kind of resources should be provided to families?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any resources that are available and that may benefit families. Examples may include physicians, food pantries, public service agencies, career exploration agencies or organizations, job placement organizations, parent education classes, GED courses, etc. <p>What if my program's family engagement activity (2-star and above), or educational training (3-star and above) are not well attended?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program should be conscientious of offering activities at times that families can participate. The program may offer activities on a small group basis or one on one to meet the needs of their families, if the activities are offered to all age groups and all families. <p>In addition to the items required by rule, what else should my family engagement model include? (4 and 5-star)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of the program—for example, to model positive adult-child interactions. The model's goals—for example, to strengthen parenting skills. The model's planning strategies—for example, setting goals for family interactions for the next year. The program's administrative practices—for example, how it communicates and interacts with families. Professional development the program offers—for example, trainings that educate staff about interacting and communicating with families. <p>Can Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programs be a family engagement activity or educational workshop? (3-star and above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, PBIS is considered an educational workshop. <p>How many community partners must the program have on file? (4 and 5-star)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two. <p>Continued..</p>

Community Engagement / Parent Resources (All Ratings)

Key Terms	Tips	Frequently Asked Questions
	<p>Continued..</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01382, "Parent Volunteer Group for Four- to Five-Star Ratings for SUTQ," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01382.</p> <p>Sample technical assistance form JFS 01515, "Community Partners Agreement for SUTQ," can be used to better understand and/or show implementation of the requirement. The standard requires programs to maintain documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or the sample JFS 01515.</p>	<p>Continued..</p> <p>What information should I consider when developing a family engagement model? (4 and 5-star)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program's philosophy • Families' diverse structures and cultures • Strategies to facilitate relationships with and within families, support the strengthening of parenting skills, value the role of families, and provide connections to resources for families • Plan for engaging families over time • Measurable goals • Planning, administrative and professional development supports to make sure goals are implemented • Evaluate progress toward achieving goals • Are the goals measurable? • What observations were made during a family engagement activity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What were participants' responses to the activity? ○ Has there been progress over time? ○ How interested are families in engagement? ○ How does the program gather feedback from parents and staff on family engagement activities?



SUTQ Resources

These lists of screening and assessment tools are not intended to be inclusive of all tools and instruments that programs can choose to use, but rather are meant to give an overview of tools and resources commonly used in the field. The tools are reflective of tools that are developmentally appropriate for a wide range of ages and program types.

Early Childhood Screening Tools (Lists A, B and C)

The following lists are commonly used screening tools. The tools in list A are comprehensive and screen multi-domains. The tools in lists B and C are not comprehensive but using a tool from both list B and list C results in a comprehensive screening that will meet Step Up To Quality requirements.

Early Childhood Screening Tools					
List A – Comprehensive Tools					
Screening Tool / Age Range	Domains	Time per child	Training Type	Training Details	SUTQ Training Recommendation
<i>Ages & Stages Questionnaires, 3rd Ed. (ASQ-3)</i> Ages: 1-66 months	Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving, Personal-Social	10-15 min.	Self-Study or Formal	DVD training; In-person workshops including “train-the-trainer” workshops (Trainers Toolkit and online training options are in development)	Documentation of study group review of manual and DVD training OR Attend an in-person training led by a trainer who has completed the ASQ train-the-trainer workshop
<i>Battelle Developmental Inventory: Screening, 2nd Ed. (BDI-2)</i> Ages: Birth – 7 years, 11 months	Personal-Social, Adaptive, Motor, Communication, and Cognitive Ability	10-30 min.	Self-Study if pre-req. met or Formal	In-person training available	Documentation of study group review of manual AND meet pre-requisite ¹ OR Attend an in-person training by publisher
<i>Brigance Early Childhood Screens-III (0-35 months, 3-5 years, K&1)</i> Ages: 0-35 months, 3-5 years, K – 1st grade	Physical Development, Language, Academic/ Cognitive, Self-Help, and Social-Emotional Skills	10-15 min.	Online Self-Study or Formal	In-person training available Free Webinars	Documentation of completed webinar modules AND group review of manual OR Attend an in-person training by publisher

Child Development Review Parent Questionnaire (CDR-PQ) Ages: 18 months - Kindergarten	Social, Self Help, Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills and Language	5 min.	Self-Study	Instructions in manual	Documentation of study group review of manual
Denver-II Ages: Birth - 6 years	Personal Social, Fine Motor, Adaptive, Language, and Gross Motor	10-20 min.	Self-Study or Formal	Instructions for scoring and interpreting included w/ questionnaires; Training DVD/ VHS; Master Instructor Training	Documentation of study group review of manual and DVD/video training OR Attend an in-person training led by a trainer who has completed the Master Instructor training OR Attend an in-person training by publisher
Developmental Indicators for Assessment of Learning – 4th Ed. (DIAL-4) Ages: 2 years, 6 months – 5 years, 11 months	Motor, Concepts, Language, Self-Help, and Social Development	30-45 min.	Online Self-Study if pre-req. met or Formal	Free series of 8 online modules (Brainshark)	Documentation of completed all 8 online modules AND meet pre-requisite ³ OR Documentation of completed Training Packet and group review of Training DVD AND meet pre-requisite
Screening Tool / Age Range	Domains	Time per child	Training Type	Training Details	SUTQ Training Recommendation
Infant Development Inventory (IDI) Ages: Birth-18 months	Social, Self-Help, Gross Motor, Fine Motor and Language	10 min.	Self-Study	Instructions are included in the required Child Development Review Manual	Documentation of study group review of manual
Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS) Ages: Birth – 8 years	Cognitive, Language, Motor, Preacademic/ academic, Self Help, Behavior	5 min.	Self-Study	Online case studies, PowerPoint slide shows, and additional downloadable training material available online	Documentation of study group review of manual and all relevant online training resources (i.e. users of PEDS online must watch the “PEDS Online Implementation” video, but paper users do not)
Social Skills Improvement System- Performance Screening Guide Ages: 3 - 18 years	Prosocial Behaviors, Motivation to Learn, Reading Skills, and Math Skills	5-10 min.	Self-Study	None	Documentation of meeting the pre-requisite training ²

List B – Social Emotional Screening Tools					
Screening Tool / Age Range	Domains	Time per child	Training Type	Training Details	SUTQ Training Recommendation
Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE) Ages: 3-66 months	Self-Regulation, Compliance, Communication, Adaptive, Autonomy, Affect, and Interaction with People	10-15 min.	Self-Study or Formal	DVD training; In-person workshops including “train-the-trainer” workshops (Trainers Toolkit and online training options are in development)	Documentation of study group review of manual and DVD training OR Attend an in-person training led by a trainer who has completed the ASQ train-the-trainer workshop
Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Second Edition (DECA-P2) Ages: 2-5 years	Initiative, Self-Control, Attachment, and Behavioral Concerns	5-10 min.	Online Self-Study or Formal	Free archived webinars Interactive Webinars User Guide Regional Training Centers for in-person trainings Mentor training	Documentation of completed relevant webinars AND group review of User Guide OR Attend an in-person training or Interactive webinar training by publisher OR Attend an in-person training by an individual who completed the Mentor training
Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants and Toddlers (DECA-IT) Ages: 1-36 months	Initiative, Attachment/ Relationships, and Self-Regulation (Toddler only)	20 min.	Online Self-Study or Formal	Free archived webinars Interactive Webinars User Guide Regional Training Centers for in-person trainings Mentor training	Documentation of completed relevant webinars AND group review of User Guide OR Attend an in-person training or Interactive webinar training by publisher OR Attend an in-person training by an individual who completed the Mentor training

List C – Non-Comprehensive, Multi-Domain Screening Tools

Screening Tool / Age Range	Domains	Time per child	Training Type	Training Details	SUTQ Training Recommendation
Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development: 3rd Ed. (Bayley-III) Screening Test Ages: 1 – 42 months	Cognitive, Language, Motor	15-25 min.	Self-Study if pre-req. met or Formal	Online presentation available (Brainshark)	Documentation of completed online presentations AND group review of manual AND meet pre-requisite ² OR Attend an in-person training by publisher
Early Screening Inventory – Revised (ESI-R) 2008 Edition Ages: 3 years to 5 years, 11 months	Visual Motor/ Adaptive, Language and Cognition, and Gross Motor Skills	15-20 min.	Self-Study	Trainer's Manual Training DVD Examiner's Manual	Documentation of study group review of manual and training DVD OR Documentation of qualified, trainer-led review of manual and training DVD

Prerequisite training requirements:

1. College-level training in general measurement and statistical concepts essential for interpreting test results for different audiences AND child development.
2. A master's degree in psychology, education, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, social work, or in a field closely related to the intended use of the assessment, and formal training in the ethical administration, scoring, and interpretation of clinical assessments. OR Formal supervised mental health, speech/language, and/or educational training specific to working with parents and assessing children, or formal supervised training in infant and child development.
3. At least a sixth-grade reading level AND At least one year of teaching experience.

Definitions:

Self-Study – Learn to use the tool by reading the manual, completing one or more online modules that do not provide a certificate of completion/competency, and/or watching a training video.

Formal – Learn to use the tool by completing a face-to-face course or online course that results in a certificate of completion/competency.

Commonly Used Child-Assessment Tools

Commonly Used Child Assessment Tools					
	Aligned to Early Learning and Development Standards	Infant Toddler	Preschool	School Age	Family Child Care
Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS) for Infants and Children	X	X	X		
Battelle Developmental Inventory (Need to complete the full child assessment)		X	X	K-2	
Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development-Second Edition (IED-II)		X	X	K-2	
Core Knowledge Preschool Assessment Tool (CK-PAT)			X		
Galileo Pre-K Online System for the Electronic Management of Learning			X		
Get It, Got It, Go! (no longer a required tool for ODE, can be used to assess language/literacy, but must be used in conjunction with another tool to complete a comprehensive assessment)			X		
HELP 0-3		X			
HELP for Preschoolers			X		
High Scope COR for Infant and Toddlers	X	X			X
High Scope Preschool COR	X		X		X
Other – Standardized child assessment tools that are a component of the curriculum and appropriate to the age of the children served in the classroom (Kindercare, Goddard, etc)		X	X	X	X
Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment System	X	X	X	K-3	X
The Ounce Scale		Infants			
The Work Sampling System			X	X	X
Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment		X	X	K	
Redleaf Family Child Care Curriculum Developmental Assessment					X

Commonly Used Classroom Self-Assessment Tools

Commonly Used Classroom Self-Assessment Tools

The following is a list of commonly used classroom self-assessment tools.

- CLASS—Classroom Assessment Scoring System—3 versions: CLASS Toddler (15–36 months), CLASS Pre-K (3–5 years), CLASS K to 3, (tool will be accepted as meeting the classroom self-assessment requirement. However, it must be completed by a designated individual within the program, other than the classroom teacher being observed.)
- ECERS-R—Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised (2–5 years)
- ELLCO—Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation—2 versions: ELLCO Pre-K (3–5 years) and ELLCO K-3
- ITERS-R—Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale Revised (infants–30 months)
- NAEYC—National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation Observation Criteria Tool (valid for year completed)
- NAC—National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (valid for year completed)
- PQA—High Scope Program Quality Assessment—2 versions: Infant/Toddler (0–3 years) and Preschool (3–5 years)
- SACERS—School Age Care Environment Rating Scale
- Teaching Strategies Gold Fidelity Tool
- Other—Standardized classroom assessment tools that are a component of the curriculum and appropriate to the age of the children served in the classroom.

The following classroom self-assessment tools that are specific to family child care (Type A and Type B).

- CHELLO—Child Home Early Language and Literacy Observation
- FCCERS-R—Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale Revised
- NAFCC—National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation Materials

When selecting a tool, the program should take into consideration how they will use the tool, and whether it will give them an accurate measure of the program's strengths and weaknesses, as well as provide useful information in the identification and development of realistic and attainable goals for continuous improvement.

Commonly Used Program Self-Assessment Tools

Commonly Used Program Self-Assessment Tools

The following is a list of commonly used program self-assessment tools.

- Head Start Annual Program Assessment (valid for year completed)
- NAC—National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (valid for year completed)
- NAEYC Program Self-Study (valid for year completed)
- PAS—Program Administration Scale - For centers ONLY
- QSAT—Quality Self-Assessment Tool for Ohio's Afterschool Programs
- Other—Program assessment tools that are a component of the program's identified curriculum.

The following self-assessment tools are specific to family child care (Type A and Type B).

- BAS—Business Administration Scale
- NAFCC—National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation materials

When selecting a tool, the program must assure that it meets the rule requirement for assessing the following program elements:

- human resource leadership and development
- family and community partnerships
- program development and evaluation
- business and operations management

SUTQ Required Program Goals

SUTQ Required Goals for Programs			
Goals	Brief Description	Rating	Frequency
Professional Development Plan	A document used to identify professional development goals for administrators, lead and assistant teachers, and family child care owners.	1 star and above	Annually
Continuous Improvement Plan	A document used to identify goals and action steps for the program based on the program self-assessment.	2 star and above	Annually
Classroom Goals	A document used to identify goals and action steps for the program based on the program self-assessment.	3 star and above	Annually
Child Educational and Developmental Goals	A document to record goals for the child created collaboratively between the program and the child's family. Screening result, and curriculum or assessment goals may also be considered and included.	3 star and above	Annually

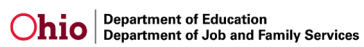
SUTQ Screenings and Assessments Summary

SUTQ Screenings and Assessments			
Screening	Brief Description	Rating	Frequency
Comprehensive Developmental Screening	Completed evaluation of child development compared to developmental norms.	3-star and above	Annually
Health Screening	Medical evaluation to identify potential health issues; written information must be provided to families about health screenings offered at the program or in the community.	3-star and above	Annually
Assessment	Brief Description	Rating	Frequency
Program Self-Assessment	An assessment of the program's administrative practices.	1-star and above	Annually
Classroom Self-Assessment (For Family Child Care, this is an Environment Self-Assessment)	Completed assessment of staff/child interactions and the program environment.	2-star and above	Annually
State-required Assessment Early Learning Assessment (ELA)	Formal child assessment required for preschool-age children.	3-star and above	The required timeline can be found here: education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Kindergarten/Early-Learning-Assessment/Early-Learning-Assessment-for-Programs-1#Rollout%20and%20Timeline
Informal Assessment	An assessment in which program staff and sometimes parents provide evidence of a child's progress; may include pictures, work products or anecdotal notes.	3-star and above	Ongoing
Formal Assessment	An assessment in which staff use the informal assessment materials to complete a standardized tool.	3-star and above	Determined by the publisher of the assessment tool
Ongoing Child Assessment	A continuous cycle of formal and informal child assessment.	3-star and above	Ongoing

SUTQ Approved Accrediting Bodies

A list of the approved accrediting bodies for programs who wish to utilize accreditation for optional extra points when registering for a 4- or 5- star rating can be found at: jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/docs/ApprovedAccreditingBodies.stm.

If an accrediting body is removed from this list, the programs accredited by that body will maintain their optional accreditation points until the program receives their next SUTQ visit or review after their accreditation has expired.



Mike DeWine, Governor
State of Ohio

Matt Damschroder, Director
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

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