

KENTUCKY STARS FOR KIDS NOW PROCESS EVALUATION

Evaluation Brief #6

Alternative Rating Structures for Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW

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The Process Evaluation of Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW was initiated by the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services, Division of Child Care to provide an examination and assessment of existing STARS components and to provide a basis for recommendations to improve STARS implementation statewide.

Kentucky is unique nationally in its investment in a process evaluation to address a set of comprehensive questions about the functioning of its QRIS after operating for over a decade.

The Evaluation questions and activities focused on five broad, interrelated components of STARS:

- The quality standards and measurement strategies
- The rating structure and process for assigning STARS levels
- The technical assistance provided to promote improvement
- The outreach methods to promote STARS to providers and to parents
- The collaboration, coordination, and administrative processes most supportive for STARS.

The Evaluation was conducted by Child Trends, a nonpartisan research organization located in Washington DC. The Evaluation was supported by funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department of Community Based Services, Division of Child Care.

A series of Evaluation Briefs were created to provide summaries of the key findings. These Briefs include:

- [Executive Summary of the Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW Process Evaluation](#)
- [Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW Process Evaluation: Overview of Methods](#)
- [Providers' Perceptions of the Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW Rating Process](#)
- [Technical Assistance Provided to and Received by Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW Programs](#)
- [Collaboration and Coordination in the Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW Technical Assistance System](#)
- [Alternative Rating Structures for Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW](#)
- [Evaluation of Kentucky's Child Care Resource and Referral System](#)
- [Findings from the Kentucky Early Care and Education and School-Age Care Household Survey](#)

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ALTERNATIVE RATING STRUCTURES FOR KENTUCKY STARS FOR KIDS NOW

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the work presented in this Evaluation Brief is to inform a discussion of alternative rating structures for Kentucky STARS for KIDS Now. To accomplish this goal, we will discuss, model and analyze alternative rating structures. First, the Brief provides a theoretical review of possible rating structures. Second, data from child care facilities currently participating in STARS are used to predict how facilities might score in alternative rating structures. Finally, the “results” of the alternative rating structures are compared to each another and to the current rating structure.

As a preview of the key findings of the Brief, we highlight the following points about the four alternative models presented:

- Model 1 is an example of a points system, constructed using the current STARS standards. We find that using the same standards in a different structure, programs score much higher in a points system than in a block system.
- Model 2 is an example of a hybrid system, where categories are designed as a block system and overall STARS ratings are assigned based upon point Levels. In this model, facilities must achieve lower Level standards within a category before moving to higher-Level standards. We find that facilities again score higher in a hybrid system than in a block system.
- Model 3 is another example of a hybrid system, where Levels 1 and 2 are block systems and Levels 3 and 4 are assigned based upon earning points for higher-Level requirements. Facilities score higher in this hybrid than they did in the current STARS structure, with the exception of Level 1 programs which were not able to move past Level 1.
- Model 4 is designed the same way as Model 3 with the addition of several new indicators. Facilities do not score as highly as they did with Model 3. Adding new quality indicators presents a challenge for some programs but not for others who report that they already meet the higher standards.
- By modeling different STARS ratings structures, we find that facilities are meeting grid requirements above their current grid Level. Facilities score better when given the opportunity to get credit for higher-Level indicators without having first to complete all lower-Level indicators.

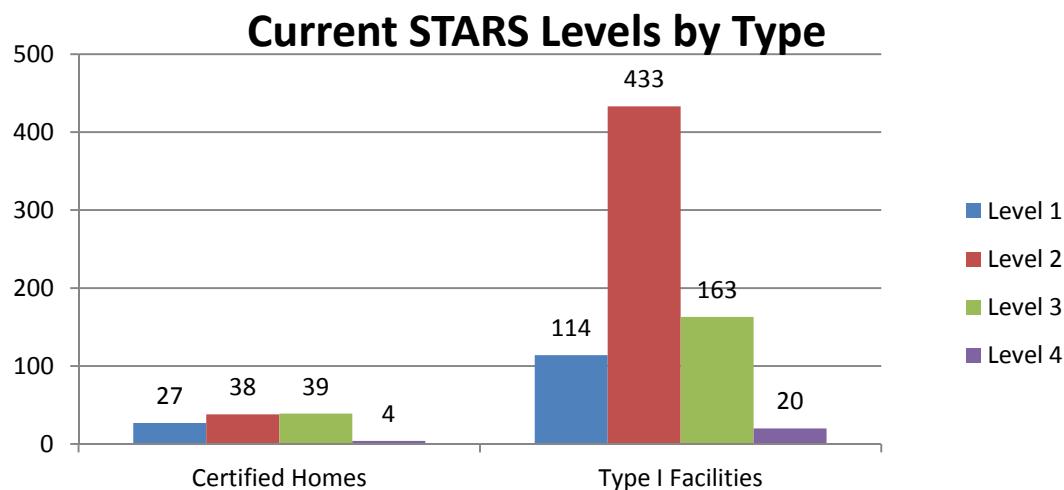
BACKGROUND

The designs or rating structures used in QRIS typically use one of three approaches: building blocks, points, or some combination of the two. In a building block design, all of the standards in one Level must be met before moving on to the next higher Level. In a points system, points are earned for each standard and are then added together so that each rating Level represents a range of possible total scores (Tout, Starr, Soli, Moodie, Kirby, & Boller, 2010). In the QRIS Compendium which reviewed 26 QRIS, twelve used building blocks, and seven used points. Five QRISs used a combination or hybrid approach which incorporates elements of both blocks and points. The Compendium found that QRIS with a building blocks system or combination system were more likely to have a higher proportion of child care facilities rated at the lower Levels of the scale. It appears that a building block system provides a higher threshold for receiving a rating at the top one or two Levels of the QRIS (Tout et al., 2010).

Kentucky STARS for KIDS NOW currently uses a building block structure. Consistent with the analyses presented in the QRIS Compendium, more Type I Facilities in Kentucky STARS are rated at lower levels than at higher Levels (See Figure 1). The prevalence of programs at the lower levels is not as significant for Certified Homes except when comparing Level 4 providers to those at lower levels.

This Evaluation Brief provides models for how STARS could be restructured as a points system or as a combination system, and provides analysis of how changes in the rating structure would likely impact the distribution of facilities across levels. The models outlined here are based primarily on the current STARS indicators but are also informed by the structure and indicators used in other state QRIS and in the Quality Self Study Crosswalk completed by Child Trends for the process evaluation. These models were designed to demonstrate a range of options for alternative rating structures and prototypes for Kentucky to consider.

Figure 1. Current STARS Levels by Facility Type



DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS OF THE ALTERNATIVE MODELS

In this section, we present four rating structures and an analysis of how programs currently participating in STARS would score in each model.

The data to conduct these analyses were gathered through interviews (see Methods Brief for details). Certified Home (n=25), Type I (n=28) and School-Age Care (SAC; n=9) providers at Levels 1, 2, and 3 were asked whether or not they met individual requirements at the next highest STARS Level. Responses were coded (met, not met) and quantified according to the model specifications described below and in Appendix A.

MODEL 1

Model 1 translates the Kentucky STARS block system into a point system, using Minnesota's QRIS pilot, Parent Aware, as a guide (Minnesota Parent Aware: QRIS Profile, April 2010). Using the existing STARS grid requirements, point values were generally assigned incrementally (e.g., a current Level 3 indicator has a higher point value than a Level 2 indicator). Because so many indicators are currently located in the Curriculum category, that category was split into two categories. A new category, Family Involvement, was created (and also exists in all subsequent models). The points possible in each category and the distribution of points by STARS Level vary slightly by facility type. The number of points assigned to each indicator was determined by the evaluation team for the purpose of modeling alternative rating structures, not as a direct recommendation for STARS.

The Model 1 scoring systems for Type I Facilities and Certified Homes are as follows:

Category	Points Possible for Certified Family Child Care	Points Possible for Type I Facilities
Ratio	6	6
Family Involvement	4	6
Curriculum	9	9
Training	11	12
Personnel	4.5	Not Applicable
Business Practices	Not Applicable	5
TOTAL	34.5	38

See Appendices for Model 1 scoring details by category.

Analysis of Model 1

Ratios. In the Ratio category, most Certified Homes (72%) and most Type I Facilities (61%) received the full 6 points. The majority of Certified Homes (64%) were awarded all of the 4 points possible for the Family Involvement category. Similarly, most Type I Facilities (71%) attained the full 6 points possible. Therefore, participating facilities are meeting the ratio and family-related indicators at all levels of difficulty.

Curriculum. Scores in the Curriculum category (which includes the Environment Rating Scale scores and accreditation) were more broadly distributed. Most facilities (88% of Certified Homes and 79% of Type I Facilities) are not accredited, and therefore could earn at most 4.5 points (out of 9) in this category. Facilities that are accredited tended to also score well on the other Curriculum category requirements, with the result that no facility scored between 4.5 and 8 points.

Training. Scores in the Training category were also broadly distributed. Certified Homes were fairly evenly distributed across the 11 point range. Type I Facilities were also scoring along the 11 point range, with slightly more facilities (36%) scoring at the high end with 10 or more points.

Business Practices. In the Business Practices category, 64% of Certified Homes attained at least 3.5 out of 4.5 possible points.

Personnel. In the Personnel category, 64% of Type I Facilities received 3 points or less out of 5 possible points.

When examining the total points facilities received for Model 1, Certified Homes scored between 6.5 and 32.5 total points and Type I Facilities scored between 5.5 and 38 points. These point ranges were then grouped into the following STARS Levels:

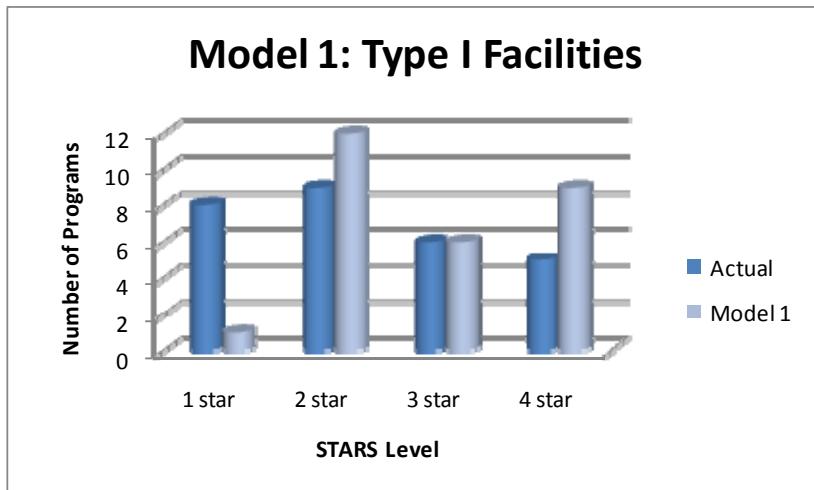
STARS Level	Certified Homes	Type I Facilities
1	3 – 11.9 points	3 – 12.9 points
2	12 – 19.9 points	13 – 20.9 points
3	20 – 27.9 points	21 – 28.9 points
4	28 – 34.5 points	29 – 38 points

Consistent with findings from the QRIS Compendium, facility ratings shifted up to higher STARS Levels when the rating structure was changed from a building blocks structure to a points system. For Certified Homes, just over half the Level 1 facilities moved up to at least Level 2; half the Level 2 facilities moved up to Level 3, and one Level 3 facility moved up to Level 4 (See Figure 2). For Type I Facilities, most Level 1 facilities moved up to at least Level 2; half of Level 2 facilities moved up to Level 3, and two-thirds of Level 3 facilities moved up to Level 4 (See Figure 3).

Figure 2. Hypothetical Model 1 distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for CFCC (n=25)



Figure 3. Hypothetical Model 1 distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for Type I Facilities (n=28)



Summary of Model 1

It is clear that translating Kentucky STARS current block system into a point system results in more facilities receiving higher STARS ratings. Using a points system allows facilities to receive credit for all of the indicators they are meeting across varying levels of quality, even when they may be unable to meet some indicators at lower levels. The flexibility of a points system may be interpreted as a benefit or a drawback. Proponents of a points system might say that a points system allows facilities more individual paths to higher quality, provides incentives for facilities to improve their quality in whatever way they can, and acknowledges the quality practices of facilities even when a facility cannot meet every indicator or chooses not to meet certain indicators. In contrast, proponents of a building block approach might say that a QRIS captures those elements of quality that are not optional, and that in a points system facilities are no longer held accountable for these foundational standards of quality. In response to these divergent opinions, a different rating structure called a “combination” or “hybrid system” has evolved.

MODEL 2

Model 2 is a hybrid system based on Miami-Dade’s Quality Counts (Miami-Dade Quality Counts: QRS Profile, April 2010). This model has category levels designed in a block system and overall STARS Levels designed in a points system. In other words, in each category, a facility must meet all the indicators at Level 3 (and all lower levels) to reach Level 3 in that category. Within this system, for example, a facility can be a Level 1 for Ratios, a Level 3 for Family Involvement, a Level 2 for Curriculum, a Level 2 for Training, and a Level 4 for Personnel. A facility then receives 1 to 4 points for each category, based on the level achieved. These category points are added together to create a total number of points, which is then used to assign that facility an overall STARS Level.

There are two versions of scoring for Model 2—an unweighted version in which all the categories are worth 4 points and a weighted version in which certain categories are worth more than others. Weighting categories is an option for signaling that certain categories may be more critical to overall quality than others. This set of weights is loosely based on the point proportions from Model 1. The varying weights assigned to each category were decided upon by the evaluation team for the purpose of modeling alternative rating structures not as a direct recommendation for STARS.

The Model 2 scoring system is as follows:

Model 2 Unweighted	
Category	Maximum Points (for all facility types)
Ratio	4
Family Involvement	4
Curriculum	4
Training	4
Personnel	4
TOTAL	20

Model 2 Weighted		
Category	Maximum Points for Certified Homes	Maximum Points for Type I Facilities
Ratio	4 x 1.5	4 x 1.5
Family Involvement	4	4 x 1.5
Curriculum	4 x 2.5	4 x 2.5
Training	4 x 3.25	4 x 3.25
Personnel	Not Applicable	4 x 1.25
Business Practices	4 x 1.75	Not Applicable
TOTAL	40	40

See Appendices for scoring details by category for both facility types.

Analysis of Model 2

Ratio. In the Ratio category, the majority of Certified Homes (72%) and Type I Facilities (57%) received 4 stars. Similarly, most Certified Homes (64%) and Type I Facilities (71%) were awarded 4 stars in the Family Involvement category. As in Model 1, these findings suggest that the indicators in these categories are relatively easy for facilities to meet.

Curriculum. In contrast, few facilities received 4 stars in the Curriculum category; 8% of Certified Homes and 18% of Type I Facilities. Again, because very few facilities are accredited, very few are able to reach this highest Level.

Training. Facilities' scores were evenly distributed across levels in the Training category. More Certified Homes (32%) than Type I Facilities (18%) received 4 stars. Centers were prevented from reaching 4 stars because of the indicators that specify requirements for staff (as opposed to indicators concerning the Director's training and credentials). We can hypothesize that the training indicators for Type I Facilities, like "50% of staff having a Commonwealth Child Care Credential" and "a minimum of one CDA or higher in each classroom," are difficult for facilities since they involve multiple staff members' education levels and schedules. Achievement of these indicators is challenged by staff turnover. Homes are less likely to have these challenges in meeting the indicators in the Training category.

Business Practices. Most (60%) Certified Homes received 3 or more stars in the Business Practices category. The remaining Certified Homes (40%) were evenly distributed across 1 and 2 star levels.

Personnel. Over half (54%) of Type I Facilities received 3 or more stars in Personnel. The remaining Type I Facilities (46%) achieved 2 stars in this category.

On average, Certified Homes and Type I Facilities received similar STARS ratings by category in Model 2. Table 1 depicts the average STARS ratings by category for home-based and center-based facilities.

Table 1. Average STARS rating by category for Model 2 (n=53)

Category Stars	Average Stars for Certified Homes	Average Stars for Type I Facilities	Overall Average
Ratio	3.56	3.25	3.37
Family Involvement	3.12	3.36	3.25
Curriculum	2.28	2.39	2.34
Training	2.52	2.36	2.43
Personnel/Business Practices	2.72	2.79	2.75

Combining all of the category totals and using the unweighted scoring system for Model 2, STARSs are awarded using the following scale:

Level	All Facilities
1 STARS	5-7 points
2 STARS	8-12 points
3 STARS	13-17 points
4 STARS	18-20 points

With scoring unweighted and equal across categories, facilities scored much higher in Model 2 than under the current STARS system. For Certified Homes, most Level 1 facilities moved up to Level 2; all Level 2 facilities moved up to at least Level 3; and most Level 3 facilities moved up to Level 4. For Type I Facilities, nearly all Level 1 facilities moved up to at least Level 2; just under half of the Level 2 facilities moved up to a Level 3; and one Level 3 facility moved up to a Level 4.

As mentioned earlier, another option is to weight the quality categories as a signal of their priority. In the weighted version of Model 2, total points ranged from 11.5-40 for Certified Homes and 12.75-40 for Type I Facilities. These points were then divided into STARS Levels using the following scales (see the next page):

Level	Certified Homes	Type I Facilities
1 star	7 – 10.9 points	8 – 14.9 points
2 star	11 – 20.9 points	15 – 24.9 points
3 star	21 – 30.9 points	25 – 33.9 points
4 star	31 – 40 points	34 – 40 points

Again, the weighted Model 2 results show that several facilities shifted up in the STARS system. For Certified Homes, less than half of Level 1 facilities moved up to a Level 2; all but one Level 2 facilities moved up to at least Level 3; and all but one Level 3 facilities moved up to Level 4 (See Figure 4). For Type I Facilities, most Level 1 facilities moved up to Level 2; less than a quarter of Level 2 facilities moved up to Level 3; and one facility at Level 3 moved up to Level 4 (See Figure 5).

Figure 4. Hypothetical Model 2 (unweighted and weighted) distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for CFCC (n=25)

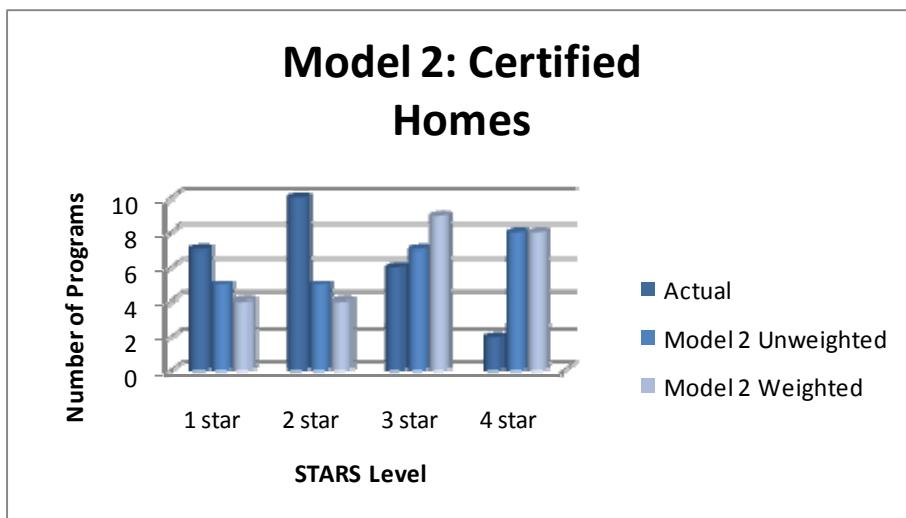
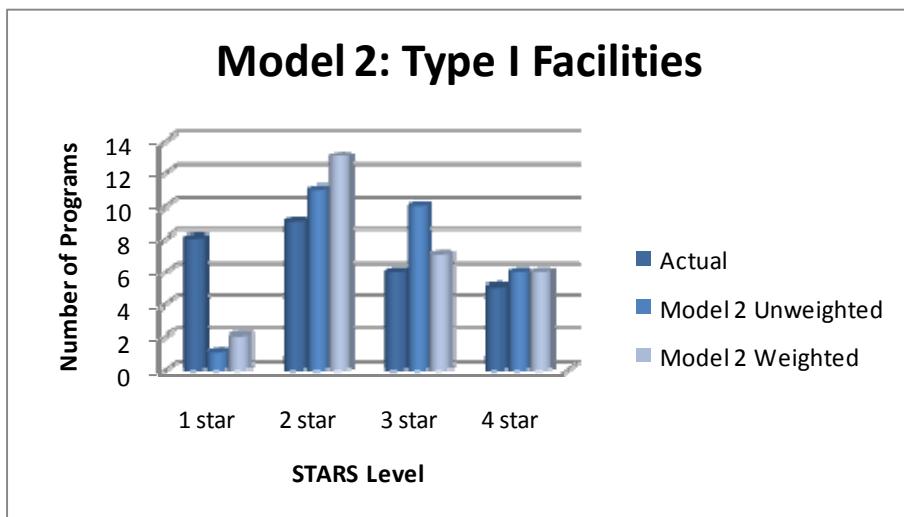


Figure 5. Hypothetical Model 2 (unweighted and weighted) distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for Type I Facilities (n=28)



Summary of Model 2

As in Model 1, facilities are earning higher scores in Model 2 than they do in the current STARS system. Results vary significantly, however, between the weighted and unweighted versions of Model 2. Certified Homes are receiving higher ratings in the weighted system, while Type I Facilities are receiving higher ratings in unweighted system. In other words, Type I Facilities are scoring better when all categories are given equal weight. This indicates that the categories assigned higher weights in the weighted version (such as Training) are more challenging for these facilities. In contrast, the finding that Certified Homes are receiving higher ratings in the weighted system signifies that more are meeting the indicators in the heavily weighted categories (such as Training), amounting to higher ratings.

Since Model 2 allows STARS ratings by category level, in addition to overall STARS rating, it provides more detailed information about each facility's quality. As seen in Minnesota's Parent Aware, having category stars can be used as a marketing strategy for facilities (Parent Aware Rating Materials, 2008). For example, if a parent was looking a facility that used a rigorous curriculum but placed a lower priority on ratios, they could seek a facility with 4 stars in the Curriculum category without regard for the facility's score in the Ratios category.

MODEL 3

Model 3 is a hybrid rating system informed by Iowa's Quality Rating System (Iowa Child Care Quality Rating System: QRIS Profile, April 2010), where Levels 1 and 2 are designed as a block system and Levels 3 and 4 are designed as a points system. In other words, all requirements in Level 1 must be achieved to earn a Level 1 rating and all requirements in both Level 1 and Level 2 must be met in order to earn a Level 2 rating. After a facility has met all the requirements of

Levels 1 and 2, the facility earns points for each indicator it meets, and points can be combined in any way, regardless of category. Level 3 is reached by earning a specified number of points, regardless of which points were earned, and Level 4 is reached by earning a higher number of points.

Three slight changes to the Kentucky STARS grid indicators are tested in Model 3. First, facilities may receive points for having more than four annual family involvement activities. Second, directors and providers may receive an additional point for having a bachelor's degree. These changes were informed by practitioners' responses to interview questions (many providers reported having more than four family involvement activities) and trends in other QRIS (most give points for education Levels higher than a CDA) (Tout et al., 2010). Lastly, facilities receive points for small increases in their ERS scores. In Model 3, facilities may receive 1 point for each 0.5 point increase in their overall ERS score.

The Model 3 scoring systems for Certified Homes and Type I Facilities are as follows:

Category	Maximum Points for Certified Homes	Maximum Points for Type I Facilities
Ratio	5	5
Family Involvement	4	4
Curriculum	10	9.5
Training	8	10
Personnel	n/a	4
Business Practices	4	n/a
TOTAL	31	32.5

Analysis of Model 3

Over a quarter of all facilities (28% of Certified Homes and 29% of Type I Facilities) were not able to meet the requirements of Level 2 and did not have the opportunity to gain points to move to higher levels in Model 3. For the remainder of this section, we will be reporting on the points earned by those facilities that had already met all the requirements for Level 2.

Ratio. In the Ratio category, over three-quarters (78%) of Certified Homes received all available points and only one facility received zero points. Type I Facilities did not score quite as high, as only half (55%) received all available points and nearly a third (30%) received zero points.

Family Involvement. The points facilities earned for the Family Involvement category ranged from zero to four. In contrast to the Ratio category, Type I Facilities scored better than Certified Homes in the Family Involvement category. Of the family child care Certified Homes eligible to receive points, one facility received zero points, and 50% of Certified Homes received all available points. Alternatively, no eligible Type I Facilities received zero points and 70% received all available points.

Curriculum. Scores in the Curriculum category were clustered at the bottom and top of the possible range of scores – with few facilities scoring in the mid-range – because half the points in this category are awarded for accreditation. For Certified Homes, only 17% of eligible Certified Homes are accredited so only 17% could score more than 4.5 points. Most accredited facilities also scored very high on the ERS, the other source of points in the Curriculum category, and therefore earned all - or nearly all - available points. Type I Facilities displayed a similar pattern, where accredited facilities scored all – or nearly all – available points, while the majority of facilities (70%) are unaccredited and received 3 or fewer points.

Training. In the Training category, scores for both Certified Homes and Type I Facilities were distributed across the available point range, with the largest group of facilities scoring at the high end of the scale. Among family child care Certified Homes, a third of facilities received zero or one point, a quarter of facilities received around half the available points, and 45% earned all or nearly all the available points. Type I Facilities’ scores were also widely distributed across the 10 point scale, with 30% receiving all or nearly all available points.

Business Practices. As in earlier models, family child care Certified Homes scored very well in the Business Practices category, with 89% of eligible Certified Homes receiving 3 or 4 points in this category.

Personnel. In comparison, in the Personnel category, Type I Facilities’ scores were distributed relatively evenly between 0 and 4 points, with the greatest frequency of facilities (35%) obtaining all 4 points.

Total points received for Model 3 ranged from 1.5 to 30 for Certified Homes and 0.5 to 32.5 for Type I Facilities. These points were then divided into STARS Levels using the following scale:

Level	Certified Homes	Type I Facilities
1 star	completed all Level 1 requirements	completed all Level 1 requirements
2 star	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements
3 star	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 10-19.99 points	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 10-23.99 points
4 star	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 20-31 points	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 24-32.5 points

Model 3 results show that Level 1 facilities remain at Level 1 while facilities at other levels are able to move up. Because no indicators changed from the actual Kentucky STARS grid to the proposed Model 3 grid for Level 1, and all Level 1 indicators must be met in Model 3 before

moving to Level 2 (just as in the current grid), it is expected that all Level 1 facilities remained Level 1 in Model 3. For Certified Homes, nearly all Level 2 facilities moved up to at least Level 3 and nearly all Level 3 facilities moved up to Level 4 (See Figure 6). For Type I Facilities, just over half of Level 2 facilities moved up to Level 3, and one Level 3 facility moved up to Level 4 (See Figure 7).

See Appendices for scoring details by program type.

Figure 6. Hypothetical Model 3 distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for CFCC (n=25)

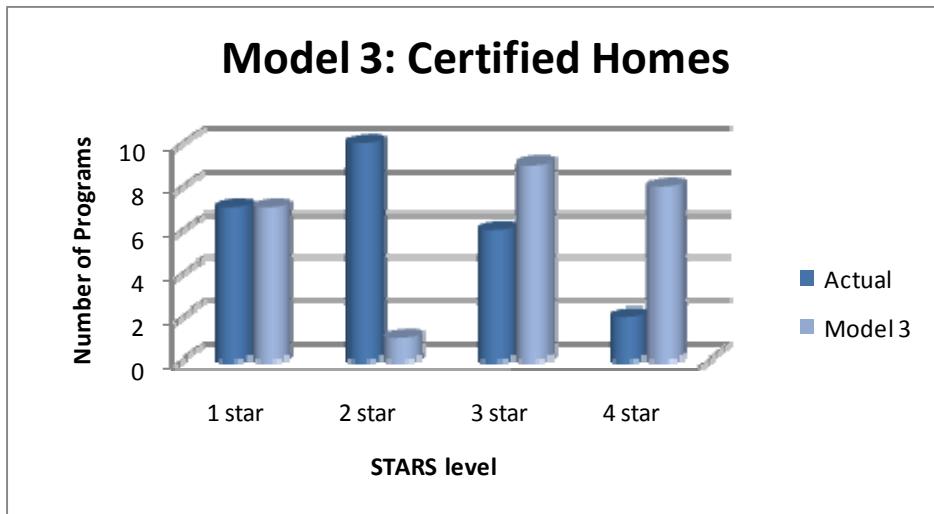
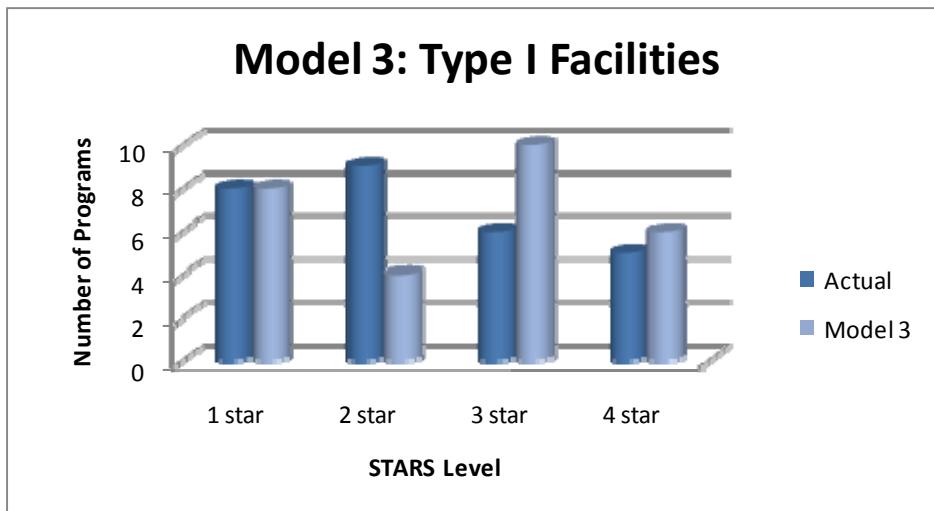


Figure 7. Hypothetical Model 3 distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for Type I Facilities (n=28)



Summary of Model 3

Model 3 shows an interesting variation of results from the previous two models. As expected, the number of Level 1 facilities did not change from the actual STARS rating to the proposed Model 3. The most noticeable shift is the high percentage of Level 2 facilities that moved to higher STARS Levels in Model 3 for both Certified Homes and Type I Facilities, leaving very few facilities at Level 2. The greatest change from the actual STARS rating to the Model 3 ratings seemed to be captured in Level 2 facilities having already achieved several higher level requirements on the STARS grid, and Model 3 allows for those facilities to receive credit for completing these, despite not achieving all the current requirements for either Level 3 or Level 4.

MODEL 4

Using the same hybrid rating structure as Model 3, Model 4 includes new indicators. These indicators were developed using the findings from the Quality Self Study Crosswalk. The QSS Crosswalk identified alignment opportunities between STARS rating indicators and other quality frameworks (the QSS, the Kentucky Early Childhood Core Content, national accreditation standards, and other QRIS) consistently emerging in the following areas: family and community involvement, professional development, curriculum, screening and assessment, and children with special needs. In an effort to address these opportunities, new indicators were tested in Model 4 (See Table 2). These new indicators were added to Model 4 with some required at Levels 1 and 2 and most optional for points towards Levels 3 and 4.

It is important to note that there were methodological limitations to developing the new indicators tested in Model 4. In order to get data points for these indicators, interview questions were developed to gauge the degree to which facilities were engaged in best practices identified in the Quality Self Study. The responses to these questions were then coded into categories. These categories resulted in the proxy indicators included in Model 4. The information that can be gathered through interview questions is of a different kind and quality than the information that would be gathered as part of a quality documentation process in a QRIS. Due to these limitations, the proxy indicators used in Model 4 are not necessarily indicators recommended for actual use in a QRIS.

Table 2. Quality Self Study Indicators translated into grid indicators by category for Model 4

Quality Self Study Indicators	Proxy Indicator	Model 4 Category
3.4 Curriculum planning involves preparation and reflects intentionality. 3.4.1 Teachers have opportunities to plan. 3.4.8 Teachers consider children's abilities, interests and needs as they decide on materials and activities.	Activities planned a day in advance. (Level 1) Activities planned one week in advance. (Level 2) Activities planned one month in advance. (Optional for points)	Curriculum & Assessment

Quality Self Study Indicators	Proxy Indicator	Model 4 Category
3.4.4 Current and research-based curriculum resources are available on site for planning.	Use a research-based curriculum. (Optional for points)	
3.4.2 Teachers gather assessment information for every child in the classroom.	Informally assess children's development. (Level 2) Formally assess children's development using a research-based assessment tool. (Optional for points) Formal assessments of each child takes place at least quarterly. (Optional for points)	
4.4.1 Individual child health and developmental status is determined as a part of program practice.	Refer all children for regular screenings. (Optional for points)	
1.4.1 Program administrator ensures participation in Child Find activities in order to identify children with atypical development needing further evaluation.	Provisions for special needs assessments on-site. (Optional for points)	
5.1.3 Families assess program effectiveness and family satisfaction on an ongoing basis.	Parents provide input on the facility's family involvement plan. (Optional for points)	Family Involvement
5.3 Family priorities are identified and are integrated into program and service delivery.	Parent feedback informs facility changes or professional development plans. (Optional for points)	
1.2.5. All staff develop, update, and follow a professional development growth plan. The ECCC is intended to be used by providers to help set their professional goals	The Kentucky Early Care and Education Core Content is used to help develop professional development plans. (Optional for points)	Training

In addition to adding new indicators, some other parts of the grid were changed in Model 4.

- Since all facilities in the current sample had coordinated at least one annual activity involving parental or family participation, and most facilities reported providing more family involvement activities than were required at their STARS Level, Model 4 sets a higher standard for family involvement activities. No points are awarded for offering

fewer than two family involvement activities and, as in Model 3, points can be earned for offering up to six such activities.

- A new category, Environment & Interactions, is introduced in Model 4 as a more global measure of quality. Scores in this category are determined solely by a facility's accreditation status and ERS score, with points awarded incrementally for ERS scores above 3.5.
- The Curriculum category is expanded to include measures of a facility's use of a research-based curriculum and assessment of child development and therefore renamed the Curriculum and Assessment category.

Table 3. Percent of facilities reportedly meeting new indicators in Model 4

Category	New indicator/Change to grid	Met by percent of Certified Homes	Met by percent of Type I Facilities
Curriculum & Assessment	Activities planned a day in advance. (Level 1)	0%	0%
	Activities planned one week in advance. (Level 2)	64%	44%
	Activities planned one month in advance. (Optional for points)	36%	56%
	Use a research-based curriculum. (Optional for points)	0%	29%
	Informally assess children's development. (Level 2)	32%	25%
	Formally assess children's development using a research-based assessment tool. (Optional for points) ¹	16%	54%
	Formal assessments of each child takes place at least quarterly. (Optional for points)	28%	21%
	Refer all children for regular screenings. (Optional for points)	12%	54%
	Provisions for special needs assessments on-site. (Optional for points)	4%	34%

¹ The 2009 Kentucky Child Care Market Rate Study also asked facilities about their use of an assessment tool. The study found that 24% of Type I Facilities and 3.6% of Certified Homes were using a screening and assessment tool (Rous, Singleton, Cox, Booth & Gross, 2009). Our findings are much higher, which may reflect a difference in sampling or a difference in how the question was asked.

Category	New indicator/Change to grid	Met by percent of Certified Homes	Met by percent of Type I Facilities
Family Involvement	Parents provide input on the facility's family involvement plan. (Optional for points)	44%	57%
	Parent feedback informs facility changes or professional development plans. (Optional for points)	24%	86%
	Coordinate more than 4 activities involving parental or family participation. (Optional for points)	8% had 5 36% had 6 or more	64% had 6 or more
Training	The Kentucky Early Care and Education Core Content is used to help develop professional development plans. (Optional for points)	40%	64%
	Director/provider has a bachelor's degree	4%	32%

The Model 4 scoring system is as follows:

Category	Maximum Points for Certified Family Child Care	Maximum Points for Type I Facilities
Ratios	2	2
Family Involvement	4	5
Curriculum & Assessment	9	9
Training	8	8
Personnel	Not applicable	4
Business Practices	3	Not applicable
Environment & Interactions	7	6
TOTAL	33	34

See Appendices for scoring details by facility type.

Analysis of Model 4

In Model 4, about one-sixth (14%) of Type I Center facilities received 0 stars because they did not meet the requirements at of Level 1. More than a third of all facilities (48% of Certified Homes and 32% of Type I Facilities) were not able to meet the requirements of Level 2 and did not have the opportunity to gain points to move to higher Levels in Model 3. For the remainder of this section, we will be reporting on the points earned by those facilities that had already met all the requirements for Level 2 and thus were eligible to earn points toward Levels 3 and 4.

Ratio. As in previous models, most facilities received all points in the Ratio category (69% of Certified Homes and 53% of Type I Facilities). Since facilities consistently meet these ratio requirements, Model 4 has given the Ratio category less total points than all other categories to give less weight to this category.

Family Involvement. In the Family Involvement category, Certified Homes were distributed evenly across the available point range; about one-fourth (23%) received zero or 1 point, over a third (38%) received around half of the points, and another third or so (38%) earned all or nearly all the available points. Most Type I Facilities (80%) scored at the high end of the scale, attaining 4 or 5 points (out of 5 possible points) in this category.

Curriculum & Assessment. The Curriculum and Assessment category underwent the most changes of any category in Model 4. With the addition of several new indicators across all Levels, it is not surprising that many facilities did not receive high scores in this category. This is especially true for Certified Homes—a fourth (23%) received zero points, three-fourths (77%) received 1 to 3 points, and no facilities received over 3 points (when 9 points were possible). No Certified Homes received higher points for this category because none reported meeting the new indicator for using a research-based curriculum (which is worth 3 points). Type I Facilities were less negatively affected by the new indicators and received a range of scores from zero to the full 9 points. A quarter (27%) of Type I Facilities received 3 points or less, 40% received 4 to 6 points, leaving a third of facilities (33%) that attained 4 to 9 points.

Training. Facility scores in the Training category were distributed across the range of 8 possible points. One-sixth (15%) of Certified Homes earned zero points, the same number (15%) received 1 to 4 points, and most (69%) attained 5 to 8 points. In contrast, no Type I Facilities received zero to 2 points in this category. The group of Type I Facilities was split, with about half (53%) receiving 3 to 5 points and the other half (47%) receiving 5 to 8 points.

Business Practices. In the Business Practices category, over half (54%) of Certified Homes received 1 or 2 points, and just under half (46%) received the full 3 points.

Personnel. In the Personnel category, a few (13%) Type I Facilities received zero points, about half (47%) earned 1 to 3 points, and over a third (40%) received the full 4 points available.

Environment & Interactions. In the last category, Environment and Interactions, the highest percentage of Certified Homes received 3 or 3.5 points (46%) and the highest percentage of Type I Facilities received 5.5 or 6 points (40%). A third (31%) of Certified Homes received 1 to 2.5 points and a fourth (23%) earned 6 or 7 points. About a third (27%) of Type I Facilities received zero points and another third (33%) of Type I Facilities received 1.5 or 2 points for their ERS scores.

Total points received for Model 4 ranged from 6 to 26 for Certified Homes and 4 to 32 for Type I Facilities. These indicator points were summed and point ranges were grouped into the following STARS Levels:

Level	Certified Homes	Type I Facilities
1 stars	completed all Level 1 requirements	completed all Level 1 requirements
2 stars	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements
3 stars	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 12-21 points	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 12-22 points
4 stars	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 22-33 points	completed all Level 1 & Level 2 requirements and earned 23-34 points

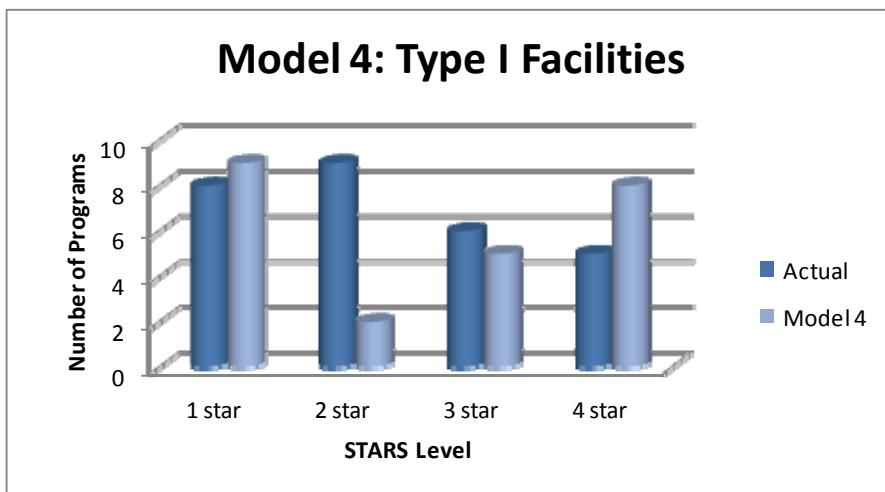
Model 4 results are notably different from Models 1-3 particularly because, for some facilities, ratings are moving down. The findings show that almost 50% of facilities are either receiving a 1 star or have 0 stars because they are not meeting the indicators at Level 1. Nevertheless, 45% of facilities still received a 3 or 4 star rating.

For Certified Homes, an equal number of Level 2 facilities moved up and down a Level. One Level 3 facility and one Level 4 facility moved down (See Figure 8). For Type I Facilities, three Level 1 facilities received zero stars because they did not meet the new indicators at Level 1. These facilities were not meeting the requirements for having 50% of staff trained in CPR/First aid and/or having a classroom roster. There was a variety of movement for Level 2 facilities, with some moving up and some moving down. A few Level 3 facilities moved up to a Level 4 and all Level 4 facilities stayed at the highest rating. (See Figure 9).

Figure 8. Hypothetical Model 1 distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for CFCC (n=25)



Figure 9. Hypothetical Model 1 distribution of STARS Levels compared to actual STARS Levels for Type I Facilities (n=28)



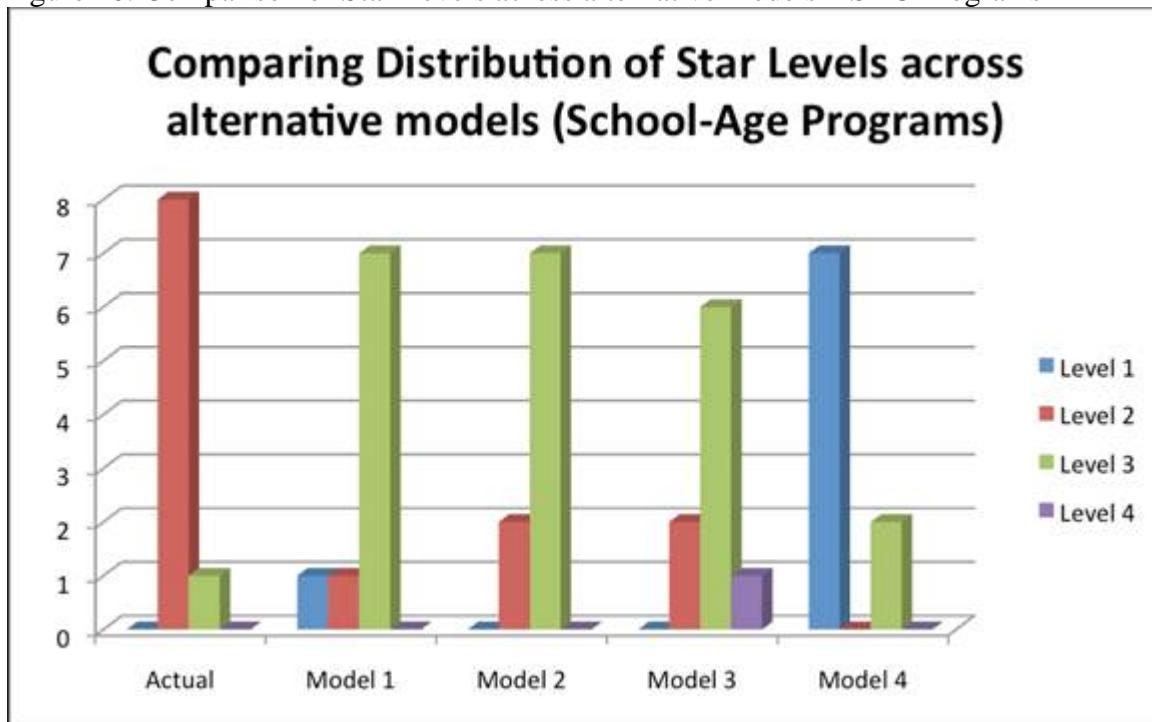
Summary of Model 4

The new indicators in Model 4 presented a challenge for some facilities. Since these indicators were unfamiliar, it is not surprising that several facilities were not practicing them simply because they have never been asked to do so. On the other hand, it is striking that almost half of the facilities received 3 or 4 STARS ratings despite the fact that there were additional indicators to meet. This illustrates that many facilities in Kentucky STARS are ready to be challenged by new indicators and standards.

SCHOOL-AGE CARE FACILITIES

There are several facilities participating in STARS that are categorized as Type I Facilities but are unique in that they are exclusively providing care to school-age children. In order to obtain more information about these School-Age Care Facilities' experiences in STARS and how they may vary from other Type I Facilities, a small sample of 9 school-age facilities was interviewed. The STARS Level distribution of the interviewed facilities (8 out of 9) was heavily skewed towards Level 2 facilities, but this is a fairly representative sample as the majority of school-age only facilities in STARS are rated a Level 2 (See Methods Brief for details about current STARS Levels). Figure 10 illustrates how these facilities scored when run through the proposed Models 1-4.

Figure 10. Comparison of Star Levels across alternative models – SAC Programs



In Models 1 and 2, most facilities moved up from a Level 2 to a Level 3. These increases in ratings mirror those of Certified Homes and Type I Facilities in these same models. Using a points/hybrid system increased STARS Levels for SAC Facilities. This is most likely due to the flexibility of Models 1 and 2 that makes indicators that are difficult for these types of facilities optional, such as having a person with a CDA at all times in each classroom/group—an indicator which 88% of SAC Facilities did not meet.

The distribution of SAC Facilities in Model 3 is also similar to that of Certified Homes and Type I Facilities. Many of the Level 2 SAC Facilities moved to Level 3, suggesting that these facilities met higher level indicators on the STARS grid but were stuck at Level 2 because they could not meet all Level 3 indicators.

Lastly, facilities scored the lowest in Model 4, with almost all facilities receiving a Level 1 rating. This is not surprising, as the Model 4 grid added new indicators. For example, 67% of School-Age Type I Facilities do not meet the indicator for using a research-based curriculum and 78% of facilities do not assess children's development (either informally or formally).

Ultimately, SAC Facilities received higher ratings when given the option of obtaining points for higher level indicators, especially when those indicators were more applicable to their work in school-age settings (such as in Models 1-3).

SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS FROM THE PROPOSED MODELS

Figures 11 and 12 show the distribution of STARS Levels for both Type I Facilities and Certified Homes across all of the proposed models.

Figure 11. Comparison of Star Level across alternative models – Certified Homes

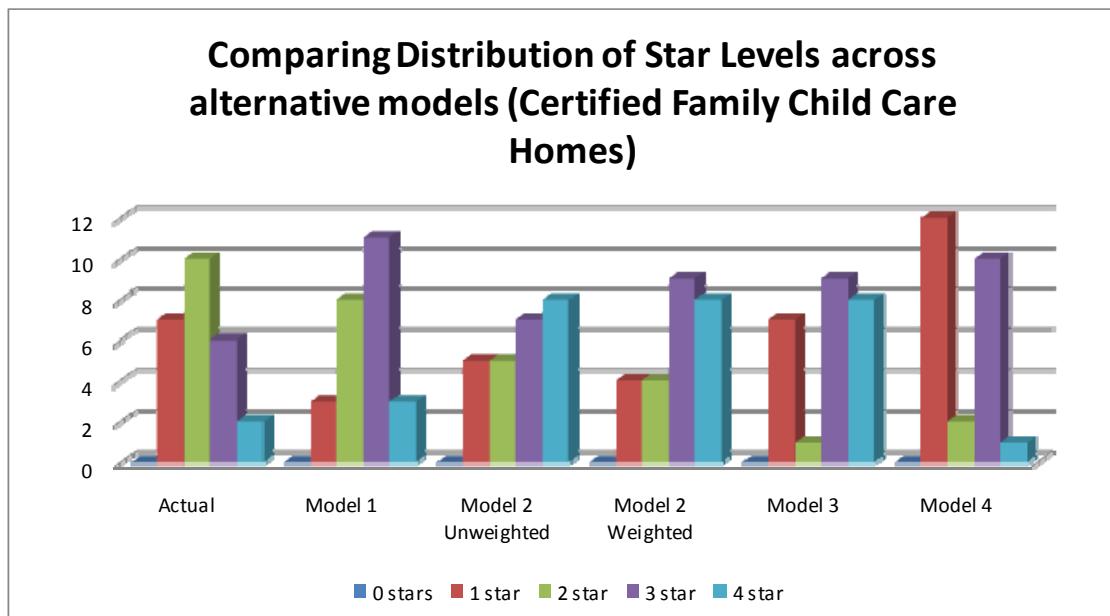
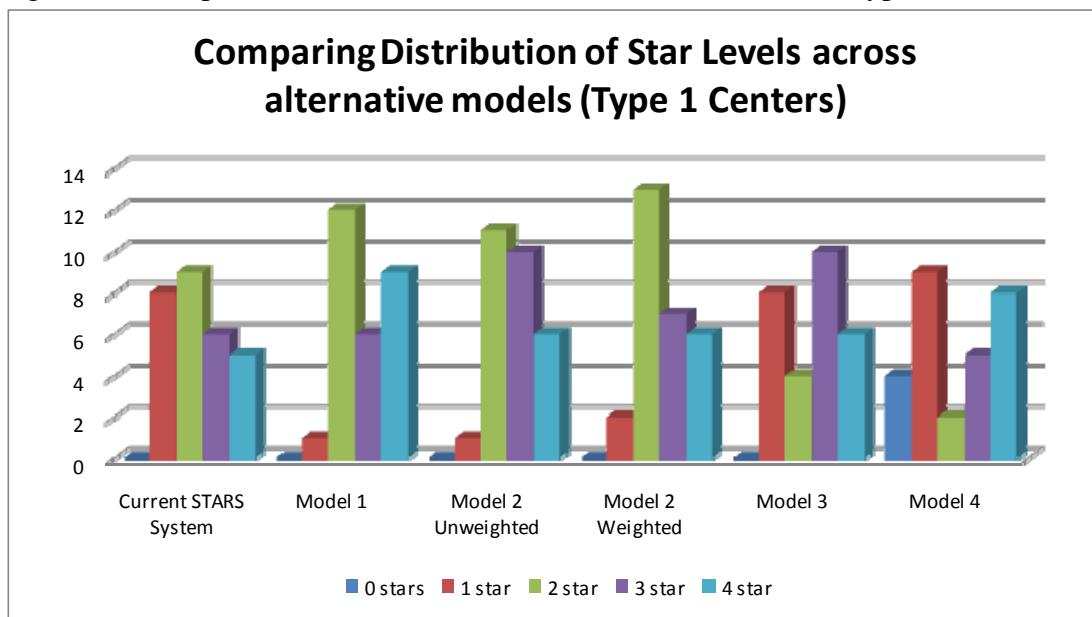


Figure 12. Comparison of Star Levels across alternative models – Type I Centers



LIMITATIONS OF THE MODELING APPROACH

Interview methodology

The interview methodology used for collecting the data presented is not comparable to a rating process. Questions were developed to elicit easy responses from interviewees and lessen

interviewer burden. For example, participants were asked, “Looking at the grid for Level 3, do you currently meet these ratio requirements?” rather than asking them to list the number of children in each age group, the number of staff in each classroom, etc. In contrast, a rating process would involve observing in classrooms and having supporting documentation to determine whether or not a facility met Level 3 ratio requirements. Therefore, while responses were proxies for achievement of grid indicators, it is important to keep in mind that the questions were developed for interview purposes and are not comparable to rating verification processes.

Nature of self-report

Because our interviews relied on self-report data, it is uncertain if proposed scores and ratings are accurate. Providers may have inflated their scores by claiming to be implementing best practices, even when not demonstrating these practices for outside observers. Alternatively, many providers reported not currently achieving indicators but claimed it would be either “easy” or “somewhat easy” to meet this requirement. In other words, if certain, new indicators were required of facilities (such as in Model 4) then providers would have the motivation to achieve these requirements and their scores may be higher than our models demonstrated. In general, self-report is always a limitation of interview methodology. Here provider report showed great variation, therefore the concern for inflated self-report is minimal.

Challenges translating a block system into a point system

Because points systems eliminate the requirement for facilities to achieve all indicators at previous levels before receiving credit for higher level indicators, facilities have the opportunity to reach higher levels than they would in a block system. For these reasons, when using a points system states have more indicators (than exist in most block systems) in order to balance out the difficulty of the points system. In other words, a Level 4 facility in a block system essentially has a “perfect score.” A points system adds more indicators so that a Level 4 facility can fall within a range of points while still meeting high standards. Therefore, since indicators were not added in Models 1-3, they could only function to make it easier for facilities to score higher in STARS. In an attempt to balance this, additional indicators were added to Model 4, which in turn typically led to facilities not scoring as highly as they had in Models 1-3.

Assumption of linearity amongst indicators

A limitation of the current models in this analysis and of QRIS rating structures in general is an assumption of linearity amongst quality indicators. In QRIS, indicators are arranged to increase in difficulty as facilities move up Levels; however certain indicators may not necessarily be linear in this way. For example, the number of family involvement activities is often incremental, such as requiring one activity at Level 1 and four activities at Level 4—but the research does not exist to support that four activities are actually four times “better” than having just one activity. New research in the early childhood field is aimed at understanding whether there are thresholds of quality at which children’s outcomes improve, and this research will have important implications for QRIS indicator design.

SUMMARY

Looking across the models and analyses presented in this Evaluation Brief, we conclude the following:

Facilities are meeting indicators above their current level.

The models consistently show that facilities report meeting grid requirements that exceed their current rating level. When given the opportunity to receive points for meeting indicators, facility ratings increased. Recognizing facilities for achieving indicators higher than required is a potential avenue to motivate facilities to join STARS and keep facilities in STARS motivated for continuous improvement.

Facilities are achieving new indicators.

Even with new indicators added in Model 4, many facilities still received Level 3 and 4 ratings. This finding demonstrates that not only are some facilities meeting grid requirements higher than their current level, they have quality practices in place that do not exist in the STARS grids.

It is important to design rating structures that differ by facility types.

The models consistently show differences by facility type. For example, Certified Homes received varying ratings and reported meeting fewer of the new indicators (in Model 4) compared to Type I Facilities. Therefore, it is important for Kentucky STARS to continue to have separate grids for these facility types and to carefully gauge the potential differential effects by facility type if changes are made. In addition to Type I Facilities and Certified Homes, through the modeling it is evident that school-age facilities in STARS may need differentiation as well. Most SAC Facilities are scored at a Level 2 which may indicate a problem in achieving higher Levels. The grid requirements could be adapted for SAC Facilities by creating a different grid or adding provisions to the Type I Facility grid.

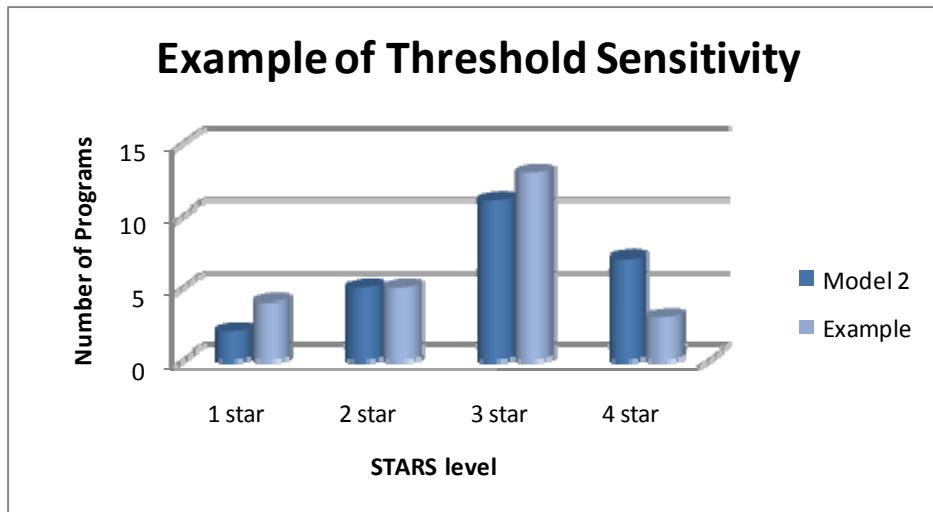
Sensitivity of thresholds.

The exercise of modeling alternative rating structures illustrated the high stakes associated with setting thresholds. QRIS that use points/combinations systems are usually required to set thresholds at both the indicator-level and star-level; indicators are assigned point values and then ratings are assigned based on range of points facilities receive. Through the analysis conducted for this Evaluation Brief, it became clear that each indicator decision needs serious consideration because even simple adjustments have consequences for the final level a facility can achieve. In order to demonstrate the sensitivity to slight changes in the models, a modification was made to the point ranges determining STARS Levels in the unweighted version of Model 2 for Certified Homes. By simply increasing the range for Level 1 by one point and adjusting the other ranges accordingly, there was a significant decrease in 4 STARS facilities (see Figure 13). With this

slight change, two Level 3 facilities were unable to advance to Level 4 and no Level 2 facilities reached Level 4.

Level	All Facilities	EXAMPLE
1	5-7 points	5-8 points
2	8-12 points	9-13 points
3	13-17 points	14-18 points
4	18-20 points	19-20 points

Figure 13. Example of threshold sensitivity



This example illustrates the circumstances and sensitivity of setting thresholds for hybrid rating structures. If STARS were to consider making changes to their current system, caution should be used during the process of setting thresholds. It may also be advisable to have pilot phase if a new rating structure is being introduced in order to gauge the effects it may have on facility rating outcomes.

Currently, the early childhood field lacks empirical evidence to inform assigning specific weights to quality indicators or developing levels and thresholds of quality. QRIS developers make design decisions using the existing research which provides general, but not specific guidance. The current exercise of modeling alternative rating structures illustrates the need for a careful and consistent design (or re-design) strategy that takes into account the sensitivity of point cut-offs and their impact on facility rating outcomes.

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MODEL 1: LICENSED TYPE I FACILITIES

Ratios	Family Involvement	Curriculum	Training	Personnel
6 points possible	6 points possible	9 points possible	12 points possible	5 points possible

Total points possible: 38

Programs must have current certification in good standing in order to participate. Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled (2 ½ points are guaranteed from licensing/level 1 standards in current system). Stars are awarded using the following scale:

- 1 star = 3 – 12.9 points
- 2 stars = 13 – 20.9 points
- 3 stars = 21 – 28.9 points
- 4 stars = 29 – 38 points

Scoring Details by Grid Category:

RATIOS	POINTS POSSIBLE																																																																																																	
Meet current licensing standard ratios.	½ point																																																																																																	
Post prominently in each classroom and maintain the above staff-to-child ratios and group size.	½ point																																																																																																	
Meet the following ratios: <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age</th> <th>Ratio</th> <th>Group Size</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-1</td> <td>1:4</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-2</td> <td>1:5</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-3</td> <td>1:8</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3-4</td> <td>1:11</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4-6</td> <td>1:12</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6-12</td> <td>1:14</td> <td>28</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age	Ratio	Group Size	0-1	1:4	8	1-2	1:5	10	2-3	1:8	16	3-4	1:11	22	4-6	1:12	24	6-12	1:14	28	2 points																																																																												
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Kindergarten								1:10	1:11	1:12																																																																																								
Total Possible Points for Ratio	6 points possible																																																																																																	
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT																																																																																																		
Coordinate activities involving parental or family participation.	If 1 activity, ½ point If 2 activities, 1 points If 3 activities, 1½ points If 4 or more activities, 2 points																																																																																																	
	<i>2 points possible</i>																																																																																																	
Documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement.	2 points																																																																																																	
Documented family feedback procedure used annually.	2 points																																																																																																	

Total Possible Points for Family Involvement	6 points possible
CURRICULUM	POINTS POSSIBLE
Post prominently and maintain planned program of activities and daily schedule.	$\frac{1}{2}$ point
Environment Rating Scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average score of at least 3.0 • Average score of at least 4.0 • Average score of at least 4.5 • Average score of at least 6.0 	$\frac{1}{2}$ point 1 point 2 points 3 points <i>3 points possible</i>
Have a written plan for improving your program's average Environment Rating Scale score	$\frac{1}{2}$ point
Have in each classroom a roster with first and last name of employee and each child enrolled in the center and cared for in that room.	$\frac{1}{2}$ point
Accreditation by Early Childhood Authority approved accrediting organization.	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ points
Total Possible Points for Curriculum	9 points possible
Training	
Create and implement individual staff development plans for all staff annually.	$\frac{1}{2}$ point
Center offers staff opportunity to participate in KY Early Childhood Development Scholarship Program, if eligible.	1 point
Staff training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 clock hours annually of approved ECE training • 50% of staff have current CPR/First Aid training • 50% of staff have Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher • Minimum of one CDA or higher in each classroom 	1 point $\frac{1}{2}$ point 2 points 3 points <i>6 $\frac{1}{2}$ points possible</i>
Director training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 clock hours annually of approved ECE training • 24 clock hours annually of approved ECE training • CDA or higher • Kentucky Director's credential 	$\frac{1}{2}$ point $\frac{1}{2}$ point 1 point 2 points <i>4 points possible</i>
Total Possible Points for Training	12 points possible

PERSONNEL	
Annual staff evaluations	1 point
Paid leave <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 days paid leave for employees with at least 6 months of employment • 11 days paid leave for employees after 1 year of employment 	1 point 1 point <i>2 points possible</i>
Insurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pays at least 50% of the cost of a single health insurance plan for full-time employees. • Pays prorated amount towards a single health insurance plan for all employees. (Only applicable if program meets standard above.) 	1 point 1 point <i>2 points possible</i>
Total Possible Points for Personnel	5 points possible

MODEL 1: CERTIFIED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Ratios	Family Involvement	Curriculum	Training	Business Practices
6 points possible	4 points possible	9 points possible	10 points possible	4.5 points possible

Total points possible: 33.5

Programs must have current certification in good standing in order to participate. Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled (3 points are guaranteed from licensing/level 1 standards in current system). Stars are awarded using the following scale:

- 1 star = 3 – 11.9 points
- 2 stars = 12 – 19.9 points
- 3 stars = 20 – 27.9 points
- 4 stars = 28 – 33.5 points

Scoring Details by Grid Category:

RATIOS		POINTS POSSIBLE
Post prominently and maintains compliances with licensing capacity requirements		1 point
Employ an assistant if home cares for 6 or fewer children and more than 3 children are less than 24 months old		2 points
Maximum capacity of 9		3 points
Total Possible Points for Ratio		6 points possible
Family Involvement		
Coordinate activities involving parental or family participation.		If 1 activity, $\frac{1}{2}$ point If 2 activities, 1 points If 3 activities, $1\frac{1}{2}$ points If 4 or more activities, 2 points <i>2 points possible</i>
Documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement.		2 points
Total Possible Points for Family Involvement		4 points possible
CURRICULUM		
Post prominently a planned program of activities and daily schedule.		$\frac{1}{2}$ point
Environment Rating Scale		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average score of at least 3.0 • Average score of at least 4.0 • Average score of at least 4.5 • Average score of at least 5.5 		$\frac{1}{2}$ point 1 point 2 points 3 points <i>3 points possible</i>
Have a written plan for improving your program's average Environment Rating Scale score		$\frac{1}{2}$ point
Achieve at least a 5 on the ERS portion pertaining to the use of television		$\frac{1}{2}$ point
Accreditation by state approved national accrediting organization		4 $\frac{1}{2}$ points
Total Possible Points for Curriculum		9 points possible

TRAINING	POINTS POSSIBLE
Develop and implement a written plan for obtaining annual training	½ point
Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 clock hours annually of approved ECE training • At least 1 person on duty is certified in infant and child CPR & First Aid • 18 clock hours annually of approved ECE training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If applicable, assistant must obtain 6 hours of approved ECE training & attend basic orientation training 	1 point ½ point 1 point <i>2 ½ points possible</i>
Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth Child Care Credential • CDA or higher • Kentucky Director's credential 	1 point 3 points 3 points <i>7 points possible</i>
Total Possible Points for Training	10 points possible
BUSINESS PRACTICES	
Written program policies	½ point
Maintain a written parent/provider agreement	½ point
Provide proof that a recordkeeping system is maintained	½ point
Provide families a written daily report for children age 2 and under	1 point
Parents provided with handbook that contains program's policies	1 point
Be a member of an early childhood professional organization	1 point
Total Possible Points for Business Practices	4.5 points possible

MODEL 2

Unweighted Points System for all programs

Category	Maximum Points
Ratios	4
Family Involvement	4
Curriculum	4
Training	4
Personnel	4
TOTAL	20

Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale:

- 1 star = 5-7 points
- 2 stars = 8-12 points
- 3 stars = 13-17 points
- 4 stars = 18-20 points

Weighted Points System for Type I Facilities

Category	Maximum Points
Ratios	4 x 1.5
Family Involvement	4 x 1.5
Curriculum	4 x 2.5
Training	4 x 3.25
Personnel	4 x 1.25
TOTAL	40

Weighted Points System for Certified Family Child Care Homes

Category	Maximum Points
Ratios	4 x 1.5
Family Involvement	4
Curriculum	4 x 2.5
Training	4 x 3.25
Personnel	4 x 1.75
TOTAL	40

Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale for all program types:

- 1 star = 0 – 14.9 points
- 2 stars = 15 – 24.9 points
- 3 stars = 25 – 33.9 points
- 4 stars = 34 – 40 points

Category	1	2	3	4								
Ratios	Post prominently in each classroom and maintain current licensing staff-to-child ratios and group size.		Post prominently in each classroom and maintain the below staff-to-child ratios and group size.	Post prominently in each classroom and maintain the below recommended staff-to-child ratios consistent with National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).								

Age	Ratio	Group Size
0-1	1:4	8
1-2	1:5	10
2-3	1:8	16
3-4	1:11	22
4-6	1:12	24
6-12	1:14	28

Category	1	2	3	4
Family Involvement	Coordinate at least one activity involving parental or family participation.	Documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement. Coordinate at least two activities involving parental or family participation.	Documented family feedback procedure used annually. Coordinate at least three activities involving parental or family participation.	Coordinate at least four activities involving parental or family participation.

Category	1	2	3	4
Curriculum	Director or individual with decision making authority attend STARS Overview prior to program participation Post prominently and maintain planned program of activities and daily schedule. ERS: Agree to complete ERS at each applicable age group within 12 months, no minimum score 2nd year: written ERS improvement plan based on assessment findings in place	ERS: Average score of at least 3.0 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a minimum average ERS score of 4 by 4th year and beyond Have in each classroom a roster with first and last name of employee and each child enrolled in the center and cared for in that	ERS: Average score of at least 4.5	ERS: Average score of at least 6.0 Accreditation by Early Childhood Authority approved accrediting organization.

		room.		
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Category	1	2	3	4
Training	Create and implement individual staff development plans for all staff annually.	<p>Center offers staff opportunity to participate in KY Early Childhood Development Scholarship Program, if eligible.</p> <p>Staff training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 clock hours annually of approved ECE training <p>Director training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 clock hours annually 	<p>50% of staff have current CPR/First Aid training</p> <p>50% of staff have Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher</p> <p>Director training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 clock hours annually of approved ECE training • CDA or higher 	<p>Minimum of one CDA or higher in each classroom</p> <p>Director training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets approved national accrediting organization requirements <u>AND</u> 24 clock hours of training annually <u>AND</u> a Kentucky Director's Credential

Category	1	2	3	4
Personnel	In-house STARS for KIDS NOW Overview attendance sign-in sheet signed by ALL staff.	Annual staff evaluations	<p>Paid leave</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 days paid leave for employees with less than one year of employment • 11 days paid leave for employees after 1 year of employment 	<p><u>To Qualify for Enhancement Award:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pays at least 50% of the cost of a single health insurance plan for full-time employees • Pays prorated amount towards a single health insurance plan for part-time employees

MODEL 2: CERTIFIED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Category	1	2	3	4
Ratios	Post prominently and maintains compliances with licensing capacity requirements	Post prominently and maintains compliances with licensing capacity requirements	Employ an assistant if the home cares for 6 or fewer children and more than 3 children are less than 24 months old	Maximum capacity of nine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>May care for up to 3 related children in addition to 6 unrelated</i>

Category	1	2	3	4
Curriculum	<p>Attend STARS Overview prior to program participation</p> <p>Post prominently and maintain planned program of activities and daily schedule.</p> <p>ERS: Agree to complete ERS at each applicable age group within 12 months, no minimum score</p> <p>2nd year: develop written improvement plan in each area identified by the environment assessment as needing improvement</p>	<p>ERS: Average score of at least 3.0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a minimum average ERS score of 4 by 4th year and beyond 	<p>ERS: Average score of at least 4.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve a score of at least 5.0 on the ERS portion pertaining to the use of television • Provider limits use of TV to programs and video games regarded as good for children. No more than 2 hours per day. Activities are provided as an alternative while TV is on. 	<p>ERS: Average score of at least 5.5</p> <p>Accreditation by Early Childhood Authority approved accrediting organization.</p> <p>To Qualify for Enhancement Award: An average program score above 5.5 on family child care ERS</p>

Category	1	2	3	4
Business Practices	<p>Written program policies</p> <p>Maintain a written parent/provider agreement</p>	<p>Provide proof that a recordkeeping system is maintained</p>	<p>Provide families a written daily report for children age 2 and under</p> <p>Parents provided with handbook that contains program's policies</p>	<p>Be a member of an early childhood professional organization</p>

MODEL 3: LICENSED TYPE I FACILITIES

Category	Maximum Points
Ratios	5
Family Involvement	4
Curriculum	9.5
Training	10
Personnel	4
TOTAL	32.5

Total points possible: 33.5

Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale:

- 1 star = must complete all Level 1 requirements
- 2 stars = must complete all Level 2 requirements
- 3 stars = 10-23.99 points
- 4 stars = 24-32.5 points

Scoring Details by Grid Category:

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points																																																																																										
Ratios	Post prominently in each classroom and maintain current licensing staff-to-child ratios and group size.	Maintain a higher standard for staff-to-child ratios and group size. (2 points)	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Age</th><th style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Ratio</th><th style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Group Size</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>0-1</td><td>1:4</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>1-2</td><td>1:5</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>2-3</td><td>1:8</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>3-4</td><td>1:11</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>4-6</td><td>1:12</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>6-12</td><td>1:14</td><td>28</td></tr> </tbody> </table> Programs can earn 2 points for meeting the criteria above and can earn an additional 3 points for maintaining the staff-to-child ratios recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), shown below.			Age	Ratio	Group Size	0-1	1:4	8	1-2	1:5	10	2-3	1:8	16	3-4	1:11	22	4-6	1:12	24	6-12	1:14	28																																																																			
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5 POINTS POSSIBLE

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Family Involvement	Coordinate at least one activity each year involving parental or family participation.	Documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement. Coordinate at least two activities annually involving parental or family participation.	Documented family feedback procedure used annually. (2 points) Coordinate additional activities involving parental or family participation. (2 points) 3 activities annually – $\frac{1}{2}$ point 4 activities annually – 1 point 5 activities annually – $1\frac{1}{2}$ points 6 activities annually – 2 points <i>4 POINTS POSSIBLE</i>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Curriculum	Director or individual with decision making authority attend STARS Overview prior to program participation Post prominently and maintain planned program of activities and daily schedule. ERS: Agree to complete ERS at each applicable age group within 12 months, no minimum score 2nd year: written ERS improvement plan based on assessment findings in place	Environment Rating Scale: Average score of at least 3.0 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a minimum average ERS score of 4 by 4th year and beyond Have in each classroom a roster with first and last name of employee and each child enrolled in the center and cared for in that room.	Environment Rating Scale (5 points): Average score between 4.0 & 4.499 – 1 point Average score between 4.5 & 4.999 – 2 points Average score between 5.0 & 5.499 – 3 points Average score between 5.5 & 5.999 – 4 points Average score of at least 6.0 – 5 points Accreditation by Early Childhood Authority approved accrediting organization. (4.5 points) <i>9.5 POINTS POSSIBLE</i>

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Training	Create and implement individual staff development plans for all staff annually.	<p>Center offers staff opportunity to participate in KY Early Childhood Development Scholarship Program, if eligible.</p> <p>Staff members receive 15 clock hours annually of approved ECE training</p> <p>Director receives 18 clock hours annually of approved ECE training</p>	<p>50% of staff have current CPR/First Aid training (0.5 points) 50% of staff have Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher (1.5 points)</p> <p>Minimum of one CDA or higher in each classroom (3 points)</p> <p>Director has 24 clock hours annually of approved ECE training (1 point)</p> <p>Director's Education (2 points) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director has CDA or higher (1 point) • Director has BA in ECE-related field or higher (2 points) </p> <p>Director has a Kentucky Director's Credential (2 points)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>10 POINTS POSSIBLE</i></p>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Personnel	In-house STARS for KIDS NOW Overview attendance sign-in sheet signed by ALL staff.	Annual staff evaluations	<p>Program offers 6 days paid leave for employees with at least 6 months of employment (1 point)</p> <p>Program offers 11 days paid leave for employees after 1 year of employment (1 point)</p> <p>Health Insurance (2 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program pays at least 50% of the cost of a single health insurance plan for full-time employees. (1 point) • Program meets above standard and <i>also</i> pays prorated amount towards a single health insurance plan for all employees. (2 points) </p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>4 POINTS POSSIBLE</i></p>

MODEL 3: CERTIFIED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Category	Maximum Points
Ratios	5
Family Involvement	4
Curriculum	10
Training	8
Personnel	4
TOTAL	31

Total points possible: 31.5

Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale:

- 1 star = must complete all Level 1 requirements
- 2 stars = must complete all Level 2 requirements
- 3 stars = 10-19.99 points
- 4 stars = 20-31 points

Specific Details by Grid Category:

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Ratios	Post prominently and maintains compliances with licensing capacity requirements	Post prominently and maintains compliances with licensing capacity requirements	<p>Employ an assistant if the home cares for more than 6 children AND/OR if more than 3 children are less than 24 months old (2 points)</p> <p>Maximum capacity of nine (<i>3 related children in addition to 6 unrelated children</i>) (3 points)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5 POINTS POSSIBLE</p>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Family Involvement	Coordinate at least one activity involving parental or family participation.	<p>Documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement.</p> <p>Coordinate at least two activities involving parental or family participation.</p>	<p>Coordinate additional activities involving parental or family participation. (4 points)</p> <p>3 activities annually – 1 point 4 activities annually – 2 point 5 activities annually – 3 points 6 activities annually – 4 points</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4 POINTS POSSIBLE</p>

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Curriculum	<p>Attend STARS Overview prior to program participation Post prominently and maintain planned program of activities and daily schedule.</p> <p>ERS: Agree to complete ERS at each applicable age group within 12 months, no minimum score</p> <p>2nd year: develop written improvement plan in each area identified by the environment assessment as needing improvement</p>	<p>ERS: Average score of at least 3.0 (Average score of 4 by 4th year and beyond)</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scale (5 points):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average score between 4.0 & 4.499 – 1 point Average score between 4.5 & 4.999 – 2 points Average score between 5.0 & 5.499 – 3 points Average score between 5.5 & 5.999 – 4 points Average score of at least 6.0 – 5 points <p>Achieve a score of at least 5.0 on the ERS portion pertaining to the use of television (0.5 points)</p> <p>Accreditation by Early Childhood Authority approved accrediting organization. (4.5 points)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>10 POINTS POSSIBLE</i></p>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Training	<p>Develop and implement a written plan for obtaining annual training</p> <p>If provider has an assistant, the assistant must attend basic orientation training</p>	<p>At least 1 person on duty is certified in infant and child CPR & First Aid</p> <p>Provider receives 9 clock hours annually of approved ECE training</p>	<p>18 clock hours annually of approved ECE training for provider and 6 hours for assistant, if applicable. (2 points)</p> <p>Education (4 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth Child Care Credential (1 point) • CDA (3 points) • Bachelor's degree in ECE-related field (4 points) <p>Provider has Kentucky Director's Credential (2 points)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>8 POINTS POSSIBLE</i></p>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Additional Points
Business Practices	<p>Written program policies</p> <p>Maintain a written parent/provider agreement</p>	<p>Provide proof that a recordkeeping system is maintained</p>	<p>Provide families a written daily report for children age 2 and under (2 points)</p> <p>Parents provided with handbook that contains program's policies (1 point)</p> <p>Be a member of an early childhood professional organization (1 points)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>4 POINTS POSSIBLE</i></p>

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)																																																																																																																																															
Ratios	<p>Post prominently in each classroom and maintain current licensing staff-to-child ratios and group size.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age</th> <th>Ratio</th> <th>Group Size</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>0-1</td><td>1:5</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>1-2</td><td>1:6</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>2-3</td><td>1:10</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>3-4</td><td>1:12</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>4-5</td><td>1:14</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>5-7</td><td>1:15</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>7 and older (before and after school)</td><td>1:16</td><td>30</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Age	Ratio	Group Size	0-1	1:5	10	1-2	1:6	12	2-3	1:10	20	3-4	1:12	24	4-5	1:14	28	5-7	1:15	30	7 and older (before and after school)	1:16	30	<p>Maintain a higher standard for staff-to-child ratios and group size. (1 point)</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age</th> <th>Ratio</th> <th>Group Size</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>0-1</td><td>1:4</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>1-2</td><td>1:5</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>2-3</td><td>1:8</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>3-4</td><td>1:11</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>4-6</td><td>1:12</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>6-12</td><td>1:14</td><td>28</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Age	Ratio	Group Size	0-1	1:4	8	1-2	1:5	10	2-3	1:8	16	3-4	1:11	22	4-6	1:12	24	6-12	1:14	28	<p>Programs can earn 1 point for meeting the criteria above and can earn an additional 1 point for maintaining the staff-to-child ratios recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), shown below.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Age</th> <th colspan="10">Group Size</th> </tr> <tr> <th>6</th> <th>8</th> <th>10</th> <th>12</th> <th>14</th> <th>16</th> <th>18</th> <th>20</th> <th>22</th> <th>24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>0-15 months</td><td>1:3</td><td>1:4</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>12-28 months</td><td>1:3</td><td>1:4</td><td>1:4c</td><td>1:4</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>21-36 months</td><td></td><td>1:4</td><td>1:5</td><td>1:6</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>30-48 months</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1:6</td><td>1:7</td><td>1:8</td><td>1:9</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4-year-olds</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1:8</td><td>1:9</td><td>1:10</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5-year-olds</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1:8</td><td>1:9</td><td>1:10</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Kindergarten</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1:10</td><td>1:11</td><td>1:12</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">2 POINTS POSSIBLE</p>	Age	Group Size										6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	0-15 months	1:3	1:4									12-28 months	1:3	1:4	1:4c	1:4							21-36 months		1:4	1:5	1:6							30-48 months				1:6	1:7	1:8	1:9				4-year-olds						1:8	1:9	1:10			5-year-olds						1:8	1:9	1:10			Kindergarten								1:10	1:11	1:12
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Curriculum & Assessment	<p>Have in each classroom a roster with first and last name of employee and each child enrolled in the center and cared for in that room.</p> <p>Post prominently and maintain planned program of activities and daily schedule.</p> <p>Activities planned a day in advance.</p>	<p>Informally assess children's development.</p> <p>Activities planned a week in advance.</p>	<p>Activities planned a month in advance. (1 point)</p> <p>Use a research-based curriculum. (3 points)</p> <p>Formal child assessment (3 points) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally assess children's development using a research-based assessment tool. (2 points) Formal assessments of each child take place at least quarterly. (1 point) </p> <p>Refer all children for regular screenings. (1 point)</p> <p>Provisions for special needs assessments on-site. (1 point)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9 POINTS POSSIBLE</p>																																																																																																																																															

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Family Involvement	<p>Coordinate at least two activities involving parental or family participation.</p>	<p>Documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement.</p> <p>Coordinate at least three activities involving parental or family participation.</p>	<p>Documented family feedback procedure used annually. (1 point)</p> <p>Coordinate additional activities involving parental or family participation. (2 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 activities annually – 1 point 5 activities annually – 1 ½ points 6 activities annually – 2 points <p>Parents provide input on the program's family involvement plan. (1 point)</p> <p>Parent feedback informs program changes or professional development plans. (1 point)</p>

5 POINTS POSSIBLE

MODEL 4: LICENSED TYPE I CENTERS

Ratios	Curriculum & Assessment	Family Involvement	Training	Personnel	Environment & Interaction
2 points possible	9 points possible	5 points possible	8 points possible	4 points possible	6 points possible

Total points possible: 34

Programs must have current certification in good standing in order to participate. Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale:

- 1 star = must complete all Level 1 requirements
- 2 stars = must complete all Level 1 & 2 requirements
- 3 stars = all level 1 & 2 requirements, 12-22 points
- 4 stars = all level 1 & 2 requirements, 23-34 points

Scoring Details by Grid Category:

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Training	Create and implement individual staff development plans for all staff annually. 50% of staff have current CPR/First Aid training.	Center offers staff opportunity to participate in KY Early Childhood Development Scholarship Program, if eligible. Staff training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 clock hours annually of approved ECE training Director training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 clock hours annually 	<p>Staff Education & Training (3 points):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of staff have Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher. (1 point) • Minimum of one CDA or higher in each classroom. (2 points) <p>Director Training & Education (4 points):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 clock hours annually of approved ECE training (1 point) • Kentucky Director's Credential (1 point) • Director has CDA or higher (1 point) OR Director has BA in ECE-related field or higher (2 points) <p>The Kentucky Early Care and Education Core Content is used to help develop professional development plans. (1 point)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>8 POINTS POSSIBLE</i></p>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Personnel	In-house STARS for KIDS NOW Overview attendance sign-in sheet signed by ALL staff.	Annual staff evaluations	<p>Paid leave (2 points):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 days paid leave for employees with less than one year of employment. (1 point) • 11 days paid leave for employees after 1 year of employment. (1 point) <p>Health Insurance (2 points):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program pays at least 50% of the cost of a single health insurance plan for full-time employees. (1 point) • Program meets above standard and <i>also</i> pays prorated amount towards a single health insurance

			plan for all employees. (2 points) <i>4 POINTS POSSIBLE</i>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Environment & Interaction	Agree to complete ERS at each applicable age group within 12 months, no minimum score. 2nd year: written ERS improvement plan based on assessment findings in place.	Average score of at least 3.5. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a minimum average ERS score of 4 by 4th year and beyond Develop an annual ERS improvement plan.	Environment Rating Scale (3 points) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average score of at least 4.5 (1½ point) • Average score of at least 5.0 (2 point) • Average score of at least 5.5 (2 ½ points) • Average score of 6.0 or higher (3 points) Accreditation by Early Childhood Authority approved accrediting organization. (3 points) <i>6 POINTS POSSIBLE</i>

MODEL 4: CERTIFIED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Ratios	Curriculum & Assessment	Family Involvement	Training	Business Practices	Environment & Interaction
2 points possible	9 points possible	4 points possible	8 points possible	3 points possible	7 points possible

Total points possible: 33

Programs must have current certification in good standing in order to participate. Points in all five categories of best practices are totaled. Stars are awarded using the following scale:

- 1 star = must complete all Level 1 requirements
- 2 stars = must complete all Level 2 requirements
- 3 stars = all level 1 & 2 requirements, 12-21 points
- 4 stars = all level 1 & 2 requirements, 22-33 points

Specific Details by Grid Category:

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Ratios	Post prominently and maintains compliances with licensing capacity requirements.		<p>Employ an assistant if the home cares for 6 or fewer children and more than 3 children are less than 24 months old. (1 point)</p> <p>Maximum capacity of nine (1 point)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>May care for up to 3 related children in addition to 6 unrelated</i> <p style="text-align: right;">2 POINTS POSSIBLE</p>
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Curriculum & Assessment	<p>Post prominently and maintain planned program of activities and daily schedule.</p> <p>Activities planned a day in advance.</p>	<p>Informally assess children's development.</p> <p>Activities planned a week in advance.</p>	<p>Activities planned a month in advance. (1 point)</p> <p>Use a research-based curriculum. (3 points)</p> <p>Formal child assessment (3 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally assess children's development using a research-based assessment tool. (2 points) • Formal assessments of each child take place at least quarterly. (1 point) <p>Refer all children for regular screenings. (1 point)</p> <p>Provisions for special needs assessments on-site. (1 point)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9 POINTS POSSIBLE</p>

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Family Involvement	Coordinate at least two activities involving parental or family participation.	Documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement. Coordinate at least three activities involving parental or family participation.	Coordinate additional activities involving parental or family participation. (2 points) 4 activities annually – 1 point 5 activities annually – 1 ½ points 6 or more activities annually – 2 points Parents provide input on the program's family involvement plan. (1 point) Parent feedback informs program changes or professional development plans. (1 point) 4 POINTS POSSIBLE
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Training	Develop and implement a written plan for obtaining annual training.	At least 1 person on duty is certified in infant and child CPR & First Aid. Provider training <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9 clock hours annually of approved ECE training	18 clock hours annually of approved ECE training or Commonwealth Child Care Credential (1 point) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If provider employs an assistant, they must obtain 6 hours of ECE training annually and attend basic orientation training in order provider to receive the point for clock hours. Kentucky Director's Credential (2 points) CDA in Early Childhood Education (3 points) OR BA in ECE-related field or higher (4 points) The Kentucky Early Care and Education Core Content is used to help develop professional development plans. (1 point) 8 POINTS POSSIBLE
Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Business Practices	Written program policies Maintain a written parent/provider agreement	Provide proof that a recordkeeping system is maintained	Provide families a written daily report for children age 2 and under. (1 point) Parents provided with handbook that contains program's policies. (1 point) Be a member of an early childhood professional organization. (1 point) 3 POINTS POSSIBLE

Category	1 (required)	2 (required + Level 1)	Points for Levels 3 & 4 (+Levels 1 & 2 requirements)
Environment & Interaction	<p>Agree to complete ERS at each applicable age group within 12 months, no minimum score.</p> <p>2nd year: develop written improvement plan in each area identified by the environment assessment as needing improvement.</p>	<p>Average score of at least 3.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a minimum average ERS score of 4 by 4th year and beyond <p>Develop an annual ERS improvement plan.</p>	<p>Environment Rating Scale (3 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average score of at least 4.5 (1½ points) • Average score of at least 5.0 (2 points) • Average score of at least 5.5 (2 ½ points) • Average score of 6.0 or higher (3 points) <p>Achieve a score of at least 5.0 on the ERS portion pertaining to the use of television (Provider limits use of TV to programs and video games regarded as good for children. No more than 2 hours per day. Activities are provided as an alternative while TV is on). (1 point)</p> <p>Accreditation by Early Childhood Authority approved accrediting organization. (3 points)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>7 POINTS POSSIBLE</i></p>