



Capital Quality – DC’s Enhanced Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS)

The Office of the State Superintendent’s (OSSE) Division of Early Learning (DEL) is in the process of replacing the current Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), Going for the Gold, with an Enhanced QRIS system named Capital Quality. Since its original implementation, the current QRIS has not changed or been updated, but due to changes in the education sector in DC and an increased need for a common measure of quality across all three sectors (public charter schools, DC Public Schools, and community-based organizations), it has become vital to replace the current QRIS with one that measures program quality. Most importantly, Capital Quality will be public-facing, which will allow parents to review and compare the program quality of various child development providers throughout the District, and make informed decisions when deciding where to enroll their child.

The Capital Quality pilot was launched in April 2016 to advance and align quality standards across DC’s early care and education system. Capital Quality aims to provide meaningful consumer information, helps OSSE align supports for providers to research-based quality standards, and targets areas of improvement through collaborative partnership between child development providers, OSSE, and other agencies. Capital Quality has three components: a rating, a continuous quality improvement (CQI) plan, and a public-facing profile for child development facilities.

Capital Quality will have four tiers and will use a combination of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), the Environmental Rating Scales (ERS), and attendance measures (for pre-K programs only) to rate programs. The CQI plan includes a set of quality standards that are common to all programs that serve children birth to age 5. These standards align with already existing standards for the three sectors operating early childhood education programs in the District. The public-facing QRIS profile will include the rating, key elements of the CQI plan, and additional information beneficial to families, such as hours of operation, group size and ratios, languages spoken, accreditation status, and results of licensing and monitoring visits.

QUALITY INDICATORS IN THE CQI PLAN INCLUDE:

- Mission statement
- Attendance policies
- Family engagement
- Child progress monitoring and assessment
- Use of curriculum
- Culturally and linguistically responsive practices
- Inclusion practices
- Professional development

Will all child development providers be required to participate in Capital Quality?

OSSE’s responsibility as the state education agency for DC is to ensure all children in the District receive equitable and quality early learning experience. The current QRIS, Going for the Gold, only applied to providers receiving subsidies. The Enhanced QRIS, Capital Quality, will rate all licensed facilities that receive public funding, but all licensed facilities in DC are encouraged to participate.

What supports will providers receive from OSSE?

Each participating provider will have a quality facilitator who will work with the site administrator and their leadership team to create and implement a continuous quality improvement plan, help design and implement quality improvement strategies, and work with the center director to monitor, track, and measure progress.

What will Capital Quality provide to parents and families?

National research shows that development and growth in the early years is critical for preparing children for Kindergarten and beyond. OSSE strives to provide parents and families with the necessary information to make informed decisions when searching for the early learning environment that is best for their child’s development and learning. Capital Quality will publish a quality profile that will be publicly available for families to use in making these decisions.