Great Start to Quality
User Guide for
Out-of-School Time

June 2018

This document can be used as a companion to the Orientation webinar videos for out-of-school time only programs engaging in Great Start to Quality. The clickable table of contents allows you to jump to any section of the document.

Contents

Getting Started

Q: What was launched?

A: Over the last two years the Early Childhood Investment Corporation and the Michigan Department of Education-Office of Great Start, along with its partners, conducted three pilots for out-of-school time programs with the goal of integration with the current statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System; Great Start to Quality. Starting December 1st, 2017, programs licensed to serve schoolagers only (children from kindergarten entry to age 12) are eligible to participate in Great Start to Quality.

Q: What is required of my program to participate?

A: To be eligible for Great Start to Quality your program must:

- Be licensed to serve schoolagers <u>only</u> or ages 4 years 9 months to 12 years.
- Be in Good Standing with Licensing.

Q: What else should I know as a participant?

A: This process is driven by <u>*you*</u>. You set the pace, you can take as long as you like to complete the Self-Assessment Survey and upload supporting documentation. Once you are ready, you must click the "Submit for Validation" button. A Great Start to Quality Team Member will then contact the program to confirm information and discuss the next steps.

Benefits for Participants

Q: What are the benefits of participating?

A: There are a variety of benefits, including:

- You set the pace!
- Earn a Star rating valid for two years
- Free Program Profile on the Great Start to Quality website to market the program's rating to families
- Receive a Star rating valid for two years
- Increased Reimbursement through the Child Development and Care subsidy program
- Decrease or eliminate the cost for families using the Child Development and Care subsidy program
- All programs are eligible for a no-cost on-site assessment

Orientation Webinar

Q: What is the Orientation webinar?

A: The Orientation webinar is split into four short videos for out-of-school time programs to use to support the completion of the Self-Assessment Survey, upload documentation and submit the program for validation.

Q: How long will the Orientation webinar last?

A: Each video is about eight minutes long.

Q: What if I cannot attend the Orientation webinars when they are scheduled?

A: A recording of the webinar is always available on the Great Start to Quality website **here**.

Program Profile

This section shows how a program should complete their Program Profile. The Program Profile is meant to capture basic information about the program. The information provided in the Program Profile is the information that will be used to communicate with the program through the Self-Assessment Survey and rating process.

Tips

- Be sure to use the name of the program as it is **listed on the License.** This may be different from what the program is called in other documents or marketing materials.
- The contact person should be the person who completes the Self-Assessment Survey and answers questions during the validation call. This will be the person who Great Start to Quality contacts with any questions or concerns.
- A classroom is defined as the following:
  - A consistent group of children with consistent caregivers. It is **not** based on physical space, but looks at the grouping of children to staff.
    - *Example One*: The program has one group of children and staff who move freely through different physical spaces (rooms). This would be seen as one classroom as it maintains a consistent group of children with consistent staff.
    - *Example Two*: A program splits the children by grade (K-1, 2-3, 4-5) and has specific staff dedicated to each group there would be one classroom for each group. In this case, there would be three classrooms.
- You must use the same computer to access the in-progress Self-Assessment Survey. That is the way the website recognizes which survey to open. If you try to access the Self-Assessment Survey from a new computer you will need to start over.

- The survey will only save completed pages, meaning, you must complete the full page for the survey to save your answers.
- Question 2 on the Program Profile, asks if you will be completing a Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) for multiple programs. If you will need to complete a SAS for more than one program, it is important that you select 'Yes' for question 2.
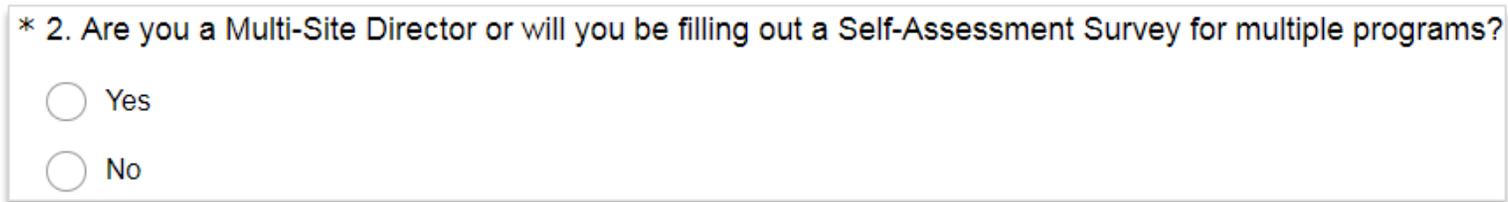
Figure 1. Question 2 of the Self-Assessment Survey

- If you select 'Yes' for question 2 send all additional program names and license numbers to outofschooltime@ecic4kids.org
- Once Great Start to Quality receives the additional program names and license numbers, you will receive an email invitation from SurveyMonkey for each additional site. This email invitation will allow you to complete additional Self-Assessment Surveys.

Self-Assessment Survey

Q: What is the Self-Assessment Survey (SAS)?

A: The SAS is a series of indicators that are reflective of Michigan's definition of quality in out-of-school time settings. These indicators fall into five categories:

- **Staff Qualifications and Professional Development** – Providers have a college degree, have attended and/or are taking college classes, have obtained a Child Development Associate or a Montessori or Michigan School-Age Youth Development credential, and/or have participated in trainings relevant to youth development and out-of-school time topics.
- **Family and Community Partnerships** – Program staff help families learn more about how their children learn and grow and they meet with parents to talk about their schoolagers' development. Program staff let families know about places in the community that can help them when they need assistance and support schoolagers' transitions into kindergarten and to other programs.
- **Administration and Management** – Program has written policies and procedures for staff, if applicable, and yearly staff evaluations. Staff set yearly goals for themselves and offers different types of benefits for their staff.
- **Environment** – The physical space, where care is provided, is free of safety hazards and providers offer nutritionally sound meals as well as nutrition education to families. Program keeps track of schoolagers mental health and communicate with families about their schoolagers' overall health.
- **Curriculum and Instruction** – Program has a mission statement for their program, follow a flexible daily schedule, and use curriculum that helps them make decisions about the daily routine.

Q: What is the basis for the quality indicators?

A: There are two documents that provide the foundation of Michigan's definition of quality for out-of-school time care and education field. These documents are reflected in the indicators in the Self-Assessment Survey and Assessment tool.

- Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals
- Michigan Out-of-School Time Standards of Quality

Q: What is the format of the Self-Assessment Survey in SurveyMonkey®?

A: There are two types of indicators in the SAS. The first format is a 'yes' or 'no' selection. The second format is a multiple-option selection. Most indicators fall into the first type shown below.

Figure 2. Indicator Type One

The second format you will see is in the Staff Qualifications and Professional Development section of the SAS. These indicators are made up of a series of statements. Select which statement **best** describes your staff.

Figure 3. Indicator Type Two

Q: How do I complete the Self-Assessment Survey?

A: It is recommended that programs take the following steps to complete the self-assessment process:

1) Complete the basic program information about the staff and program structure.
2) Review the Program Quality Indicator Guidance Document. Note the indicators you believe are true for your program and consider what documentation you have to show that your program is meeting the indicator.
3) Complete the Self-Assessment Survey on SurveyMonkey by selecting a response for each indicator.
4) Upload supporting documentation using Dropbox.
5) Share the Dropbox folder with outofschooltime@ecic4kids.org
6) Submit for validation.

A few reminders:

- If you select 'Yes' for an indicator you **must** upload supporting documentation.
- You will have an opportunity to upload additional documentation after your validation call, but it is highly recommended you upload as much documentation as possible during your initial submission.

You have the option to complete the self-assessment process all at once or work on it over time. We recommend completing a full page before you exit out of the survey. SurveyMonkey will only save your progress up to the last completed page. To re-enter your survey, use this link.

Q: What if I am not sure what an indicator is asking?

A: Begin by reviewing the Program Quality Indicator Guidance document. Focus on the *Intent of Indicator* and the documents linked in the *Learn More* section. If more support is needed, contact us by email or call your Great Start to Quality Resource Center at 1-877-614-7328.

Q: What if I'm not sure if the document I have is proof my program meets the indicator?

A: Using the Program Quality Indicators for Out-of-School Time review the Suggested Documentation section for list of examples. During the validation call, the Validator will ask questions and request additional documentation for indicators that were selected and do not yet meet the indicator.

Q: How will I get a copy of my Self-Assessment Survey?

A: A copy of your Self-Assessment Survey will be uploaded to the program's Dropbox folder within a week of submission.

Q: How do I provide my documentation for each of the indicators I selected?

A: Programs provide documentation for review by creating a Dropbox account and sharing a folder where the documentation has been uploaded with the validation team at ECIC. Guidance on how to create a Dropbox, create a folder, upload into the folder and how to share that folder are available at: http://greatstarttoquality.org/out-of-school-time.

Validation

Q: What is validation?

A: Validation is an in-depth review of all uploaded documentation to verify that the program quality indicators selected by the program, in their Self-Assessment Survey, are currently in practice. It includes a call between the Validator and the program contact person to discuss selected indicators and supporting documentation.

Q: What is the validation process?

A: The process starts when the Validator receives the completed SAS and supporting documents.

1) Next the Validator will review SAS selections and supporting documentation. If an indicator does not have any supporting documentation, credit cannot be earned.
2) Once the validator has completed the initial review of the program's SAS and supporting documentation they will contact the program to schedule a validation call.
3) During the validation call, the Validator will ask clarifying questions and programs may identify additional documentation that they would like to submit.
4) After the additional documentation is uploaded the Validator will review and finalize the validation report.
5) This report will be uploaded into the program's Dropbox.

Q: How long will I wait for the validation call?

A: Validators will work as quickly and thoroughly as possible to complete initial validations. Programs should expect to be contacted within 14 business days to schedule their call. Programs should mark the time of the call on their calendar and prepare to set aside about an hour of time for the conversation. If you miss the scheduling call, a voicemail will be left with the validator's contact information for you to return the call. The program must make contact with the Validator within three business days to

schedule the validation, or the program will be declined due to no contact.

Q: What can I expect during my validation call?

A: The call will take about an hour with the validator asking any questions they have about the program. You also have the opportunity to ask clarifying questions. Together you will identify any additional documents that should be uploaded to support the program's validation.

Q: What do I need for my validation call?

A: To be prepared for your call it is recommend that you have the following materials at hand:

- The Great Start to Quality Program Quality Indicator Guidance Document
- The completed Self-Assessment Survey (this will be provided to you in Dropbox)
- Access to your uploaded documents
- A list of all staff (director/site supervisor, leads, assistants) with qualifications and hire dates

Q: What if I miss the phone call for my Validation?

A: The Validator will leave a message with a number to call to reschedule. You have three business days to contact the Validator and reschedule your validation. If you do not, you will need to complete Step 4, submitting the program for validation, again.

Q: How do I submit additional documents?

A: If additional documents are identified, an email will be sent that lists the documents you identified. To upload them, simply return to your Dropbox folder and add the documents. Please **do not remove** any documents from your Dropbox folder; just add the additional pieces.

Q: When will we be able to see the difference between our published rating and our self-assessed rating, if there is one?

A: This information will be made available inside of the program's Validation Report. Programs could also

use the [Out-of-School Time Self-Assessment Survey Tracking Sheet](#) to tally their own score, as they respond to each indicator.

Q: When will the validated rating be available?

A: Great Start to Quality is committed to moving programs through the validation process in a timely manner and will contact participants as quickly as possible after their validation is complete. You will receive an email alerting you that the validation report is available in Dropbox. This email will also have next steps for publishing the rating.

Q: My rating is lower than what the program self-assessed at, why is that?

A: The validation of one or more of the indicators was different from what you marked on your Self-Assessment Survey based on the review of the evidence provided, resulting in a lower overall rating. Review your Validation Report to understand where there is a difference between your self-assessment rating and your final validated rating.

Q: When is a program's rating published?

A: A rating is posted after a program completes the rating process. Depending on your program, this may be after validation or after assessment has been completed. If you wish to decline the program's rating email outofschooltime@ecic4kids.org with the subject line: Decline Our Rating & License Number.

Q: I have some questions about my final score and rating, who is the best person to contact?

A: The primary program contact should email Great Start to Quality at outofschooltime@ecic4kids.org.

Assessment

Q: What is Assessment?

A: Assessment is an opportunity to have a valid and reliable Assessor visit your program and administer the *School Age Program Quality Assessment Plus Extension* which is owned by the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality.

If your program receives a 4 or 5 Star validation, you will have the choice to move on to the on-site assessment observation using the SA-PQA. You will receive a detailed assessment report and a final published rating once the assessment is complete.

During the process, programs will receive the assessment window (typically a four-week window) after completing the validation. The assessment day should be a regular program day, when most children are typically in attendance.

Please note: For a program to receive a 4 Star rating the SA-PQA score must be a 3.5 or higher. For a program to receive a 5 Star rating the SA-PQA score must be 4.5 or higher.

Q: What should be expected during an Assessment visit?

A: Programs can expect one Assessor to visit them during the assessment. The amount of time an Assessor will spend observing the program will be determined by the amount of time needed to observe each of the SA-PQA items. For example, if the Assessor arrives in the morning and outdoor time is not scheduled until later in the day, the Assessor will remain until this can be observed.

The Assessor will be happy to introduce themselves to the staff and children and explain their purpose for visiting the program. If this would be helpful to put the children in your program at ease, please ask the Assessor to do so. After this point, however, they will focus on observation and avoid engaging directly with staff or schoolagers.

Q: How many assessments will need to be completed during the Assessment visit?

A: One.

Q: How should I prepare for Assessment?

A: First, you should communicate with the families whose schoolagers are in your care that an Assessor will be visiting the program to observe. It is recommended that staff be made aware of the possibility they will be observed and should be encouraged to continue with usual programming. Please avoid altering anything about the program in preparation for the assessment; the observation is meant to capture a typical day. This includes something as small as offering the Assessor a chair or a snack; they are there to observe the program and should not be accommodated in a way that changes the environment.

Q: Can I see the Assessment tool?

A: The SA-PQA Plus Extension is available to the public on the Weikart Center for Program Quality website.

Out-of-School Time Self-Assessment Survey Tracking Sheet

This tool can be used to track the indicators you select 'Yes' to in the Self-Assessment Survey, which documents you upload to support the indicator, and how many points the program could potentially earn during the validation process. The tracking sheet is set up in the same order as the Self-Assessment Survey and can be used as a companion document to support the submission of the Self-Assessment Survey for validation.

For example:

Family and Community Partnerships					
Indicator	Self-Assessment Point Value	Selected 'Yes'	Potential Points Earned	Document Title to Support Indicator	Uploaded
Program offers education opportunities for all families.	1	☒	1	Parent Handbook	☒
Provider engages in informal communication with families.	1	☐	0	-	☐
Program has partnerships that take basic steps to facilitate schoolagers' transitions before and after school, and between and among programs, agencies and schools.	1	☒	1	Transition Policy	☒

After completing the tracking sheet and uploading all documentation, the Potential Points Earned column can be filled out to see the program's self-assessment score and possible star rating. To calculate the possible star rating, make sure the program has earned the minimum number of points in each category for the corresponding star level. For example, a program has self-assessed at a 22/50 which falls in the 2 Star point range. This program would need to have also earned the minimum number of points in two of the five categories to receive a 2 Star rating.

Category	Total Points Per Section	Minimum Point Distribution			
		2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
Family and Community Partnerships	8	4	4	6	6
Environment	8	2	4	6	6
Curriculum and Instruction	12	4	6	8	8
Administration and Management	6	2	4	4	4
Staff Qualifications and Professional Development	16	3	6	8	8
Additional points in any other category		1	2	6	10
Minimum Required Points for Rating	50	16 points total and minimum points in 2 of 5 categories	26 points total and minimum points in 3 of 5 categories	38 points total and minimum points in 4 of 5 categories	42 points total and minimum points in 5 of 5 categories
PQA Score		N/A	N/A	≥ 3.5	≥ 4.5

Family and Community Partnerships					
Indicator	**Self–Assessment Point Value**	**Selected 'Yes'**	**Potential Points Earned**	**Document Title to Support Indicator**	**Uploaded**
Program offers education opportunities for all families.	1	☐			☐
Provider engages in informal communication with families.	1	☐			☐
Program has partnerships that take basic steps to facilitate schoolagers' transitions before and after school, and between and among programs, agencies and schools.	1	☐			☐
Program delivers communication, education, informational materials and opportunities for families are delivered in a way that meets diverse needs (e.g. literacy level, language, cultural appropriateness).	1	☐			☐
Families and schoolagers have input into the design of the program.	2	☐			☐
Program has a written policy to provide or connect families to appropriate comprehensive services.	1	☐			☐
Total Potential Points for Family and Community Partnerships _____					

Environment					
Indicator	**Self-Assessment Point Value**	**Selected 'Yes'**	**Potential Points Earned**	**Document Title to support Indicator**	**Uploaded**
Program demonstrates that it has lower adult: child ratios than required by licensing.	2	☐			☐
Program dedicates 20 percent of daily program time to outdoor recreation, sports, or fitness activities, with appropriate indoor physical activities available when weather or other factors prohibit play.	2	☐			☐
Program has a written policy to address and observe daily mental health and well-being of schoolagers.	2	☐			☐
Program addresses the nutritional needs of schoolagers by providing nutrition food choices and nutritional education.	2	☐			☐
Total Potential Points for Environment _____					

Curriculum and Instruction					
Indicator	**Self-Assessment Point Value**	**Selected 'Yes'**	**Potential Points Earned**	**Document Title to support Indicator**	**Uploaded**
Program has a written statement of educational and developmental priorities for all schoolagers that is available to families.	2	☐			☐
Program has a plan in place to ensure there is youth voice and engagement, including leadership opportunities for schoolagers during the program.	2	☐			☐
Program has a written policy and plan in place to ensure that planned activities and academic experiences incorporate the diversity of the schoolagers and families within the program.	2	☐			☐
Program has a written plan for serving schoolagers with special needs.	2	☐			☐
Program has a written plan and process in place to ensure that planned activities and academic experience provide a variety of hands-on developmentally appropriate experiences.	2	☐			☐
Total Potential Points for Curriculum and Instruction _____					

Administration and Management					
Indicator	**Self-Assessment Point Value**	**Selected 'Yes'**	**Potential Points Earned**	**Document Title to support Indicator**	**Uploaded**
Program has written personnel policies and procedures (staff handbook) that includes at a minimum a written plan for: staff orientation, retention, evaluation and individual professional development plans.	2	☐			☐
Program has a formal advisory committee that meets regularly to coordinate programming, curriculum, goals, policies, and procedures.	1	☐			☐
Program has a flexible benefit plan that may include health insurance, tuition assistance, and other benefits for staff.	1	☐			☐
Program has paid leave time for full-time employees that may include holiday, vacation, education, or sick time.	1	☐			☐
Program has a documented, graduated salary scale that takes into account education and experience.	1	☐			☐
Total Potential Points for Administration and Management _____					

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development					
Administrator/Director/Site Supervisor Qualifications					
Indicator	**Self-Assessment Point Value**	**Selected 'Yes'**	**Potential Points Earned**	**Document Title to support Indicator**	**Uploaded**
N/A or None	0	--	--	--	--
Out-of-school time Program Director or Site Supervisor has <u>one</u> of the following: • 60 semester hours with 12 semester hours in a child-related field <u>and</u> 1,200 hours of experience with schoolagers <u>OR</u> • A valid Child Development Associate (CDA) or Montessori credential with 12 semester hours in a child-related field <u>and</u> 960 hours of experience with schoolagers	1	☐			☐
Out-of-school time Program Director or Site Supervisor has a valid Michigan School Age Youth Development Credential with 12 semester hours in a child- related field <u>and</u> 960 hours of experience with schoolagers.	2	☐			☐
Out-of-school time Program Director or Site Supervisor has: • An Associate's degree in a child-related field with 960 hours of experience with schoolagers <u>OR</u> • 60 semester hours in a program leading to a Bachelor's degree in a child- related field with at least 24 of those semester hours in a child-related field <u>and</u> 960 hours of experience with schoolagers <u>OR</u> • A Bachelor's degree or higher in a child-related field	3	☐			☐
Out-of-school time Program Director or Site Supervisor has a Bachelor's degree or higher in a child-related field <u>AND</u>: • A valid Michigan School Age Youth Development Credential <u>OR</u> • 960 hours of experience with schoolagers	4	☐			☐
Total Potential Points for Administrator Qualifications _____					

Schoolage Educator Qualifications					
N/A or None	0	- -	--	- -	--
At least one staff has, at a minimum, • A valid Michigan School Age Youth Development Credential OR • At least 25 percent of school age staff has a Michigan School Age Youth Development Certificate	2	☐			☐
At least 25 percent of staff has, at a minimum, one of the following: • A Michigan School Age Youth Development Credential OR • At least an Associate's degree in a child-related field OR • 60 semester hours or higher with 12 semester hours in a child-related field	3	☐			☐
At least 50 percent of staff has, at a minimum, one of the following: • A Michigan School Age Youth Development Credential OR • At least an Associate's degree in a child-related field OR • 60 semester hours or higher with 12 semester hours in a child-related field	4	☐			☐
100 percent of staff has, at a minimum, one of the following: • A Michigan School Age Youth Development Credential OR • At least an Associate's degree in a child-related field OR • 60 semester hours or higher with 12 semester hours in a child-related field	5	☐			☐
Total Potential Points for Schoolage Educator Qualifications _____					

Professional Development and Other Staffing					
Director and **all** program staff complete at least 24 hours of professional development annually.	2	☐			☐
Annual professional development attended includes at least two hours focused on cultural competence or inclusive practices related to serving schoolagers with special needs or disabilities.	2	☐			☐
Annual professional development attended by staff has at least two hours focused specifically on family engagement.	2	☐			☐
Program develops quality improvement plan designed to improve quality in staff qualifications and progress is monitored by a quality improvement consultant.	1	☐			☐
Total Potential Points for Professional Development and Other Staffing _____					

To determine the Self-Assessment Score, add the total potential points for each category above. This will determine the programs Self-Assessment Score. Total score is based out of 50 points.

Potential points earned in:	Total Potential Points	Category Points
Family and Community Partnerships		8
Environment		8
Curriculum		12
Administration and Management		6
Administrator Qualifications		4
Schoolage Educator Qualifications		5
Professional Development and Other Staffing		7
Program Total		**50**