Using QRIS as an Innovative Approach to Promote Quality in Infant and Toddler Child Care: highlighting innovations from Georgia and Washington DC’s programs

Pam Stevens, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
Renata Claros, Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Kathryn Kigera, Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Amy Thomas, National Center on Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships
GOALS

• Learn about Head Start participation in QRIS

• Learn about recent trends in QRIS

• Learn about QRIS models in Georgia and Washington DC

• Explore and Discover strategies in QRIS for your program
Ice Breaker

Just Like Me
Why Develop a QRIS?

- Creates **alignment**:  
  - between licensing, subsidy, and quality; and  
  - across child care, prekindergarten, and Head Start.

- Links **supports and initiatives** to a specific quality framework.

- Provides an **accountability measure** for funding and quality initiatives.
System Alignment

QRIS System Linkages

- Prekindergarten
- Head Start
- Child Care
- Professional Development System
- Subsidy
- Licensing
- Scholarships
- Grants to Providers
- Early Learning Guidelines
- Child Care Resource and Referral
Head Start Performance Standards

§1302.53 Community partnerships in coordination with other early childhood and education programs

(b)(2) Quality Rating and Improvement Systems. A program, with the exception of American Indian and Alaska Native programs, must participate in its state or local Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) if:

(i) Its state or local QRIS accepts Head Start monitoring data to document quality indicators included in the state’s tiered system;

(ii) Participation would not impact a program’s ability to comply with Head Start Performance Standards; and,

(iii) The program has not provided the Office of Head Start with a compelling reason not to comply with this requirement.

Head Start Participation in State QRISs

Retrieved from the QRIS Compendium, March 2016 http://qriscompendium.org/
Trends in Quality Standards

• More frequent revisions
• Cross-walking standards
• Research basis for selected standards; data-driven changes to standards
• Fewer QRIS standards: “The few and the powerful.”
• Raising the bar on expectations (States melding lower levels into licensing and raising top levels)
• Hybrid or combination approaches
Trends in Quality Assurance and Monitoring

- Linkages with licensing
- Differential monitoring
- Coordinated monitoring
- Moving from rating to recognition
- Rating readiness tools or assistance
- Increased use of portable devices in the field
- Increased reliance on data systems
- Careful consideration of efficiencies
- Staffing, number of criteria and assessments, reporting, and automation
Trends in Consumer Education

- Focus on families accessing subsidy
- More sophisticated, consumer-friendly websites
- Inclusion of licensing information and reports on websites
- Broad early childhood campaigns
- Diverse marketing strategies for different audiences
- Help with marketing information and tools for providers
Trends in Financial Supports

- Use of a variety of incentives
- Time limited based on progress
- Subsidy payments limited to those participating in the QRIS
- Amounts vary by program size, program type, and QRIS level
- Targeted for special populations

For more information: QRIS Resource Guide Provider Incentives and Supports
Staying in Touch

• Visit the Partnership Center Web page at http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehs-ccp

• Subscribe on ECLKC to “Partnerships between Early Childhood Programs” to get updates from the Partnerships Center

• Contact us at ehsccpwebinars@ecetta.info, or call (toll-free) 1-866-763-6481.
Using the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) as an Innovative Approach to Promote Quality in Infant and Toddler Care

June 29, 2014
Kathryn Kigera and Renata Claros
I. Setting the Stage for Quality

II. Integrated System of Services for Children and Families

III. Strategies to Replicate the System
Setting the Stage for Quality
### Context

**Children in DC**
- 110,588 children under age 18 in 2015
- Majority are children of color
  - 57 percent Black and 15 percent Hispanic
- 42 percent live in single-mother households

**Economic Well-being Citywide as of 2015**
- 27 percent of children live in poverty

Sources: [DC Kids Count](https://www.dckidscount.org) and [Kids Count Data Center](https://data.kidscount.org).
Division of Early Learning

Our Mission:
Prepare all children to enter Kindergarten ready to succeed!

Foster high-quality services and programming

Core Activities:
• Subsidize quality child care for eligible low-income families
• Build capacity of early learning programs and their employees (through professional development, grants, partnerships, etc.)
• Monitor quality of programs
• Provide effective early intervention services

Engage and inform our community

Core Activities:
• Provide clear, consistent, and timely information to families
• Engage parents, early learning programs, and the public in DEL’s decisions

Promote safe and healthy learning environments

Core Activities:
• License and monitor early learning programs
• Develop early learning policy and regulations
• Deliver training, funds, and resources to programs
• Coach parents of infants/toddlers with disabilities to provide healthy supports

How We Do It:
Build a highly skilled and motivated team in DEL

Build efficient, versatile, and sustainable systems
# Partnerships

## Federal Partners
- **Office of Child Care**
  - Child Care Development Block Grant
- **Office of Head Start**
  - Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Grant
  - Head Start Collaboration Grant

## Local and State Partners
- Bainum Family Foundation
- Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agency
- DC Action for Kids
- DC Early Intervention
- DC Head Start Association
- DC Interagency Steering Committee
- DC Public Schools
- Early Care and Education Funders Collaborative
- State Early Childhood Development Coordinating Council
- Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Project
- UCLA, Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities
- University of Maryland
- Washington Region Early Care and Education Workforce Network

## Providers (centers and homes)
- Over 500 licensed child care providers
- 273 providers in the subsidy program with a contract to provide subsidized child care (local and federal funding)
  - Data as of June 1, 2017
Integrated System of Services for Children and Families
• Build the supply of high quality, comprehensive early childhood development and family engagement services for infants and toddlers
QIN Goals

• Implement a community-based quality improvement system aligned to the comprehensive, quality standards of Early Head Start (EHS)

• Invest in adding new high-quality EHS slots for children and families where need is unmet

• Leverage all available funding sources (local and federal) across DC government

• Ensure that children with high needs have access to these child care slots in their community
QIN Structure

Collaborating Agencies:
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Behavioral Health
- Department of Health
- Department of Health Care Finance
- Child and Family Services Agency

Governance Structure: Policy Council with Parent Representation

Office of the State Superintendent of Education (Grantee)

Hub:
- (6 centers)

Hub:
- (8 centers)

Hub:
- (14 homes)

Providers

Provides direct services to children and families

Joint planning and funding for some family services and transitions

Participate in policy making and other decisions about the program

Hub provides technical assistance to meet Early Head Start standards, coaching and learning to providers, comprehensive services for children and families – mental health consultation, family engagement specialists, health and nutrition, and early intervention.

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Head Start/Office of Child Care

Federal Grant to OSSE for Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships to implement the District’s QIN.

OSSE provides grants to Hubs to pay for Quality Technical Assistance and Comprehensive Services (health, mental health, nutrition, and family services), subsidy eligibility intake, and administration of the Child and Adult Care Food Program.
Capital Quality, DC’s Enhanced QRIS

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP)

Ongoing cycles of feedback, support, and improvement in implementing CQIP

Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

• Align and simplify quality standards across DC’s early learning system
• Align OSSE’s supports to quality standards
• Target areas of improvement through collaborative partnership among providers, OSSE, and other agencies
• Provide meaningful consumer information to families
Quality indicators include:

- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) results
- Attendance
- Mission statement
- Culturally and linguistically responsive practices
- Inclusion practices
- Curriculum aligned to DC Common Core Early Learning Standards
- Formal and informal child assessments
- Developmental screenings
- Professional development
- Family engagement

The CQIP is driven by program leadership and supported by their assigned Quality Facilitator.
Quality Facilitators
- Quality Facilitators hired by Hurley and Associates have a wealth of knowledge in early childhood education, family engagement, inclusion, diversity, assessments, and curriculum

Coaching Model
- Underlying Theoretical Principles or Philosophy (Characteristics of coaching practices)
- Targeted Support
  - Instruction-based coaching (Family Child Care Providers)
  - Practice-based coaching (Child Care Centers)
  - Integration into existing coaching model (DCPS and Child Care Centers)

Ongoing cycles of feedback, support, and improvement in implementing CQIP
• **Alignment between QIN and Capital Quality**
  – All subsidy programs will participate in Capital Quality
    • This will include all programs participating in QIN by 2019
  – Quality indicators support the Head Start Program Performance Standards
  – Further alignment is ongoing related to internal division alignment and professional development opportunities
What is the overlap between QIN and Capital Quality?

- Family Engagement Specialist at each site
- Professional Development for teachers and directors
- Teachers’ stipends
- Resources for facilities renovations, equipment, and materials
- Comprehensive services at the centers
- Mental health consultation and training for teachers and parents
- Leadership opportunities for parents

- Coaching
- Professional development
- Incentives
- Support at the center level
- Focus on children and families

- Quality facilitators – work with 5-6 directors, 3-6 hours per week during the initial year
  - Dosage will ultimately be determined by the quality rating
- Community of practice professional development meetings
- Incentives for participation
- Materials and supplies to support the environment

- Currently, 13 of the 28 QIN providers are participating in Capital Quality
Strategies to Replicate the System
Strategies and Lessons Learned

- **Strategies and lessons learned**
  - Engage key stakeholders, including policymakers, providers, and families in the development and rollout of these initiatives
  - Take the time to understand the context and the different levels of development of providers
  - All actions need to be informed by the context, which is specific to the community in which you’re working
  - Buy-in and communication are key to success
  - Policies and procedures need to be clear for all stakeholders
  - Ensure coordination across initiatives and programs to best support providers
Ensuring Equity

- **Ensuring equity is a part of the process**
  - Focus on access and availability of quality child care slots and services available to high-needs families
  - Increase subsidy rates for QIN slots
  - Supports to providers prioritizing those in the most high-needs wards of the city and serving mainly children receiving subsidy
  - Use data to understand the needs of the community (i.e., community needs assessment and the Early Development Instrument)
  - DC is very culturally and economically diverse and families participating in child care programs are as well, our goal is to communicate to all participating families across DC
  - We know that the context in DC will not remain the same and it is very important for us to remain responsive to the needs of the community
Describe your biggest take away in one word.

Word Cloud
FIND US

ADDRESS:
810 First St. NE, Ninth Floor
Washington, DC 20002

POC:
Renata Claros (OSSE)
Renata.Claros@dc.gov

Kathryn Kigera (OSSE)
Kathryn.Kigera@dc.gov

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Quality Rated Subsidy Grants

Jennie Couture
Director of Practice and Support Services

Pam Stevens
Quality Rated Policy and Partnerships Director
The Goal...

- Develop a plan to convert up to 20% of Georgia’s child care subsidy certificates to child care subsidy slots
- Use ELC funds to pilot delivery methods
Quality Rated Subsidy Grants

The Quality Rated Subsidy Grants give Quality Rated providers the opportunity to increase access to high quality learning environments for Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) eligible infants and toddlers.

- Employing a new funding source (ELC Grant)
- Managing eligibility at the child care program level
- Utilizing grants to secure child care slots
- Offering a business friendly grant model to child care providers
Round 1 & 2 Grant Applicant Requirements

- Have Quality Rated star rating
- Serve at least 10 children currently receiving CAPS
- Willing to serve at least 10 subsidy eligible children
- Have licensed capacity to serve the amount of slots awarded
- Ensure no more than 50% of total class enrollment in grant funded slots
Grants Awarded

Round 1
- 54 applications received
- 12 grants awarded
- Start date: 8/24/15

Round 2
- 73 applications received
- 24 grants awarded
- Start date: 12/14/15
Child Care Provider Responsibilities

- Deliver full day, high quality care to enrolled infants and toddlers
- Maintain or increase Quality Rated status
- Determine subsidy eligibility and maintain records
- Participate in all technical assistance and professional development sessions
Subsidy Grant Family Responsibilities

- Provide all necessary documents to support subsidy eligibility
- Maintain subsidy eligibility
- Report any changes in circumstances to child care provider
- Report to CAPS case manager of grant participation if participating in CAPS program
Benefits of Quality Rated Subsidy Grants

Providers receive:

- Increased reimbursements (90th percentile of the market rate for their payment zone based on the 2013 Market Rate Survey)
  - Zone 1: $238.00 weekly per child
  - Zone 2: $152.00 weekly per child
  - Zone 3: $121.00 weekly per child

- In-depth eligibility training

- Ongoing technical assistance and professional development opportunities
Round 3

Infants Matter: Quality Infant Classrooms
What if ...

- An infant room didn’t lose money?
- Being an infant room teacher was one of the best jobs in the building?
- Infant room teachers had time to plan instruction?
- Families with high needs didn’t have child care fees?
An Infant Classroom in a Program that:

- Is Quality Rated
- Serves children who receive CAPS
- Serves infants
- Located in a specific geographic area
- Has Georgia’s Pre-K or Head Start
  - Administrative capacity
  - Eligibility experience
  - Part of the quality pathway
Subsidy Infant Classroom Requirements

- Group size of no more than 8 infants
- 1:4 teacher/child ratio
- Minimum compensation requirements for a full-time lead teacher and assistant teacher
- Minimum of 1 hour of weekly paid planning time for the lead teacher
- Onsite family/child eligibility
- Intentional professional development for all infant room teachers and director
Professional Development

Teacher credentials

- Teachers will complete educational counseling with DECAL Scholars
- Teachers will enroll and receive benefits from DECAL Scholars
- Teachers will enroll in a program to earn an infant/toddler credential
- Programs will dedicate a percentage of their grant to support credential attainment
Professional Development

Ongoing professional development supported by DECAL Infant /Toddler Specialists

- Celebrating Milestones modules
- Learn the Signs Act Early
- Read Right from the Start
- Active professional development plans
- Director training based on program needs (responsive caregiving, coaching staff, family engagement, administrative supports)
Planning and Development Phase

- Short term grant 12/1/16 – 3/31/17
  - $15,000
    - Training
    - Classroom environment
    - Outdoor environment

- Purchasing decisions made with and approved by the Infant/Toddler Specialist
# Credential-Based Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insufficient</th>
<th>Full-Time Lead Teacher $11/hr</th>
<th>$22,880</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Full-Time Assistant Teacher $10/hr</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Part-Time Assistant Teacher $10/hr</td>
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<td>Operating</td>
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<td>Total Grant</td>
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<thead>
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<th>CDA or TCC Credential</th>
<th>Full-Time Lead Teacher $14/hr</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-Time Assistant Teacher $10/hr</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-Time Assistant Teacher $10/hr</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operating</td>
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<td>Total Grant</td>
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<td>$111,652</td>
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<th>Associate Credential</th>
<th>Full-Time Lead Teacher $15/hr</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Full-Time Assistant Teacher $10/hr</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Total Grant</td>
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<td>$118,226</td>
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<tr>
<th>Bachelor Credential</th>
<th>Full-Time Lead Teacher $17/hr</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-Time Assistant Teacher $10/hr</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-Time Assistant Teacher $10/hr</td>
<td>$10,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operating</td>
<td>$58,815</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td>$125,375</td>
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Enrollment Options

- Fully funded Quality Rated Subsidy Infant Classroom
  - 8 grant-funded infants enrolled
  - Meet attendance requirements

- Quality Rated Subsidy Infant Classroom/tuition funded classrooms
  - Maximum group size 8
  - Minimum of 4 grant-funded infants enrolled
  - 1:4 teacher/child ratio
Benefits of Quality Rated Subsidy Grants

Families receive:

- High quality learning opportunities
- $0 family fees for full day child care
- Ongoing child care management handled by the child care provider
## Quality Rated Subsidy Grants Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round</th>
<th>Providers selected as finalists</th>
<th>Grant Slots Awarded</th>
<th>Allocated Funds (per grant year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Round 1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>$1,798,784</td>
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<td>Round 2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>$3,359,200</td>
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<td>Round 3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>$1,244,298</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>$6,402,282</td>
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QR Subsidy Grants Statistics

As of May 2017:
- 42 programs participating
- 20 counties throughout the state
- $6,402,282 - Current Budget
- 584 children being served through grant slots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Programs</th>
<th>County</th>
<th># of Slots Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Baldwin</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bibb</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bulloch</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Clarke</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clayton</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cobb</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>DeKalb</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fulton</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gwinnett</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Lowndes</td>
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<td>Murray</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Muscogee</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rockdale</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Troup</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Whitfield</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>584</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Voices from the Field

“My goal was to bring high-risk children into a quality environment, particularly to increase enrollment for Hispanic children who are underserved in our program.”

“We partnered with the local board of health office where children go to get shots and where pregnant mothers go for maternity care and WIC. We also partnered with the local library.”
Voices from the Field

“My first step was to sit down and identify the families that were struggling to pay the family assessment fee. I also took the ones that were waiting for appointments with CAPS. I looked at my list of the parents that are coming and participating, and the families that were struggling to make payments.”
“It was a benefit to provide child care at real rates. Comparing costs of running our program...there is a deficiency. The extra money helped us run our program at its true cost. We used funds for materials and teacher development.”

The quality got a little bit better because we are able to serve more families and able to spend more time training our teachers. The changes in program quality were all a result of the changes in teacher quality.”
Voices from the Field

“Overall the morale of parents changed... They were not stressed about having to pay child care fees. These parents also started interacting with our staff more. They also had conversations with other parents who might not be in this program as far as what is expected of a quality program.”
Questions and Answers