ARKANSAS REGISTER



Proposed Rule Cover Sheet

Secretary of State John Thurston 500 Woodlane Street, Suite 026 Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1094 (501) 682-5070 www.sos.arkansas.gov



Name of Department								
Agency or Division Name								
Other Subdivision or Department, If Applicable								
Previous Agency Name, If Applicable								
Contact Person_								
Contact E-mail								
Contact Phone_								
Name of Rule								
Newspaper Name								
Date of Publishing								
Final Date for Public Comment								
Location and Time of Public Meeting								

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS COMPLETELY

DEPARTMENT Department of Human Services											
DIV	VISION	Division of C	hild Care and Early	Childhood Education							
PE	PERSON COMPLETING THIS STATEMENT Laura Webb										
TE]	LEPHONE <u>(</u> 501) 320.8933	FAX (501) 682.48	897 EMAIL: laura	.webb@dhs.a	rkansas.gov					
			\$ 25-15-204(e), pleas the questionnaire a	se complete the follow nd proposed rules.	ing Financial	Impact					
SHORT TITLE OF THIS RULE Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System											
1.	Does this propo	sed, amended,	or repealed rule hav	re a financial impact?	Yes 🔀	No 🗌					
2.	economic, or ot	her evidence a	easonably obtainable nd information avail d alternatives to the r		Yes 🖂	No 🗌					
3.			tives to this rule, was	s this rule determined 1?	Yes 🔀	No 🗌					
	If an agency is p	proposing a mo	ore costly rule, pleas	e state the following:							
			fits of the more cost	ly rule justify its additiation in Arkansas.	ional cost;						
	To give paren	ts options for h	of the more costly runigher quality care for he care they are proving	or their children in Ark	cansas, as wel	l as to recognize					
	so, please It will enable	explain; and; parents to enro	oll their children in h	interests of public hea igher quality early car th, safety, and welfare	e and education	·					
	(d) Whether the reason is within the scope of the agency's statutory authority; and if so, please explain.This is within the scope of Arkansas Code §§ 20-78-206 and 25-10-129.										
4.	4. If the purpose of this rule is to implement a federal rule or regulation, please state the following:										
	(a) What is th	e cost to imple	ement the federal rule	e or regulation?		_					
<u>Cu</u>	ırrent Fiscal Ye	<u>ar</u>		Next Fiscal Year							
Fee Ca	eneral Revenue deral Funds sh Funds ecial Revenue	\$0.00 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$0.00		General Revenue Federal Funds Cash Funds Special Revenue	\$0.00 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$0.00						

Other (Identify)	\$0.00	Other (Identify)	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00	Total	\$0.00
(b) What is	the additional cost of the s	tate rule?	
Current Fisc	al Year	Next Fiscal Ye	<u>ar</u>
	\$\frac{\$3,856,010}{\$0.00}\$ superscript by \$\frac{\$3,856,010}{\$0.00}\$ \$\frac{\$3,856,010}{\$0.00}\$ \$\frac{\$3,856,010}{\$0.00}\$ al estimated cost by fiscal parts of the stimated cost by fiscal part	General Revenu Federal Funds Cash Funds Special Revenu Other (Identify Total year to any private individual, eentify the entity(ies) subject to the	\$1,151,000 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$0.00 \$1,151,000 sntity and business subject to the
they are affected Current Fiscal Y	ed.	Next Fiscal Ye	
	o the agency's answers to Q	Next Fiscal Ye \$ Questions #5 and #6 above, is the	ere a new or increased cost
private entity, 1		sand dollars (\$100,000) per year ernment, county government, mid?	
time of filing the	he financial impact stateme	Yes No No No leade Ann. § 25-15-204(e)(4) to finent. The written findings shall be hall include, without limitation,	ile written findings at the pe filed simultaneously
(1) a statement	of the rule's basis and pur	pose;	
` <i>'</i>	n the agency seeks to addrequired by statute;	ess with the proposed rule, inclu-	ding a statement of whether
(a) justi (b) desc	on of the factual evidence the files the agency's need for cribes how the benefits of the rule's costs;		ory objectives and justify

- (4) a list of less costly alternatives to the proposed rule and the reasons why the alternatives do not adequately address the problem to be solved by the proposed rule;
- (5) a list of alternatives to the proposed rule that were suggested as a result of public comment and the reasons why the alternatives do not adequately address the problem to be solved by the proposed rule;
- (6) a statement of whether existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the proposed rule and, if existing rules have created or contributed to the problem, an explanation of why amendment or repeal of the rule creating or contributing to the problem is not a sufficient response; and
- (7) an agency plan for review of the rule no less than every ten (10) years to determine whether, based upon the evidence, there remains a need for the rule including, without limitation, whether:
 - (a) the rule is achieving the statutory objectives;
 - (b) the benefits of the rule continue to justify its costs; and
 - (c) the rule can be amended or repealed to reduce costs while continuing to achieve the statutory objectives.

Statement of Necessity and Rule Summary Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System

Statement of Necessity:

Better Beginnings requirements have not changed since they were implemented in 2010. These changes are necessary to encourage advancement in the quality of early care and education in the State of Arkansas by adding three (3) additional levels to the current tiered quality rating and improvement system. This will give families additional information and options when selecting an early care and education provider for their child. It will also provide an opportunity for providers to be recognized for the high quality of care that they are providing. The change is also necessary to clarify rules for the application and recertification process as well as adverse action. The amendment updates the name of the manual to the Better Beginnings Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Summary:

The change adds levels four (4) through six (6) to the current tiered quality rating and improvement system. The new levels build upon the already existing levels, one (1) through three (3), and are optional for providers to participate in. Providers currently participating would have the option of maintaining their current level or applying for a higher level. Participation at the higher levels will give them a new rating available for parents and the public to see, enabling them to choose higher quality care for their child.

In addition, the rule change updates, clarifies, and provides additional details regarding the application and recertification process, and adverse actions. Also, the rule organization and formatting is updated.

NOTICE OF RULE MAKING

The Director of the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education of the Department of Human Services announces for a public comment period of thirty (30) calendar days a notice of rulemaking for the following proposed rule under one or more of the following chapters, subchapters, or sections of the Arkansas Code: §§20-78-206 and 25-10-129.

Effective January 1, 2023:

The Director of the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education amends the Better Beginnings Quality Rating and Improvement System. The amendment updates the name of the manual to the Better Beginnings Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. The change adds levels four (4) through six (6) to the current tiered quality rating and improvement system. The new levels build upon the already existing levels, one (1) through three (3), and participation is optional for providers. Additional revisions clarify the application and recertification process, and adverse actions. Finally, the manual is reorganized and reformatted.

The proposed rule is available for review at the Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Rules Promulgation, 2nd floor Donaghey Plaza South Building, 7th and Main Streets, P. O. Box 1437, Slot S295, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-1437. You may also access and download the proposed rule at https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/do-business-with-dhs/proposed-rules/. Public comments must be submitted in writing at the above address or at the following email address: ORP@dhs.arkansas.gov. All public comments must be received by DHS no later than **September 19, 2022**. Please note that public comments submitted in response to this notice are considered public documents. A public comment, including the commenter's name and any personal information contained within the public comment, will be made publicly available and may be seen by various people.

A public hearing by remote access only through a Zoom webinar will be held on September 13, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. and public comments may be submitted at the hearing. Individuals can access this public hearing at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88081520577. The webinar ID is 880 8152 0577. If you would like the electronic link, "one-tap" mobile information, listening only dial-in phone numbers, or international phone numbers, please contact ORP at ORP@dhs.arkansas.gov.

If you need this material in a different format, such as large print, contact the Office of Rules Promulgation at 501-534-4138.

The Arkansas Department of Human Services is in compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act and is operated, managed and delivers services without regard to religion, disability, political affiliation, veteran status, age, race, color or national origin.

4502028114

Tonya Williams, Director

Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

Better Beginnings <u>Tiered</u> Quality Rating <u>and</u> Improvement System



Provider RULE BOOK

Arkansas Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
https://arbetterbeginnings.com/

Licensing and Accreditation Unit

Better Beginnings
P.O. Box 1437, Slot S-150
Little Rock, AR 72203-1437
501-682-8590

BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND HISTORY

In 1993, the legislature passed a bill enabling the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (the "Division" or "DCCECE") to create a system by which licensed child care childcare and early childhood education entities could be certified as "quality." AOne goal of this system was to help the families of Arkansas to understand that providers, achieving this certification, consistently provided an early care and education environment above the minimum licensing requirements. A more broad The larger goal was to encourage and achieve better life longlifelong outcomes for children, by helping to assure that their time in child care childcare and early childhood education is nurturing, enriching, and meaningful.

In 2004, the state of Arkansas was awarded a State Maternal and Child Health Care grant which created the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative (AECCS). Over almost five (5) years, committees, which involved more than two hundred (200) child-care and early childhood related professionals met, researched, and created an improved approach to "quality." The result was a tiered quality rating and improvement system for our state called "Better Beginnings," implemented in 2010.

<u>Since 1993 over 25% of our child care and early childhood education providers have</u> participated in the system and provided feedback to the state. <u>During Since</u> this time, the state <u>has</u> dedicated much time and many resources to finding ways to meet the needs of the children, and to assist programs in overcoming obstacles to participation.

In 2004 the state of Arkansas was awarded a State Maternal and Child Health Care grant which created the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative (AECCS). Over almost five years, committees, which involved more than two hundred child care and early childhood related professionals met, researched and created an improved approach to "quality." The result is a revised quality system for our state called "Better Beginnings."

"Better Beginnings," Arkansas' revised <u>tiered</u> quality rating <u>and</u> improvement system is available to every licensed and registered <u>child carechildcare provider</u> in Arkansas. The system is designed to help programs improve their day_-to_-day environment for children, and to establish proven administrative practices. Tools and trainings are readily available for providers as they move along the path from <u>minimum licensing to</u>-Better Beginnings levels <u>1 (one)</u> through - 2 and 3 6 (six (1-6)).

<u>Better Beginnings is available to every licensed and registered child-care provider in Arkansas.</u>

<u>Thank you for your interest in Better Beginnings_ – w</u><u>W</u>hether you are a family home, <u>an out-of-school time program</u> youth development program, or a <u>part or full timechild-care</u> center-for <u>children</u>, — your participation is imperative for the future of Arkansas. We are grateful to all

those who have so ardently worked to create Better Beginnings and make it what it is today. ÷ Every Child Deserves Our Best!



FOREWORD

This booklet provides:

- An overview of Better Beginnings
- The rule book containing the Better Beginnings Rules

Better Beginnings is administered by the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Licensing and Accreditation Unit. Questions and or further information are available by contacting:

P.O. Box 1437, Slot S 150 Little Rock, AR 72203 1437 (501) 682-8590

Better Beginnings Overview

Better Beginnings is a <u>tiered</u> quality rating <u>and</u> improvement system (<u>TQRIS</u>) which is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education programs. Program types include <u>center based</u> care, family child care, and <u>school ageout-of-school time</u> <u>care</u> programs... (also called "stand alone" programs when they do not also serve children under age 5).

In Arkansas, the improvement system, Better Beginnings, is a "building block" approach, which means that programs must meet all requirements at one level before moving to the next. Licensing, or Minimum Licensing Requirements (MLR), is the foundation on which Better Beginnings is built. The requirements at level 1-(one (1) of Better Beginnings align with MLR and help help the administrator-director or primary caregiver start-begin the process for journey towards quality improvement. At level 2-(two (2), the staff becomes more involved in the process. Levels 3-(three (3) and above sets even higher requirements for all components.

Many rResources are available and have been specifically designed to help providers understand how to and meet each requirement. The resources will help providers become more knowledgeable and effective for Better Beginnings in the lives of children.

1.0 RULES AND REGULATIONS

1.00 REGULATORY AUTHORITY

- 1.01 These regulations are enacted pursuant to Arkansas Code Ann. §20-78-201-226 as amended.
- 1.02 These regulations shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education regulations governing Better Beginnings, Arkansas's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

2.00 PURPOSE

- 2.01 It is the purpose of these regulations to set the general guidelines for the operation of Better Beginnings. Arkansas' Quality Rating Improvement System.
- 2.02 Participation in the Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System is <u>v</u>Voluntary. Providers who choose to receive Child Care Development Block Grant Funding (CCDBGF) must be a Better Beginnings participant at the level determined by the Division. -This system is intended to certify quality status to child-care facilities that meet Better Beginnings requirements as set forth in these regulations.
- 2.03 Designation of certified status for any child-care facility will qualify taxpayers for the following:
 - A. Under Act 820 of 1993, corporations that build and equip a certified child-care center will be exempt from the state compensating tax levied by Ark. Code Ann. §26-53-101 et. seq (1987). Construction materials and furnishings purchased for use in the initial construction and equipping of a child-care center, for the exclusive purpose of providing child-care to the corporation's employees, will be subject to this exemption.
 - B.—Under Act 820 of 1993, a business that qualifies for the exemption from the Gross Receipts Tax under Ark. Code Ann. §26-52-401(29), shall be allowed an income tax credit of three and nine-tenths percent (3.9%) three and nine-tenths percent (3.9%) of the annual salary of employees employed exclusively in providing child care services.

<u>B.</u>

- C. Under Act 1268 of 1993, enhanced income tax credits in the amount of twenty percent (20%) of the federal child-care credit as allowed under Section 21 (twenty-one) of the Internal Revenue Code will be available to qualified taxpayers who incur child-care expenses at child-care facilities that are certified at Better Beginnings level 2 (two (2) or above.
- C. Under Act 1268 of 1993, enhanced income tax credits in the amount of twenty percent (20%) of the federal child care credit as allowed under Section 21 (twentyone) of the Internal Revenue Code will be available to qualified taxpayers who incur child care expenses at child care facilities certified at Better Beginnings level 2 (two) or above. Better Beginnings level 3.

3.00 ACRONYMS

3.01

ADE	Arkansas Department of Education						
ABC	Arkansas Better Chance						
AEDC	Arkansas Economic Development Commission						
BAS	Business Administration Scale						
CARF	Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities: Child and Youth						
	Services Standards						
CDA	Child Development Associate Credential						
DCCECE	Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education						
DHS	Department of Human Services						
ECERS-R	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale						
ERS	Environment Rating Scale						
FCCERS R	Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale						
ITERS-R	Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale						
MLR	Minimum Licensing Requirements						
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children						
NAFCC	National Association for Family Child Care						
PAS	Program Administration Scale						
<u>PDR</u>	Professional Development Registry						
SACERS	School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale						
PDRTQRIS	Professional Development Registry Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement						
	<u>System</u>						
YPQA	Youth Program Quality Assessment						

4.00 AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY

<u>Arkansas Better Beginnings – Center – Based Requirements page 2</u>

- 4.01 The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (the Division DCCECE) will coordinate and administer Better Beginnings.
- 4.02 The Division is authorized to make temporary revisions to these rules as deemed necessary during a Governor declared public health emergency or natural disaster impacting the State of Arkansas. These revisions will be posted on the Better Beginnings website.
- 4.024.03 The Better Beginnings Coordinator Program Administrator or designee will have final approval of applications for certification as reviewed and recommended by the Better Beginnings staff.
- 4.034.04 By December 31st -of each year, the Division will be responsible for providing verification to the Department of Finance & Administration of the child-care facilities that were qualified for certification at level 2 (two (2) and level 3 above, in the current calendar year.
- 4.044.05 Each December, the Division will be responsible for providing verification to the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) of the child-care facilities that qualified for Better Beginnings certification in the current calendar year.
- 4.054.06 The Division will verify the license status of all applicants, as well as status with other DHS programs.
- 4.064.07 The Division <u>or Division consultants</u> will provide technical assistance through consultants to any facilities desiring to achieve certification.
- 4.074.08 The Division will be responsible for the process of recertifying facilities (See Section 7.00 Application, 8.00 Application Review Process, and 9.00 Maintaining Certification).
- 4.084.09 Facilities will be notified of their certification status. The certification notice will denote the level of certification achieved.

5.00 ELIGIBILITY

- 5.01 All <u>licensed</u>, <u>registered</u>, <u>and church operated exempt</u> child-care facilities, as defined under Ark. Code Ann. §20-78-202, exclusive of foster homes, group homes, and custodial institutions, are eligible to apply for certified status.
- 5.02 All child-care facilities, except those excluded in section 5.01 above, operating under a regular child care license, new provisional New Provisional or Regular license, or registration, or church operated exemption as issued by the Division are eligible to apply. Entities with multiple

sites, each holding a separate license number must apply for certification for each site <u>individually</u>.

- 5.03 All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services. A facility in "good standing" is not currently debarred, defunded, excluded, or under adverse licensing actionadverse action with licensing or other DHS programs.
- 5.04 A certified facility which becomes the subject of an investigation may retain current certification until the investigation is concluded. The outcome of the investigation may be considered in determining continuation of certification.
- <u>5.055.04</u> Applicants and certified facilities must make their facility accessible <u>at all times</u> <u>during the regular program hours</u> for program reviews and environmental assessments. Such assessments may be unannounced.
- 5.065.05 Any of the following situations (including but not limited to conditions below) may result in an application being denied, a reduction in level, or removal of Better Beginnings status:
 - A. Ineligibility to participate according to section 5.00 Eligibility;
 - B. Application documentation which is incomplete or does not meet the intent of the requirements according to sections 6.00, 7.00, 8.00, or 9.00;-
 - C. Failure to continue to meet the requirements for the component areas for the level which the facility is assigned;
 - D. Numerous or serious deficiencies cited by licensing;
 - E. Substantiation of complaints received by the Division;-
 - F. Being placed on Corrective Action or Adverse Action by any program in DHS;-
 - G. Changes in the license status of the facility; or-
 - H. Falsification of any document or submission of false information to any DHS Division.-
- <u>5.06</u> Facilities that have been denied certification or have had certification removed by reason of ineligibility, according to any rules of this section, <u>may will</u> be eligible to re-apply in twelve (12) months unless otherwise notified by the Division.

6.00 COMPONENT AREAS, REQUIREMENTS, AND LEVELS

- 6.01 There are five four (54) component areas in Better Beginnings:
 - Administration, Administrator/
 - Staff Qualifications and Professional Development,
 - Learning Environment, Learning Environment, and

• Child Health and Development-

There are requirements to be met in each component area in each of the three (3) levels. The components, requirements, and levels are on the following seven (7) pages.



ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS CENTER BASED REQUIREMENTS

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for Level	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		1	Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
<u>A.</u>	1.A.1 Administrator	2.A.1 A program review	3.A.1 The facility shall	4.A.1 The facility shall	5.A.1 The facility shall	6.A.1 The facility shall
Administration	attends "PAS Basics"	is shall be completed by	scores an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
	training.	a certified PAS assessor.	4.00 or higher on PAS	4.00 or higher on PAS.	5.00 or higher on PAS.	6.00 or higher on PAS.
		PAS is not required for	items 1-21 (items 5 and	Schoolage programs	School-age programs	Schoolage programs
	The facility has a	school age programs	6 <u>are</u> scored, but <u>are</u> not	using YPQA shall have	using YPQA shall have a	using YPQA shall have a
	license in New	using YPQA. These	included in the average).	a PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of
	Provisional or Regular	programs shall have a	Schoolage programs	4.00 or higher.	4.25 or higher.	4.75 or higher.
	status.	PQA Form B review	using YPQA shall have a			
		completed by a reliable	PQA Form B score of	4.A.2 The director		
	1.A.2 The facility may	everyassessor. Every	3.75 or higher.	shall implement at		
	have a program review	three years.		least one (1)		
	completed by a		3.A.2 Administrator The	additional action step		
	certified PAS assessor.	2.A.2 Administrator The	director shall completes	for a total of two (2).		
		director shall reviews	the Strengthening			
	School age programs	the Strengthening	Families online self-			
	using YPQA may have	Families website,	assessment for three (3)			
	a PQA Form B review	webinar receives	or more Strategies.			
	completed by a	training in the				
	reliable assessor.	Strengthening Families	3.A.3 The Ffacility shall			
		Initiative complete a	develop s a			
		Strengthening Families	Strengthening Families			
		training listed on the	action plan and			
		<u>PDR</u> .	implements at least one			
			(1) action step.			
Administrator /	<u>Qualifications</u>	2.B.1 All directors and at	<u>Qualifications</u>			
<u>B.</u>	(Education and	least fifty percent (50%)	(Education and			
Staff	Experience)	of teaching staff shall	Experience)			
Qualifications	1.B.1 The facility has a	complete "Early Learning	2 D 4 A dualistic tensor TI			
and Professional	<u>license in New</u>	Standards (ELS) Basics	3.B.1 Administrator The			
<u>Development</u>		Training." The director	director shall meets			

Professional	Provisional or Regular	and school-age staff	requirements for PDR		
Development	status.	shall complete	Intermediate 1 or		
		"Developmental Assets	higher, includinghave a		
	1.B.1 Administrator	Training."	minimum of 4530		
	and teaching staff are		<u>cumulative</u> clock hours		
	members of the PDR	2.B.2 All directors and	of training in the PDR in		
	Registry and/or the	fifty percent (50%) of	the areas of program		
	ADE Registry.	teaching staff shall	planning, / management		
		complete an ERS	and/or leadership.		
	1.B.2 Administrator	training; if the facility is			
	meets requirements	using YPQA school-age,	3.B.2 Within the first		
	for PDR Foundation 3	staff shall complete	year of employment all		
	or higher, including 21	YPQA training.	staff will meet		
	clock hours of training		requirements for PDR		
	in program planning /	2.B.3 The director and	Foundation 1 or higher		
	management / and/or	kitchen manager (if	and at least 50% of		
	leadership.	applicable) shall	teaching staff meet		
		participate in at least	requirements for PDR		
	1.B.3 Within the first	two (2) clock hours of	Foundation 3 or higher.		
	year of employment	training on nutrition for			
	all staff meet	children annually.			
	requirements for PDR	0.0471			
	Foundation 1 or	2.B.4 The director shall			
	higher.	complete training on			
		developmentally			
		appropriate physical			
		activities for			
		children.Qualifications (Education and			
		Experience)			
		2.B.1 Administrator and			
		teaching staff maintain			
		membership in the PDR			
		Registry and/or ADE			
		registry.The director			
		shall have a minimum of			
		20 cumulative clock			
		hours of training in the			

	PDR in the areas	of		
	program plannir			
	management or			
	leadership.			
I	i eduersnip.			
1	20241			
	2.B.2 Administra			
	meets requirem			
	PDR Intermedia:	te 1 or		
	higher, including	; 30		
	clock hours of tr	aining in		
	program			
	planning/manag	ement		
	and/or leadersh	ip.		
	2.B.3 Within the	first		
	year of employn	nent all		
	staff meet requi	rements		
	for PDR Foundati	ion 1 or		
	higher and at lea	ast 50%		
	of teaching staff	meet		
	requirements fo	r PDR		
	foundation 2 or	higher.		

Arkansas Better Beginnings Center Based Requirements page

2

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	<u>LEVEL 5</u>	<u>LEVEL 6</u>
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for Level	requirements for Level	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		1	1 and Level 2	Levels 1 3	Levels 1 4	Levels 1 5
Administrator /	<u>Professional</u>	<u>Professional</u>	<u>Professional</u>			
Staff	<u>Development</u>	<u>Development</u>	<u>Development</u>			
Qualifications /						
Professional	1.B.4 Administrator	2.B.24 All administrators	2.B.23 All administrators			
Development	completes an ERS	and teaching staff shall	and directors and			
	training.	participate annually in	teaching staff shall			
		20 clock hours of	participate annually in			
	1.B.5 Administrator	approved professional	25 clock hours of			
	completes training	development_annually.;	approved professional			
	on developmentally	for administrator, at	development annually;			
	appropriate physical	least 3 clock hours must	for administrators, at			
	activities for	be in program	least 4 clock hours must			
	children.	planning/management	be in program			
		and/or leadership.	planning/management			
			and/or leadership.			
		2.B.15 All directors and Aat least 50% of				
		teaching staff shall				
		complete "Early Learning				
		Standards (ELS) Basics				
		trainingTraining.". The				
		director and ; Sschool -				
		age staff should shall				
		complete				
		"Developmental Assets				
		Training."				
		2.B.26 All administrative				
		directorsstaff and 50% of				
		teaching staff shall				
		complete an ERS				

tra	raining; if <u>the</u> facility is		
us	sing YPQA school		
sc l	chool- age staff		
sh	n <u>allould complete YPQA</u>		
tra	aining.		
2.1	B.<u>3</u>7 Administrator <u>The</u>		
dii	irector and kitchen		
m	nanager (if applicable)		
<u>sh</u>	nall participate annually		
in	at least 2 clock hours		
of	f training on nutrition		
fo	or children <u>annually</u> .		
<u>2.1</u>	.B.4 The director shall		
co	omplete training on		
de	evelopmentally		
ap	ppropriate physical		
ac	ctivities for children.		

Arkansas Better Beginnings – Center – Based Requirements page 3

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	<u>LEVEL 6</u>
		Must meet all requirements for	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		Level 1	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
			Level 1 and Level 2	<u>Levels 1 - 3</u>	<u>Levels 1 - 4</u>	<u>Levels 1 - 5</u>
<u>C.</u>	1.C.1 The facility has	2.C.1 All classrooms shall/program	3.C.1 All	4.C.1 Staff to child	5.C.1 Staff to child	6.C.1 Staff to child
Learning	a license in New	spaces have a minimum of two (2)	classrooms/program	ratios shall be	ratios shall be	ratios shall be
Environment /	Provisional or	clearly defined interest centers.	spaces shall have a	maintained as	maintained as	maintained as
Environment	Regular status.		minimum of three (3)	follows:	follows:	follows:
<u>Assessment</u>		2.C.2 Written daily plans for each	clearly defined interest	Birth-18 months	Birth-18 months 1:4	Birth-18 months 1:4
	1.C.1 ∧	group shall include all areas of	centers.	<u>1:4</u>	18-36 months 1:6	18-36 months 1:6
	developmentally	development as defined in the		18-36 months 1:7	2 ½ - 3 years 1:10	2 ½ - 3 years 1:10
	appropriate daily	Arkansas Child Development and	3.C.2 Staff maintain a	2 ½ - 3 years 1:11	4 years 1:10	4 years 1:10
	program schedule is	Early Learning Standards: Birth	portfolio for each	4 years 1:12	5 years and up 1:18	5 years and up 1:15
	posted in each	through 60 Months.	child.	5 years and up 1:18		
	classroom/program				5.C.2 The facility	6.C.2 The facility
	area.	2.C.3 Staff shall plan and	3.C.3 Facility The staff	4.C.2 The facility	shall score an	shall score an
		implement daily developmentally	shall develop develops	shall score an	average of 5.50 or	average of 6.00 or
	1.C.2 Staff develop	appropriate physical activities for	a current written	average of 5.00 or	higher on the ERS.	higher on the ERS.
	and implement	all children.	curriculum plan and	higher on the ERS.	Program areas	Program areas using
	written daily plans		daily plans that include	Program areas	reviewed with YPQA	reviewed with YPQA
	for each group.	2.C.1 The facility shall score an	learning goals for	reviewed with	shall score an	shall score an
		average of 3.00 or higher on the	children.	YPQA shall score an	average of 4.25 or	average of 4.50 or
	1.C.2 The facility	ERS review. Program areas		average of 4.00 or	<u>higher</u>	higher.
	may have an ERS	reviewed with YPQA shall score an	3.C.1 The facility shall	<u>higher.</u>		
	review.	average of 3.00 or higher.	score an average of			
			4.00 or higher on the			
			ERS. Program areas			
			reviewed with YPQA			

2.D.1 Facility scores an average of 3.00 or higher on the FRS for each classroom reviewed; classroom revie				shall score an average			
D. Environmental Accessment D. Child Health & Development D. Child Health & Development Accessment Development D. Child Health & Development Accessment Development D. Child Health & Development Accessment Development D. Child Health & Development D. D. The facility shall charses with families information regarding stages of development, and child development, and child development, and child development and child development, and child deve				of 3.75 or higher.			
D: Emvironmental Assessment 1.D.1 Facility completes-a-self- evaluation using applicable approved environment rating tools (ERS or VPQA). 1.D.1 The facility shall shares shift families information regarding medical homes for children, distribution of ARRidd-First information on child development sinformation on child development on child dev				3.C.2 The staff shall			
2.D.1 Facility scores an average of 3.00 or higher on the RRS for each classroom reviewed, classrooms reviewed, cl							
### Assessment 1.D.1 Facility completes a self-evaluation using applicable approved environment rating tools (ERS or YPCA). D. Child Health & Development D. 1.D.1 The facility shall shares with families information to families of uninsured children. 1.E.1 Facility documents distribution of ARKids First information to families of uninsured children. 1.E.2 Facility shares with families information to families of uninsured children. 1.E.2 Facility shares with families information to families of uninsured children. 2.D.2 The facility shall share with families information to annilies of uninsured children. 2.D.2 The facility shall share with families information to annilies of uninsured children. 2.D.2 The facility shall share with families information on child development, and children's health. 3.D.2 The facility shall share with families of uninsured children's health. 3.D.2 The facility shall development, and children's health. 4.E.2 Facility shalles approved tool tool tool to complete a self-assessment in a fourth module, braces with families information on child development, and children's health. 4.E.2 Facility shalles approved tool tool tool tool to complete a self-assessment in a fourth module, and activity for children. 5.D.2 The facility shall share information on child development, and children's health. 6.D.2 The facility shall use a pivision-approved tool to-complete a self-assessment in a fourth module, braces with families information on child development, and children's health. 6.D.2 The facility shall use a pivision-approved tool to-complete a self-assessment in a fourth module, braces with families information on child development, and children's health. 6.D.2 The facility shall use a pivision-approved tool to-complete a self-assessment in a fourth module, braces with families information on autivity or or inference with families information on child development and children's health. 6.D.2 The facility shall take the physical activity and nu				for each child.			
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information on child development and on children's health. Children's health. 2.D.3 All children, birth to kindergarten, shall have an annual and educational and educational Ale stages of development, and physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Llevel 2 2.D.3 All children, birth to kindergarten, shall have an annual developmental screening. Dhysical activity goal from the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Any medical course of development, and physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development, and physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development, and physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the completed action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the complete action plan in Llevel 2 Course of development and on the co		,					E D 2 The facility
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2.D.3 All children, birth to 1.E.3 Any medical and educational developmental screening. 2.D.3 All children, birth to to reassess their current status. to reassess their current status. developmental screening.			condiction incared with families.				
1.E.3 Any medical and educationalkindergarten, shall have an annual developmental screening.current status.learning, OR screen time self-		Simulation 5 ficultific	2.D.3 All children, birth to	action plan in Lievel 2			
and educational developmental screening. time self-		1.E.3 Any medical					
					23.7 2.72 244401		
assessments from		care plans involving					assessments from

<u>Arkansas Better Beginnings – Center – Based Requirements page 2</u>

a child are written and on file, and	2.D.4 The facility shall use a Division-approved tool to complete		Level 4 and Level 5 again to reassess
implementation is documented while	a self-assessment and create -and -implement -one		their current status.
maintaining confidentiality.	(1) -action plan in the area of nutrition		
	= 2.D.5 The facility shall -use a		
	Division-approved tool		
	the area of physical activity.		
	to -complete a self-assessment in the area of physical activity.		





<u>ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS – FAMILY CHILD CARE REQUIREMENTS</u>

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		Level 1	Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
<u>A.</u>	1.A.1 The facility has	2.A.1 A program	3.A.1 The Ffacility shall	4.A.1 The facility	5.A.1 The facility	6.A.1 The facility
Administration	a license in New	review is shall be	scores an average of	shall score an	shall score an	shall score an
	Provisional or	completed by a	4.00 or higher on BAS	average of 4.00 or	average of 5.00 or	average of 6.00 or
	Regular status.	certified BAS assessor.	items 2-10 (item 2 is	higher on BAS (item	higher on BAS (item	higher on BAS (item
			scored, but <u>is</u> not	2 is scored, but not	2 is scored, but not	2 is scored but not
	1.A.1 Primary	2.A.2 The Pprimary	included in <u>the</u>	included).	included).	included).
	caregiver attends	caregiver <u>shall</u> reviews	average).	included).	incidded).	meradea).
	"BAS Basics"	the Strengthening		4.A.2 The primary		
	training.	Families website,	3.A.2 The Pprimary	caregiver shall		
		webinar receives	caregiver <u>shall</u>	implement at least one		
	1.A.2 The facility	training in the	complete s <u>the</u>	(1) additional action		
	may have a program	Strengthening Families	Strengthening Families	step for a total of two		
	review completed by	Initiative complete a	online self-assessment	(2).		
	a certified BAS	Strengthening Families	for three (3) or more	<u>(2).</u>		
	assessor.	training listed on the	strategies.			
		PDR.				
			3.A.3 The Pprimary			
			caregiver shall develops			
			a Strengthening			
			Families action plan and			
			implements at least one			
			(1) action step.			
Administrator / B.	Qualifications	2.B.1 The primary	Qualifications			
Staff Qualifications	(Education and	caregiver shall	(Education and			
and/ Professional	Experience)	complete "Early	Experience)			
Development	1.B.1 Primary and	Learning Standards	3.B.1 Primary caregiver			
	secondary caregivers	Basics" training.	meets requirements for			

<u>Arkansas Better Beginnings – Center – Based Requirements page 2</u>

	appropriate physical		
	activities for children.		



Arkansas Better Beginnings – Family Child Care Requirements page 2

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		Level 1	Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
<u>C.</u>	1.C.1 The facility	2.C.1 The facility shall	3.C.1 The facility shall	4.C.1 The facility shall	5.C.1 The facility shall	6.C.1 The facility shall
Learning Environment	has a license in	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
Environment	New Provisional or	3.00 or higher on the	4.00 or higher on the	5.00 or higher on the	5.50 or higher on the	6.00 or higher on the
<u>Assessment</u> Administrate	Regular status.	FCCERS. Professional	FCCERS.	FCCERS.	FCCERS.	FCCERS.
/ Staff Qualifications		<u>Development</u>				
and/ Professional	1.C.2 The facility		3.C.2 Caregivers shall			
Development	may have a FCCERS	2.B.24 The Pprimary	maintain a portfolio			
	<u>review.</u>	caregiver and all	for each child.			
	<u>Professional</u>	secondary caregivers	<u>Professional</u>			
	<u>Development</u>	<u>shall</u> participates	Development			
	1.B.3 Primary	annually in 20 clock	3.B.3 The Pprimary			
	caregiver	hours of approved	caregiver <u>and all</u>			
	completes an ERS	professional	secondary caregivers			
	training.	development annually.	<u>shall participates</u>			
			annually in 25 clock			
	1.B.4 Primary	2.B.15 The Pprimary	hours of approved			
	caregiver	caregiver <u>shall</u>	professional			
	completes training	completes "Early	development.			
	on developmentally	Learning Standards				
	appropriate	Basics" training.				
	physical activities					
	for children.	2.B.2 The primary				
		caregiver shall				
		<u>complete an ERS</u>				
		training.				
		2.B.63 The Pprimary				
		caregiver shall				
		participates annually in at least 2 clock				
		hours of training on				

		nutrition for children				
		annually.				
		2.B.4 The primary				
		caregiver shall				
		complete training on				
		developmentally				
		appropriate physical				
		activities for children.				
<u>C.</u>	1.C.1 A	2.C.1 All Pprogram	3.C.1 All Pprogram	4.C.1 The facility shall	5.C.1 The facility shall	6.C.1 The facility shall
Learning Environmen	t+ developmentally	spaces shall have a	spaces shall have a	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
Environment Assessme	ent appropriate daily	minimum of two (2)	minimum of three (3)	5.00 or higher on the	5.50 or higher on the	6.00 or higher on the
	program schedule	clearly defined interest	clearly defined interest	FCCERS.	FCCERS.	FCCERS.
	is posted in each	centers.	centers.			
	program area.					
		2.C.2 Written daily	3.C.2 Caregivers			
	1.C.2 Caregivers	plans for each group	maintain a portfolio			
	develop and	shall include all areas	for each child.			
	implement written	of development as				
	daily plans for each	defined in the	3.C.3 Facility The			
	group.	Arkansas Child	primary caregiver shall			
		Development and	develops a current			
	1.C.1 The facility	Early Learning	written curriculum			
	<u>has a license in</u>	Standards: Birth	plan and daily plans			
	New Provisional or	through 60 months.	that include learning			
	Regular status.		goals for children.			
		2.C.3 The Ccaregivers				
	1.C.2 The facility	shall plan and	3.C.1 The facility shall			
	may have a FCCERS	implement daily	score an average of			
	review.	developmentally	4.00 or higher on the			
		appropriate physical	FCCERS.			
		activities for all				
		children.	3.C.2 Caregivers shall			
			maintain a portfolio			
		2.C.1 The facility shall	for each child.			
		score an average of				
		3.00 or higher on the				
		FCCERS.				



Arkansas Better Beginnings – Family Child Care Requirements page 3

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all requirements for	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		Level 1	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
			Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 – 3	Levels 1 – 4	<u>Levels 1 – 5</u>
<u>D.</u>	1.D.1 Facility	2.D.1 Facility scores an average of	3.D.1 Facility scores			
Environmental	completes a self-	3.00 or higher on the FCCERS.	an average of 4.00			
Assessment	evaluation using		or higher on the			
	the FCCERS.		FCCERS.			
	<u>1.</u>					
<u>D.</u>	1.E.1 Facility	2.ED.1 The primary caregiver shall	3.ED.1 The primary	4.D.1 The primary	5.D.1 The primary	6.D.1 The primary
Child Health &	documents	document distribution of ARKids	caregiver shall	caregiver shall -use a	caregiver -shall -use a	caregiver -shall -use a
Development	distribution of	First information to families of	Facility shares with	<u>Division-approved</u>	<u>Division-approved</u>	<u>Division-approved</u>
	ARKids First	uninsured children.	families information	tool to -identify and	tool to -complete a	tool to -complete a
	information to		on nutrition and	implement two	self-assessment in	self-assessment in a
	families of	2.E.2 The primary caregiver shall	physical activity for	(2) -additional action	breastfeeding &	fourth module,
	uninsured	Facility shares with families	children with	plan goals	infant feeding,	breastfeeding &
	children.	information regarding medical homes for children with families.	<u>families</u> .	in -physical	outdoor play and	infant feeding,
	1.E.2 Facility	nomes for children with families.	2 D 2 The primary	activity -or nutrition -from the	<u>learning, OR screen</u> time and implement	outdoor play and
	shares with	2.ED.2 The primary caregiver shall	3.D.2 The primary caregiver shall -use a	completed -self-	two (2) action plans in	learning, OR screen time and implement
	families	Facility shares with families	Division-approved	assessments		two (2) action plans in
	information on	information regarding child	tool to -identify and	assessments	that module.—	that module.—
	child development	development, stages of	implement one (1)	4.D.2 The primary		-
	and on children's	development, and children's health	physical activity goal	caregiver shall take		6.D.2 The primary
	health.	for children with families.	from the completed	the physical activity		caregiver shall take
			action plan in L l evel	and nutrition self-		the breastfeeding &
	1.E.3 Any medical	2.D.3 All children birth to	2	assessments again to		infant feeding,
	and educational	kindergarten shall have an annual		reassess their		outdoor play and
	care plans	developmental screening.		current status.		learning, OR screen
	involving a child					time self-assessments
	are written and on	2.D.4 The primary caregiver shall				from Level 4 and
	file, and	use a Division-approved tool to				Level 5 again to
	implementation is	complete a self-assessment and				reassess their current
	documented while	<u>create -and -implement -one</u>				status.

	maintaining confidentiality.	(1) -action plan in the area of nutrition		
	1.D.1 The facility has a license in New Provisional or	z.D.5 The primary caregiver shall -use a Division-approved tool to -complete a self-assessment in		
	Regular status.	the area of physical activity.		



<u>ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS - SCHOOL-AGE REQUIREMENTS</u>

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

COMPONENTS	15/51 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 2	LEVEL A	LEVEL E	LEVEL 6
COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1		LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for Level	requirements for Level	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		1	1 and Level 2	<u>Levels 1 - 3</u>	<u>Levels 1 - 4</u>	<u>Levels 1 - 5</u>
<u>A.</u>	-1.A.1 Administrator	2.A.1 A program review	-3.A.1 The Ffacility shall	4.A.1 The facility	5.A.1 The facility shall	6.A.1 The facility shall
Administration	attends "PAS Basics"	is shall be completed by	scores an average of	shall score an	score an average of	score an average of
	training. The facility has	a certified PAS assessor.	four 4.00.00 or higher on	average of four	5.00 .00 or higher on	6.00 .00 or higher on
	a license in New	If using YPQA, PAS is not	PAS items 1-21 (items 5	4.00 .00 or higher	PAS.	PAS.
	Provisional or Regular	required but a PQA Form	and 6 <u>are</u> scored,	on PAS.	If using YPQA, PAS is	If using YPQA, PAS is
	status.	B review shall be	butscored but are not	If using YPQA, PAS	not required but a PQA	not required but a PQA
		completed by a reliable	included in the average;	is not required but	Form B score of 4.25 or	Form B score of 4.75 or
	1.A.2 The facility may	assessor	items 10 and 11 are not	a PQA Form B	higher is required.	higher is required.
	have a program review		scored).	score of four		
	completed by a certified		If using YPQA, PAS is not	4.00 .00 or higher is		
	PAS assessor.	2.A.2 <u>The</u>	required but a PQA Form	<u>required.</u>		
		Administrator director	B score of three and			
	If using YPQA the facility	shall reviews the	seventy-five tenths	4.A.2 The director		
	may have a PQA form B	Strengthening Families	(3.75) or higher is	shall implement at		
	review completed by a	website, webinar	required.	least one (1)		
	reliable assessor.	receives training in the		additional action		
		Strengthening Families	3.4A.2 Administrator	step for a total of		
		Initiative complete a	The director shall	<u>two (2).</u>		
		Strengthening Families	complete s the			
		training, listed on the	Strengthening Families			
		PDR.	online self-assessment			
			for <u>three (</u> 3) or more			
			Strategies.			
			2 A 2 The Efective chall			
			3.A.3 The Ffacility shall			
			develops a			
			Strengthening Families			
			action plan and			
			implements at least one			
			(1) action step.			

Administrator /	Qualifications (Education	2.B.1 All directors and at	Qualifications (Education
<u>B.</u>	and Experience)	least fifty percent (50%)	and Experience)
Staff	1.B.1 Administrator and	of teaching staff shall	3.B.1 Administrator
Qualifications	teaching staff are	<u>complete</u>	meets requirements for
<u>and</u> ∕	members of the PDR	"Developmental Assets	PDR Intermediate 1 or
Professional	Registry and/or ADE	Basics" training.	higher, including 45
Development	Registry.		clock hours of training in
		2.B.2 All directors, and	program
	1.B.2 Administrator	fifty percent (50%) of the	planning/management
	meets requirements for	teaching staff shall	and/or leadership.
	PDR Foundation 3 or	complete an ERS or	
	higher, including 21	YPQA training.	3.B.2 Within the first
	clock hours of training in		year of employment all
	program	2.B.3 The director and	staff meet requirements
	planning/management	kitchen manager (if	for PDR Foundation 1 or
	and/or leadership.	applicable) shall	higher and at least 50%
		participate in at least	of teaching staff meet
	1.B.3 Within the first	two (2) clock hours of	requirements for PDR
	year of employment all	training on nutrition for	Foundation 3 or higher.
	staff meet requirements	school age children,	
	for PDR Foundation 1 or	annually.	
	higher. <u>11.B.1</u> The		
	facility has a license in	2.B.4 The director shall	
	New Provisional or	complete training on	
	Regular status.	developmentally	
		appropriate physical activities for children.	
		Qualifications (Education	
		and Experience)	
		2.B.1 Administrator and	
		teaching staff maintain	
		membership in the PDR	
		Registry and/or ADE	
		Registry	
		2.B.2 Administrator	
		meets requirements for	
		PDR Intermediate 1 or	
		higher, including 30	

clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.	
2.B.3 Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for PDR Foundation 1 or higher and at least 50% of teaching staff meet requirements for PDR Foundation 2 or higher.	

Arkansas Better Beginnings – School Age Requirements page 2

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	<u>LEVEL 6</u>
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for Level	requirements for Level	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		1	1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
Administrator /	<u>Professional</u>	<u>Professional</u>	<u>Professional</u>			
Staff	<u>Development</u>	<u>Development</u>	<u>Development</u>			
Qualifications	1.B.4 Administrator	2.B.24 All administrators	3.B.3 All administrators			
and/ Professional	completes an ERS or	directors and teaching	directors and teaching			
Development	YPQA Training.	staff shall participate	staff shall participate			
		annually in 20 clock	annually in 25 clock			
	1.B.5 Administrator	hours of approved	hours of approved			
	completes training on	professional	professional			
	developmentally	development annually.;	development; for			
	appropriate physical	for administrators, at	administrators, at least 4			
	activities for	least 3 clock hours must	clock hours must be in			
	children/youth.	be in program	program			
		planning/management	planning/management			
		and/or leadership.	and/or leadership			

Agt least 50% of teaching staff shall complete "Developmental Assets Basics" training. 2.8.26 All administrative directors, staff and 50% of the teaching staff shall complete an ERS or APCA training. 2.8.27 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4. The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.6.1 Facility shall score an average of 4.00.90 or higher on the shall score an average of 5.00.00 r higher on the shall be 1:15.			2.B.15 All directors and				
emplete "Developmental Assets Basics" training. 2.8.26 All administrative directors, staff and 50% of the teaching staff shall complete an ERS or YPQA training. 2.8.37 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate daily perportate thrysical activities for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 4.00-90 or higher on the SACERS or higher on the SACERS or solve an average of 5.500 or higher on the shall score an average of 5.00-90 shall score an average of shall be 1:15.							
"Developmental Assets Basics" training. 2.8.26 All administrative directors, staff and 50% of the teaching staff shall complete an ERS or YPO.h training. 2.8.27 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (If applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2-clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children, activities for children activities for children, activities			<u> </u>				
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2.8.26 All administrative directors, staff and 50% of the teaching staff shall complete an ERS or YPQA training. 2.8.37 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall emplete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.C. Learning Environment / Secretary and activities for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the SACERS or injeher on the SACERS or average of 5.00.00 or higher							
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directors, staff and 50% of the teaching staff shall complete an ERS or YPQA training. 2.8.37 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.6.1 A developmentally appropriate daily appropriate daily program schedule is program schedule is 3.0.00 or higher on the sacers or higher on the SACERS or higher on the shall score an average of 5.500 or higher on the shall score an average of 5.500 or higher on the shall be 1:15.							
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Shall-complete an ERS or YPQA training. 2.8.27 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 3.00.00 or higher on the shall score an average of 5.500 or higher on the shall be 1:15.			directors, staff and 50%				
2.8.27 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually 2.8.4 The director shall somplete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children, appropriate daily appropriate daily appropriate daily program schedule is program schedule is 3.0.00 or higher on the 3.0.00 or higher on the higher on the SACERS or higher on the SACERS or higher on the SACERS or			of the teaching staff				
2.B.27 The Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score appropriate daily appropriate daily program schedule is 3.0.1 Facility shall score an average of 5.00.00 5.5.1 The facility shall score an average of 5.00.00 5.500 or higher on the shall be 1:15.			shall complete an ERS or				
Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. Learning Environment / program schedule is Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 3.6.1 Facility shall score an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the SACERS or			YPQA training.				
Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. Learning Environment / program schedule is Administrator director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 3.6.1 Facility shall score an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the SACERS or							
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applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 3.00.00 or higher on the higher on the SACERS or higher on the shall be 1:15.							
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Learning en nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.C. Learning en nutrition for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of solution and average of solution and average of solution and average of solution in the sace and average of solution in the							
training on nutrition for children/youthschool age children annually. 2.8.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 3.00.00 or higher on the shall score an average of 5.500 or higher on the shall be 1:15.							
children/youthschool age children annually. 2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. C. Learning Environment / program schedule is children/youthschool age children annually. 2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 3.C.1 Facility shall score an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the SACERS or higher on the SACERS or shall score an average of 5.500 or higher on the shall be 1:15.			least 2 clock hours of				
2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. 2.C. The facility shall score an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the saction of the shall score and average of 5.00.00 shall score and average of 5.00.0							
2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children. C. Learning Environment / Program schedule is 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 3.00.00 or higher on the 3.00.00 or higher on			children/youthschool				
C. Learning Environment / Description: Complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.			age children annually.				
C. Learning Environment / Description: Complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.							
C. Learning Environment / Program schedule is C. C. C. C. C. C. C. C							
C. Learning Environment / Program schedule is Activities for children. 3.C.1 Facility shall score an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the higher on the SACERS or higher on the shall score average of 5.00.00 or higher on the shall score average of 5.00.00 or higher on the shall be 1:15.							
C. Learning Environment / Program schedule is Activities for children. activities for children. 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the higher on the SACERS or higher on the shall score an average of 5.00.00 or higher on the shall be 1:15.			developmentally				
C. Learning Environment / Program schedule is 1.C.1 \ A developmentally 2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 3.00.00 or higher on the 1.00.00 or higher on the 1.00							
Learning appropriate daily score an average of an average of 4.00.00 or higher on the solution is staff/participant ratio shall score an average of 5.500 or higher on the shall be 1:15.							
Environment / program schedule is 3.00.00 or higher on the higher on the SACERS or average of 5.00.00 or higher on the shall be 1:15.							
	Learning				shall score an		
Englishment and in each CACEDC and a suppose of an english or on the CACEDC							shall be 1:15.
	Environment	posted in each	SACERS or an average of	an average of 3.75 or	or higher on the	SACERS or an average	
Assessment classroom/program 3.00-00 or higher on the higher on the YPQA. SACERS or an of 4.25 or higher on the 6.C.2 The facility shall	<u>Assessment</u>	classroom/program		higher on the YPQA.			6.C.2 The facility shall
area. YPQA. average of 4.00 .00 YPQA. score an average of		area.	YPQA.			YPQA.	score an average of
2.C.1 All or higher on the 6.00.00 or higher on							6.00 .00 or higher on
1.C.2 Staff develop and classrooms/program a portfolio for each YPQA. the SACERS or an					YPQA.		the SACERS or an
implement written daily spaces have a minimum participant. average of 4.500 or				participant.			average of 4.500 or
plans for each group. of two (2) clearly defined higher on the YPQA.		plans for each group.	of two (2) clearly defined				higher on the YPQA.

		interest centers if not	3.C.1 All		
	1.C.1 The facility has a	utilizing single-use	classrooms/program		
	license in New	spaces. Single use spaces	spaces have a minimum		
	Provisional or Regular	are exempt from this	of three (3) clearly		
	status.	requirement as long as	defined interest centers		
		other program spaces	if not utilizing single-use		
	1.C.2 The facility may	are available to allow for	spaces. Single use spaces		
	have an ERS or YPQA	other interest center	are exempt from this		
	review.	activities.	requirement as long as		
			other program spaces		
			are available to allow for		
			other interest center		
			activities.		

Arkansas Better Beginnings – School-Age Requirements page 23

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all requirements for	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		Level 1	requirements for	requirements	requirements for	requirements for
			Level 1 and Level 2	for Levels 1 - 3	<u>Levels 1 - 4</u>	<u>Levels 1 - 5</u>
Learning		2.C.2 There shall be Wwritten daily	3.C.2 Staff maintain a			
Environment /		plans for each group that include	portfolio for each			
<u>Environment</u>		the Developmental Assets	child/youth.			
<u>Assessment</u>		concepts.				
		2.C.3 Staff shall plan and	3.C.3 The Ffacility shall			
		implement daily developmentally	develops a current			
		appropriate physical activities for	written curriculum plan			
		all children/youthparticipants.	and daily plans that are			
			consistent with			
		2.D.1 The facility shall score an				
		average of 3.00 or higher on the	3.C.1 Facility shall score			
			an average of 4.00 or			

		SACERS or an average of 3.00 or higher on the YPQA.	higher on the SACERS or an average of 3.75 or higher on the YPQA.Developmental Assets. include links to ADE K-12 frameworks. 3.C.2 Staff shall maintain a portfolio for each participant.			
D. Environmental Assessment	1.D.1 Facility completes a self- evaluation using an applicable approved environment rating tool (SACERS or YPQA).	2.D.1 Facility scores an average of 3.00 or higher on the SACERS or scores 3.00 or higher on the YPQA for each classroom/program space reviewed.	3.D.1 Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on the SACERS or scores 3 or higher on the YPQA for each classroom/program space reviewed.			
D. Child/Youth Health & Development	1.E.1 Facility documents distribution of ARKids First information to families of uninsured children/youth. 1.E.2 Facility shares with families information on child/youth development and on children's/youth health. 1.E.3 Any medical and educational care	2.D.1 The facility shall document the distribution of ARKids First information to families of uninsured participants. 2.E.1 The Ffacility shall shares with families information regarding medical homes for children/youth with families. 2.ED.2 The Ffacility shall shares with families information regarding child/or youth development, stages of development, and children's health with families.	3.ED.1 The Ffacility shall shares with families information on nutrition and physical activity for children/youthschool age children with families. 3.D.2 The facility shall -use a Divisionapproved tool to -identify and implement one (1) physical activity goal from the completed	4.D.1 The facility shall -use a Division-approved tool to -identify and implement two (2) -additional action plan goals in -physical activity -or nutrition -from the completed -self-assessments 4.D.2 The facility shall take the physical activity	5.D.1 The facility -shall -use a Division-approved tool to -complete a self-assessment in breastfeeding & infant feeding, outdoor play and learning, OR screen time, and implement two (2) action plans in that module.—	6.D.1 The facility -shall -use a Division-approved tool to -complete a self-assessment in a fourth module, breastfeeding & infant feeding, outdoor play and learning, OR screen time, and implement two (2) action plans in that module.— 6.D.2 The facility shall take the breastfeeding &

<u>Arkansas Better Beginnings – Center – Based Requirements page 2</u>

plans in	volving a	2.D.3 The facility shall use a	action plan in L l evel	and nutrition self-	infant feeding,
child/yo	outh are	Division-approved tool to complete	2 two (2)	<u>assessments</u>	outdoor play and
written	and on file,	a self-assessment and		again to reassess	learning, OR screen
and imp	olementation	create -and -implement -one		their current	time self-
i s docu i	mented while	(1) -action plan in the area of		status.	assessments from
maintai	ning	nutrition			Level 4 and Level 5
confide	ntiality.	=			again to reassess
		2.D.4 The facility shall -use a			their current status.
1.D.1 T	he facility has	Division-approved tool			Ξ
<u>a licens</u>	<u>e in New</u>	to -complete a self-assessment in			
Provision	nal or Regular	the area of physical activity.			
status.					



ACRONYMS, TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ADE: Arkansas Department of Education

ADE K-12 Frameworks: http://arkansased.org/parents/refrigerator_curriculum.html

Administrator: person on-site who is responsible for day to-day operation of the program

ARKids First: Arkansas health insurance for eligible children up 18 years old; http://www.arkidsfirst.com

BAS: Business Administration Scale

Better Beginnings: Arkansas' Quality Rating Improvement System

ERS: Environment Rating Scale(s)

FCCERS: Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale

Good standing: is not currently debarred, defunded, excluded, or under adverse licensing action

Medical home: primary source of comprehensive health care

PAS: Program Administration Scale

Primary caregiver: person in charge of the family child care program

SACERS: School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale

Secondary caregiver: an employee in a family child care program who is supervised by the primary caregiver

Staff: employees who work directly with children/youth, and those involved in the planning or implementing of services for children/youth

PDR: Arkansas' Professional Registry professional development system

<u>PDR Foundation 1:</u> Practitioner is registered in the PDR Registry. Practitioner has completed 15 clock hours of PDR registered early childhood education or after school education training which includes an orientation course.

<u>PDR Foundation 2:</u> Practitioner is registered in the PDR Registry. Practitioner has completed 30 clock hours of PDR registered early childhood education or after school education training.

<u>PDR Foundation 3:</u> Practitioner is registered in the PDR Registry. Practitioner has completed 45 clock hours of PDR registered early childhood education or after school education training or three semester hours of early childhood education or after school care education at an institution of higher education. An administrator's education and experience may be considered to meet the intent of this requirement.

<u>PDR Intermediate 1:</u> Practitioner has completed a CDA credential or 135 clock hours of PDR registered early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education or nine semester hours of early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education. An administrator's education and experience may be considered to meet the intent of this requirement.

<u>PDR Intermediate 2:</u> Practitioner has completed 18 semester hours of early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education. An administrator's education and experience may be considered to meet the intent of this requirement.

<u>PDR Intermediate 3:</u> Practitioner has completed an associate degree which includes 25 semester hours of early childhood education or after school education at an institution of higher education. An administrator's education and experience may be considered to meet the intent of this requirement.

Teaching staff: employees who are regularly scheduled to work directly with children/youth.

YPQA: Youth Program Quality Assessment; this tool has two options the YPQA (generally suited for 4th grade – 12th grade children) or the Younger Youth Program Quality Assessment (generally suited for kindergarten – 6th grade children).

7.00 APPLICATION

- 7.01 To apply for Better Beginnings certification the following shall be submitted to the Division for review. Division approved forms will be provided.
- 7.02 The application will consist of the following items:
 - A. Better Beginnings Application FormAn application indicating the level of Better Beginnings that the individual is applying for. -This can be submitted electronically through email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov or via the provider portal.
 - B. Supporting documentation for all items listed in Ssection 6, (six) regarding the facility type and level for which the facility is applying.
 - A. <u>B. Better Beginnings Application Checklist.</u> This document allows the facility to self-select the requirements for which documentation is being provided.
 - B. <u>C. Annual Staff Record Form and documentation as necessary to validate staff meeting qualifications and professional development requirements (See 6.0) including:</u>
 - 1. Verification that facility staff or caregivers are members in the Professional Development Registry (PDR) or the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Registry; and
 - 2. PDR and/or ADE Registry transcript verifying requirements for both qualifications and professional development are met. An administrator's <u>director's</u> education and experience may be considered to meet the intent of qualification requirements; and
 - 3. College hours obtained in pursuit of a degree in Early Childhood or a related degree can may count as approved professional development hours; and
 - 4. CPR and First Aid training can <u>may</u> count for up to four (4) hours of approved professional development annually<u>once every two years</u>; and
 - 5. Any additional documentation for <u>completion of required</u> trainings required but <u>that</u> is not reflected on the transcripts.
 - C. Developmentally appropriate daily program schedule for each age group served.
 - D. Evidence that daily schedules are posted in each classroom/program space.
 - E. Sample of current written daily plans for each age group served. Plans must be for two consecutive weeks for each group.
 - F. Facility self-evaluation using an approved rating tool (ex. ITERS-R, ECERS-R, SACERS, FCCERS-R, YPQA) for each age group served. Self-evaluation documentation consists of completed score sheets from the approved tools, or other self-assessment checklists associated with and compiled from the approved tools.
 - G. Evidence that ARKIDS First information is distributed to families of uninsured children.
 - H. Evidence that child/youth development information has been shared with families.

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- I. Evidence that health information has been shared with families.
- Program policy and procedures for obtaining and implementing children's medical and educational care plans.
 - J. Current ERS or YPQA scores, if applicable for the level which the facility is applying.
 - J. K. Current PAS/BAS scores, if applicable for the level which the facility is applying.

7.037.02 Child Care centers that are accredited through National Association of Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Afterschool Association (NAA), or the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities: Child and Youth Services Standards (CARF), and Family Child Care homes that are accredited through the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) will be considered certified. Facilities with such accreditations will submit a Better Beginnings Application Form and verification of the national accreditation. Additional documentation of Better Beginnings requirements, or reviews may be required to determine the level of Better Beginnings certification. Eligible programs that are accredited through state or national accreditation systems are eligible for full or partial reciprocation and given certification at levels that are determined by the Division. The following are some examples of approved accreditation systems:

- Arkansas Better Chance (ABC)
- Association Montessori International
- The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities: Child and Youth Services
 Standards (CARF)
- Early Head Start
- Head Start
- National Afterschool Association (NAA)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

Other accreditation systems may be considered upon review and approval by the Better Beginnings Program Administrator.

Facilities with such accreditations shall apply forto participatione in Better Beginnings via email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov, or the provider portal, and submit verification of the accreditation. Additional documentation of Better Beginnings requirements or reviews may be required to determine the level of Better Beginnings certification.

7.04 Electronic submissions of the application are acceptable and encouraged.

8.00 APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

8.01- The Better Beginnings Application Form is used to verify the program's eligibility. Applications will be denied without if they lack the required supporting documentation will be denied.

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- 8.02 <u>The Division will review the The Application Checklist and submitted supporting</u> documentation are reviewed to determine if each item submitted meets the intent of the associated requirement.
- 8.03 When the submitted documentation submitted does not meet the requirements, or evidence is not included, the facility may not be eligible for that level. Facilities will be considered for a lower level.
- 8.04 When submitted documentation meets the intent of each associated requirement for level 2 or 3, the facility is notified that Assessors will be assigned to conduct the Environmental Assessment (ex: ERS, YPQA) and the Program Review. The Program review consists of the PAS/BAS assessment and verification of compliance with the other requirements.
- 8.05 Facilities which meet all requirements of a level, except an assessment score (ex.:PAS/BAS or ERS/YPQA), may request a re-assessment. The request must include evidence of technical assistance or training. Re-assessments will be conducted no sooner than three (3) months after the first assessment.
- 8.068.04 Applicants will be certified at the highest level in which all requirements are met as determined by review of all documentation and assessments.
- 8.05 Applicants who purchase an existing facility that is certified at level two (2) or above, and has active voucher participants enrolled, may be given a temporary Better Beginnings level to enable them to temporarily bill for the voucher participants that are enrolled. The new owner will have ninety (90) days to achieve their own Better Beginnings level. The new owner will be certified at the level for which they qualify. If they do not qualify within ninety (90) days, they will be removed from participation.

9.00 MAINTAINING CERTIFICATON

- 9.01 Certification <u>for level two (2) and above</u> is valid for <u>thirty-six (36) months, unless months unless</u> the facility becomes otherwise ineligible for certification according to section 5.00 Eligibility or 10.00 Adverse Action. <u>Certification for level one (1) facilities will remain valid, as long as the license is in new provisional or regular status.</u>
- 9.02 Facilities, certified as Better Beginnings <u>level two (2) and above</u> programs, must re-submit all application documents, as outlined in <u>section</u> 7.00-<u>Application</u>, <u>thirty fivethree (35 (thirty-five (35)3)</u> months after the date of the last certification. <u>Level one (1) facilities are not required to reapply.</u>
 Failure to submit required documentation may <u>jeopardize</u> result in loss of certification status.
 Certification will be granted according to achievement of requirements upon completion of all requirements (see section 8.00-<u>Application Review</u>).

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9.03 -A certified facility which becomes the subject of an investigation may retain current certification until the investigation is concluded. The outcome of the investigation may be considered in determining continuation of certification at any level.

9.039.04 Facilities requesting to be reviewed for a higher level of certification must wait at least six (6) months after the last certification datesubmit a new application for the higher level. A full application must be submitted according to section 7.00 Application and will be processed according to section 8.00 Application Review Process. Facilities meeting higher level requirements will be newly certified at the appropriate level. Facilities not meeting higher level requirements will be assigned the level of certification achieved according to section 8.00 Application Review Process.

9.049.05 Certified facilities that change location must submit a new application for Better Beginnings certification according to section 7.00 Application and will be processed according to section 8.00 Application Review Process. The facility may retain any current certification level, until the application review process is completed. This process shall be completed within ninety (90) days of the relocation. If the facility does not qualify within ninety (90) days, they will be removed from participation.

9.05 Certified facilities that change ownership must submit a new application for Better Beginnings certification according to section 7.00 Application and will be processed according to 8.00 Application Review Process.

9.06 Unannounced visits, reviews, or random checks may be conducted at any time to verify continued compliance with certification requirements. An unfavorable review may result in a full-scale reassessment, which could change certified the Better Beginnings -status.

9.07 -It is recommended that each facility implements a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process with a self-assessment to assist them in maintaining quality practices during the growth years when ERS and PAS reviews are not done. Technical assistance is available upon request.

10.00 ADVERSE ACTION

10.01 Adverse actions include denial, suspension, reduction <u>in level</u>, or removal of certified status. Adverse actions may <u>result from include but are not limited to</u>:

- A. Ineligibility to participate according to section 5.00 Eligibility.
- B. Application documentation which is incomplete or does not meet the intent of requirements according to sections 6.00, 7.00, 8.00, and 9.00—;
- C. Failure to continue to meet the requirements for the component areas for the level which the facility is assigned;
- D. Numerous or serious deficiencies cited by licensing-;

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- <u>EC</u>. Substantiation of complaints received by the Division-office and/or failure to correct deficiencies within a reasonable period of time.
- F. Being placed on Corrective Action or Adverse Action by any program in DCCECE-;
- G. Changes in the license status of the facility-; or
- HD. Falsification of any document or submission of false information to any DHS Division.
- 10.02__-Facilities that have their Better Beginnings certification denied, suspended, or removed are eligible to re-apply after twelve (12) months unless otherwise notified by the Division.

11.00 APPEAL PROCEDURE

- 11.01 Facilities that are denied certification status; are found to be ineligible for a particular level; or have had their certification status reduced or removed; or have a dispute concerning published requirements, may request an appeal. A written request for appeal shall be submitted to the Better Beginnings Coordinator Program Administrator within thirty ten (3010) days of the notice of action, asking that certification status decision be reviewed.
- 11.02 Upon receipt of the request for appeal, the Better Beginnings Coordinator Program

 Administrator will conduct an internal review to ensureinsure that the appropriate processes were followed and to determine the validity of the decision. The Better Beginnings Coordinator Program Administrator will review the findings with the Division Director and will transmit the findings of the internal review to the facility within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the request to appeal.
- 11.03 If the outcome of the internal review is unsatisfactory to the facility, the facility has ten (10) days in which to ask for further review by the Better Beginnings Appeal Review Committee. -The committee will schedule a hearing and notify the facility in writing of the date and time of the hearing. The committee members are appointed by the chair of the Early Childhood Commission. A decision of the Better Beginnings Appeal Review Committee is the final DHS administrative decision.
- 11.04 -In the event that there are appeals made to multiple units in DCCECE, regarding the action that resulted in the Better Beginnings action being appealed, the Better Beginnings appeal will not be heard until the outcome of the other appeals has been determined. If the action is overturned, then the Better Beginnings appeal will be scheduled. If the action is upheld, the decision is final and there will be no Better Beginnings appeal hearing.









Better Beginnings Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System



Provider RULE BOOK

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND HISTORY

In 1993, the legislature passed a bill enabling the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (the "Division" or "DCCECE") to create a system by which licensed childcare and early childhood education entities could be certified as "quality." A goal of this system was to help the families of Arkansas to understand that providers, achieving this certification, consistently provided an early care and education environment above the minimum licensing requirements. The larger goal was to encourage and achieve better lifelong outcomes for children, by helping to assure that their time in childcare and early childhood education is nurturing, enriching, and meaningful.

In 2004, the state of Arkansas was awarded a State Maternal and Child Health Care grant which created the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative (AECCS). Over almost five (5) years, committees, which involved more than two hundred (200) childcare and early childhood related professionals met, researched, and created an improved approach to "quality." The result was a tiered quality rating and improvement system for our state called "Better Beginnings," implemented in 2010.-Since this time, the state has dedicated much time and many resources to finding ways to meet the needs of the children, and to assist programs in overcoming obstacles to participation.

"Better Beginnings," Arkansas' revised tiered quality rating and improvement system is available to every licensed and registered childcare provider in Arkansas. The system is designed to help programs improve their day-to-day environment for children, and to establish proven administrative practices. Tools and trainings are readily available for providers as they move along the path from Better Beginnings levels one through six (1-6).

Better Beginnings is available to every licensed and registered childcare provider in Arkansas. Whether you are a family home, an out-of-school time program, or a childcare center, your participation is imperative for the future of Arkansas. We are grateful to all who have worked to create Better Beginnings and make it what it is today. Every Child Deserves Our Best!

Better Beginnings Overview

Better Beginnings is a tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS) which is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education programs. Program types include center-based care, family child care, and out-of-school time programs.

Better Beginnings is a "building block" approach, which means that programs must meet all requirements at one level before moving to the next. Licensing, or Minimum Licensing Requirements (MLR), is the foundation on which Better Beginnings is built. The requirements at level one (1) of Better Beginnings align with MLR and help the director or primary caregiver begin the journey towards quality improvement. At level two (2), the staff becomes more involved in the process. Levels three (3) and above set even higher requirements for all components.

Resources are available and have been specifically designed to help providers understand and meet each requirement. The resources will help providers become more knowledgeable and effective for Better Beginnings in the lives of children.

1.0 RULES AND REGULATIONS

1.00 REGULATORY AUTHORITY

- 1.01 These regulations are enacted pursuant to Arkansas Code Ann. §20-78-201-226 as amended.
- 1.02 These regulations shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education regulations governing Better Beginnings, Arkansas's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

2.00 PURPOSE

- 2.01 It is the purpose of these regulations to set the general guidelines for the operation of Better Beginnings.
- 2.02 Providers who choose to receive Child Care Development Block Grant Funding (CCDBGF) must be a Better Beginnings participant at the level determined by the Division. This system is intended to certify quality status to childcare facilities that meet Better Beginnings requirements as set forth in these regulations.
- 2.03 Designation of certified status for any childcare facility will qualify taxpayers for the following:
 - A. Under Act 820 of 1993, corporations that build and equip a certified childcare center will be exempt from the state compensating tax levied by Ark. Code Ann. §26-53-101 et. seq (1987). Construction materials and furnishings purchased for use in the initial construction and equipping of a childcare center, for the exclusive purpose of providing childcare to the corporation's employees, will be subject to this exemption.
 - B. Under Act 820 of 1993, a business that qualifies for the exemption from the Gross Receipts Tax under Ark. Code Ann. §26-52-401(29), shall be allowed an income tax credit of three and nine-tenths percent (3.9%) of the annual salary of employees employed exclusively in providing child care services.
 - C. Under Act 1268 of 1993, enhanced income tax credits in the amount of twenty percent (20%) of the federal childcare credit as allowed under Section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code will be available to qualified taxpayers who incur child care

expenses at childcare facilities that are certified at Better Beginnings level two (2) or above.

3.00 ACRONYMS

3.01

ADE	Arkansas Department of Education
	·
ABC	Arkansas Better Chance
AEDC	Arkansas Economic Development Commission
BAS	Business Administration Scale
CARF	Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities: Child and Youth
	Services Standards
CDA	Child Development Associate Credential
DCCECE	Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
DHS	Department of Human Services
ECERS	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
ERS	Environment Rating Scale
FCCERS	Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale
ITERS	Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale
MLR	Minimum Licensing Requirements
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NAFCC	National Association for Family Child Care
PAS	Program Administration Scale
PDR	Professional Development Registry
SACERS	School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale
TQRIS	Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System
YPQA	Youth Program Quality Assessment

4.00 AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY

- 4.01 The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE) will coordinate and administer Better Beginnings.
- 4.02 The Division is authorized to make temporary revisions to these rules as deemed necessary during a Governor declared public health emergency or natural disaster impacting the State of Arkansas. These revisions will be posted on the Better Beginnings website.
- 4.03 The Better Beginnings Program Administrator or designee will have final approval of applications for certification as reviewed and recommended by the Better Beginnings staff.

- 4.04 By December 31 of each year, the Division will be responsible for providing verification to the Department of Finance & Administration of the childcare facilities that were qualified for certification at level two (2) and above, in the current calendar year.
- 4.05 Each December, the Division will be responsible for providing verification to the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) of the childcare facilities that qualified for Better Beginnings certification in the current calendar year.
- 4.06 The Division will verify the license status of all applicants, as well as status with other DHS programs.
- 4.07 The Division or Division consultants will provide technical assistance to any facilities desiring to achieve certification.
- 4.08 The Division will be responsible for the process of recertifying facilities (See Section 7.00 Application, 8.00 Application Review Process, and 9.00 Maintaining Certification).
- 4.09 Facilities will be notified of their certification status. The certification notice will denote the level of certification achieved.

5.00 ELIGIBILITY

- 5.01 All licensed, registered, and church operated exempt childcare facilities, as defined under Ark. Code Ann. §20-78-202, exclusive of foster homes, group homes, and custodial institutions, are eligible to apply for certified status.
- 5.02 All childcare facilities, except those excluded in section 5.01 above, operating under a New Provisional or Regular license, registration, or church operated exemption as issued by the Division are eligible to apply. Entities with multiple sites, each holding a separate license number must apply for certification for each site individually.
- 5.03 All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services. A facility in "good standing" is not currently debarred, defunded, excluded, or under adverse action with licensing or other DHS programs.
- 5.04 Applicants and certified facilities must make their facility accessible at all times during the regular program hours for program reviews and environmental assessments. Such assessments may be unannounced.

- 5.05 Any of the following situations (including but not limited to conditions below) may result in an application being denied, a reduction in level, or removal of Better Beginnings status:
 - A. Ineligibility to participate according to section 5.00 Eligibility;
 - B. Application documentation which is incomplete or does not meet the intent of the requirements according to sections 6.00, 7.00, 8.00, or 9.00;
 - C. Failure to continue to meet the requirements for the component areas for the level which the facility is assigned;
 - D. Numerous or serious deficiencies cited by licensing;
 - E. Substantiation of complaints received by the Division;
 - F. Being placed on Corrective Action or Adverse Action by any program in DHS;
 - G. Changes in the license status of the facility; or
 - H. Falsification of any document or submission of false information to any DHS Division.
- 5.06 Facilities that have been denied certification or have had certification removed by reason of ineligibility, according to any rules of this section, may be eligible to re-apply in twelve (12) months unless otherwise notified by the Division.

6.00 COMPONENT AREAS, REQUIREMENTS, AND LEVELS

- 6.01 There are four (4) component areas in Better Beginnings:
 - Administration
 - Staff Qualifications and Professional Development
 - Learning Environment/Environment Assessment
 - Child Health and Development

There are requirements to be met in each component area in each of the levels. The components, requirements, and levels are on the following pages.

ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS CENTER BASED REQUIREMENTS

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for Level	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		1	Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
A.	1.A.1 The facility has a	2.A.1 A program review	3.A.1 The facility shall	4.A.1 The facility shall	5.A.1 The facility shall	6.A.1 The facility shall
Administration	license in New	shall be completed by a	score an average of 4.00	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
	Provisional or Regular	certified PAS assessor.	or higher on PAS items	4.00 or higher on PAS.	5.00 or higher on PAS.	6.00 or higher on PAS.
	status.	PAS is not required for	1-21 (items 5 and 6 are	School-age programs	School-age programs	School-age programs
		school age programs	scored but are not	using YPQA shall have	using YPQA shall have a	using YPQA shall have a
	1.A.2 The facility may	using YPQA. These	included in the average).	a PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of
	have a program review	programs shall have a	School-age programs	4.00 or higher.	4.25 or higher.	4.75 or higher.
	completed by a	PQA Form B review	using YPQA shall have a			
	certified PAS assessor.	completed by a reliable	PQA Form B score of	4.A.2 The director		
		assessor.	3.75 or higher.	shall implement at		
	School age programs			least one (1)		
	using YPQA may have	2.A.2 The director shall	3.A.2 The director shall	additional action step		
	a PQA Form B review	complete a	complete the	for a total of two (2).		
	completed by a	Strengthening Families	Strengthening Families			
	reliable assessor.	training listed on the	online self-assessment			
		PDR.	for three (3) or more			
			Strategies.			
			3.A.3 The facility shall			
			develop a Strengthening			
			Families action plan and			
			implement at least one			
			(1) action step.			
В.	1.B.1 The facility has a	2.B.1 All directors and at	(2) action step:			
Staff	license in New	least fifty percent (50%)				
Qualifications	Provisional or Regular	of teaching staff shall				
and Professional	status.	complete "Early Learning				
Development		Standards (ELS) Basics				
		Training." The director				
		and school-age staff				
		shall complete				

"Developmental Assets Training." 2.B.2 All directors and fifty percent (50%) of teaching staff shall complete an ERS training; if the facility is using YPQA school-age, staff shall complete YPQA training. 2.B.3 The director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate in at least two (2) clock hours of training on nutrition for children annually. 2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.	
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COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all requirements for	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		Level 1	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
			Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
C. Learning Environment / Environment Assessment	1.C.1 The facility has a license in New Provisional or Regular status. 1.C.2 The facility may have an ERS review.	2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 3.00 or higher on the ERS review. Program areas reviewed with YPQA shall score an average of 3.00 or higher.	3.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 4.00 or higher on the ERS. Program areas reviewed with YPQA shall score an average of 3.75 or higher. 3.C.2 The staff shall maintain a portfolio for each child.	4.C.1 Staff to child ratios shall be maintained as follows: Birth–18 months 1:4 18-36 months 1:7 2 ½ - 3 years 1:11 4 years 1:12 5 years and up 1:18 4.C.2 The facility shall score an average of 5.00 or higher on the ERS. Program areas reviewed with YPQA shall score an average of 4.00 or	5.C.1 Staff to child ratios shall be maintained as follows: Birth–18 months 1:4 18-36 months 1:6 2 ½ - 3 years 1:10 4 years 1:10 5 years and up 1:18 5.C.2 The facility shall score an average of 5.50 or higher on the ERS. Program areas reviewed with YPQA shall score an average of 4.25 or higher	6.C.1 Staff to child ratios shall be maintained as follows: Birth–18 months 1:4 18-36 months 1:6 2 ½ - 3 years 1:10 4 years 1:10 5 years and up 1:15 6.C.2 The facility shall score an average of 6.00 or higher on the ERS. Program areas reviewed with YPQA shall score an average of 4.50 or higher.
D. Child Health & Development	1.D.1 The facility has a license in New Provisional or Regular status.	 2.D.1 The facility shall document distribution of ARKids First information to families of uninsured children. 2.D.2 The facility shall share information on child development, stages of development, and children's health with families. 2.D.3 All children, birth to kindergarten, shall have an annual developmental screening. 2.D.4 The facility shall use a Division-approved tool to complete 	3.D.1 The facility shall share information on nutrition and physical activity for children with families. 3.D.2 The facility shall use a Divisionapproved tool to identify and implement one (1) physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Level 2.	higher. 4.D.1 The facility shall use a Division-approved tool to identify and implement two (2) additional action plan goals in physical activity or nutrition from the completed self-assessments. 4.D.2 The facility shall take the physical activity and nutrition self-	5.D.1 The facility shall use a Division-approved tool to complete a self-assessment in breastfeeding and infant feeding, outdoor play and learning, OR screen time and implement two (2) action plans in that module.	6.D.1 The facility shall use a Division-approved tool to complete a self-assessment in a fourth module, breastfeeding and infant feeding, outdoor play and learning, OR screen time and implement two (2) action plans in that module. 6.D.2 The facility shall take the

a self-assessment and create and	assessments again	breastfeeding &
implement one (1) action plan in	to reassess their	infant feeding,
the area of nutrition.	current status.	outdoor play and
		learning, OR screen
2.D.5 The facility shall use a		time self-
Division-approved tool to complete		assessments from
a self-assessment in the area of		Level 4 and Level 5
physical activity.		again to reassess
		their current status.

ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS – FAMILY CHILD CARE REQUIREMENTS

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		Level 1	Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
A. Administration	1.A.1 The facility has a license in New Provisional or Regular status. 1.A.2 The facility may have a program review completed by a certified BAS assessor.	2.A.1 A program review shall be completed by a certified BAS assessor. 2.A.2 The primary caregiver shall complete a Strengthening Families training listed on the PDR.	3.A.1 The facility shall score an average of 4.00 or higher on BAS items 2-10 (item 2 is scored but is not included in the average). 3.A.2 The primary caregiver shall complete the Strengthening Families online selfassessment for three (3)	 4.A.1 The facility shall score an average of 4.00 or higher on BAS (item 2 is scored, but not included). 4.A.2 The primary caregiver shall implement at least one (1) additional action 	5.A.1 The facility shall score an average of 5.00 or higher on BAS (item 2 is scored, but not included).	6.A.1 The facility shall score an average of 6.00 or higher on BAS (item 2 is scored but not included).
D. Chaff	1 D 1 The facility has	2 D 1 The primary	or more strategies. 3.A.3 The primary caregiver shall develop a Strengthening Families action plan and implement at least one (1) action step.	step for a total of two (2).		
B. Staff Qualifications and	1.B.1 The facility has a license in New	2.B.1 The primary caregiver shall				
Professional	Provisional or	complete "Early				
Development	Regular status.	Learning Standards				
		Basics" training. 2.B.2 The primary				
		caregiver shall				
		complete an ERS training.				
		u allillig.				
		2.B.3 The primary				
		caregiver shall				
		participate in at least				
		two (2) clock hours of				

training on nutrition for children, annually.		
2.B.4 The primary caregiver shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.		

Arkansas Better Beginnings – Family Child Care Requirements page 2

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		Level 1	Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
C.	1.C.1 The facility	2.C.1 The facility shall	3.C.1 The facility shall	4.C.1 The facility shall	5.C.1 The facility shall	6.C.1 The facility shall
Learning Environment /	has a license in	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
Environment Assessment	New Provisional or	3.00 or higher on the	4.00 or higher on the	5.00 or higher on the	5.50 or higher on the	6.00 or higher on the
	Regular status.	FCCERS.	FCCERS.	FCCERS.	FCCERS.	FCCERS.
	1.C.2 The facility may have a FCCERS review.		3.C.2 Caregivers shall maintain a portfolio for each child.			



Arkansas Better Beginnings – Family Child Care Requirements page 3

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all requirements for	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		Level 1	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		20.0.2	Level 1 and Level 2	Levels 1 – 3	Levels 1 – 4	Levels 1 – 5
D. Child Health &	1.D.1 The facility	2.D.1 The primary caregiver shall	3.D.1 The primary	4.D.1 The primary	5.D.1 The primary	6.D.1 The primary
Development	has a license in	document distribution of ARKids	caregiver shall share	caregiver shall use a	caregiver shall use a	caregiver shall use a
	New Provisional or	First information to families of	information on	Division-approved	Division-approved	Division-approved
	Regular status.	uninsured children.	nutrition and	tool to identify and	tool to complete a	tool to complete a
			physical activity for	implement two (2)	self-assessment in	self-assessment in a
		2.D.2 The primary caregiver shall	children with	additional action	breastfeeding &	fourth module,
		share information regarding child	families.	plan goals in physical	infant feeding,	breastfeeding &
		development, stages of		activity or nutrition	outdoor play and	infant feeding,
		development, and children's health	3.D.2 The primary	from the completed	learning, OR screen	outdoor play and
		with families.	caregiver shall use a	self-assessments.	time and implement	learning, OR screen
			Division-approved		two (2) action plans in	time and implement
		2.D.3 All children birth to	tool to identify and	4.D.2 The primary	that module.	two (2) action plans in
		kindergarten shall have an annual	implement one (1)	caregiver shall take		that module.
		developmental screening.	physical activity goal	the physical activity		CD 2 The maintenant
		2 D 4 The primary caregiver shall	from the completed	and nutrition self-		6.D.2 The primary
		2.D.4 The primary caregiver shall use a Division-approved tool to	action plan in Level 2.	assessments again to reassess their		caregiver shall take the breastfeeding &
		complete a self-assessment and	2.	current status.		infant feeding,
		create and implement one (1)		current status.		outdoor play and
		action plan in the area of nutrition.				learning, OR screen
		asser plan in the district of				time self-assessments
		2.D.5 The primary caregiver shall				from Level 4 and
		use a Division-approved tool to				Level 5 again to
		complete a self-assessment in the	,			reassess their current
		area of physical activity.				status.

<u>ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS - SCHOOL-AGE REQUIREMENTS</u>

All facilities must be in good standing with the Department of Human Services.

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for Level	requirements for Level	requirements for	requirements for	requirements for
		1	1 and Level 2	Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
A.	1.A.1 The facility has a	2.A.1 A program review	3.A.1 The facility shall	4.A.1 The facility	5.A.1 The facility shall	6.A.1 The facility shall
Administration	license in New	shall be completed by a	score an average of 4.00	shall score an	score an average of	score an average of
	Provisional or Regular	certified PAS assessor.	or higher on PAS items	average of 4.00 or	5.00 or higher on PAS.	6.00 or higher on PAS.
	status.	If using YPQA, PAS is not	1-21 (items 5 and 6 are	higher on PAS.	If using YPQA, PAS is	If using YPQA, PAS is
		required but a PQA Form	scored but are not	If using YPQA, PAS	not required but a PQA	not required but a PQA
	1.A.2 The facility may	B review shall be	included in the average;	is not required but	Form B score of 4.25 or	Form B score of 4.75 or
	have a program review	completed by a reliable	items 10 and 11 are not	a PQA Form B	higher is required.	higher is required.
	completed by a certified	assessor.	scored).	score of 4.00 or		
	PAS assessor.		If using YPQA, PAS is not	higher is required.		
	If using YPQA the facility	2.A.2 The director shall	required but a PQA Form			
	may have a PQA form B	complete a	B score of three and	4.A.2 The director		
	review completed by a	Strengthening Families	seventy-five tenths	shall implement at		
	reliable assessor.	training, listed on the	(3.75) or higher is	least one (1)		
		PDR.	required.	additional action		
				step for a total of		
			3.A.2 The director shall	two (2).		
			complete the			
			Strengthening Families online self-assessment			
			for three (3) or more			
			Strategies.			
			Strategies.			
			3.A.3 The facility shall			
			develop a Strengthening			
			Families action plan and			
			implement at least one			
			(1) action step.			
В.	1.B.1 The facility has a	2.B.1 All directors and at	'			
Staff	license in New	least fifty percent (50%)				
Qualifications	Provisional or Regular	of teaching staff shall				
and Professional	status.	complete				
Development						

		"Developmental Assets Basics" training. 2.B.2 All directors, and fifty percent (50%) of the teaching staff shall complete an ERS or YPQA training. 2.B.3 The director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate in at least two (2) clock hours of training on nutrition for school age children, annually. 2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children.				
	<u> </u>					
C. Learning Environment / Environment	1.C.1 The facility has a license in New Provisional or Regular status.	2.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 3.00 or higher on the SACERS or an average of 3.00 or	3.C.1 Facility shall score an average of 4.00 or higher on the SACERS or an average of 3.75 or	4.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 5.00 or higher on the	5.C.1 The facility shall score an average of 5.50 or higher on the SACERS or an average	6.C.1 The staff/participant ratio shall be 1:15.

higher on the YPQA.

a portfolio for each

participant.

3.C.2 Staff shall maintain

SACERS or an

higher on the

YPQA.

average of 4.00 or

of 4.25 or higher on the

YPQA.

6.C.2 The facility shall

score an average of

6.00 or higher on the

SACERS or an average

YPQA.

of 4.50 or higher on the

higher on the YPQA.

Assessment

1.C.2 The facility may

have an ERS or YPQA

review.

Arkansas Better Beginnings – School-Age Requirements page 2

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
		Must meet all requirements for	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		Level 1	requirements for	requirements	requirements for	requirements for
			Level 1 and Level 2	for Levels 1 - 3	Levels 1 - 4	Levels 1 - 5
D.	1.D.1 The facility has	2.D.1 The facility shall document	3.D.1 The facility shall	4.D.1 The facility	5.D.1 The facility	6.D.1 The facility
Child/Youth	a license in New	the distribution of ARKids First	share information on	shall use a	shall use a Division-	shall use a Division-
Health &	Provisional or Regular	information to families of	nutrition and physical	Division-approved	approved tool to	approved tool to
Development	status.	uninsured participants.	activity for school age	tool to identify	complete a self-	complete a self-
			children with families.	and implement	assessment in	assessment in a
		2.D.2 The facility shall share		two (2) additional	breastfeeding &	fourth module,
		information regarding child or	3.D.2 The facility shall	action plan goals	infant feeding,	breastfeeding &
		youth development, stages of	use a Division-	in physical activity	outdoor play and	infant feeding,
		development, and children's health	approved tool to	or nutrition from	learning, OR screen	outdoor play and
		with families.	identify and implement	the completed	time, and implement	learning, OR screen
			one (1) physical activity	self-assessments.	two (2) action plans	time, and implement
		2.D.3 The facility shall use a	goal from the		in that module.	two (2) action plans
		Division-approved tool to complete	completed action plan	4.D.2 The facility		in that module.
		a self-assessment and create and	in Level 2.	shall take the		
		implement one (1) action plan in		physical activity		6.D.2 The facility
		the area of nutrition.		and nutrition self-		shall take the
				assessments		breastfeeding &
		2.D.4 The facility shall use a		again to reassess		infant feeding,
		Division-approved tool to complete		their current		outdoor play and
		a self-assessment in the area of		status.		learning, OR screen
		physical activity.				time self-
						assessments from
						Level 4 and Level 5
						again to reassess
						their current status.

7.00 APPLICATION

- 7.01 The application will consist of the following items:
 - A. An application indicating the level of Better Beginnings that the individual is applying for. This can be submitted electronically through email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov or via the provider portal.
 - B. Supporting documentation for all items listed in Section 6, regarding the facility type and level for which the facility is applying.
- 7.02 Eligible programs that are accredited through state or national accreditation systems are eligible for full or partial reciprocation and given certification at levels that are determined by the Division. The following are some examples of approved accreditation systems:
 - Arkansas Better Chance (ABC)
 - Association Montessori International
 - The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities: Child and Youth Services Standards (CARF)
 - Early Head Start
 - Head Start
 - National Afterschool Association (NAA)
 - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
 - National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

Other accreditation systems may be considered upon review and approval by the Better Beginnings Program Administrator.

Facilities with such accreditations shall apply for participation in Better Beginnings via email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov, or the provider portal, and submit verification of the accreditation. Additional documentation of Better Beginnings requirements or reviews may be required to determine the level of Better Beginnings certification.

8.00 APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

- 8.01 Applications will be denied if they lack the required supporting documentation.
- 8.02 The Division will review the supporting documentation to determine if each item submitted meets the intent of the associated requirement.
- 8.03 When the documentation submitted does not meet the requirements, or evidence is not included, the facility may not be eligible for that level. Facilities will be considered for a lower level.

- 8.04 Applicants will be certified at the highest level in which all requirements are met as determined by review of all documentation and assessments.
- 8.05 Applicants who purchase an existing facility that is certified at level two (2) or above, and has active voucher participants enrolled, may be given a temporary Better Beginnings level to enable them to temporarily bill for the voucher participants that are enrolled. The new owner will have ninety (90) days to achieve their own Better Beginnings level. The new owner will be certified at the level for which they qualify. If they do not qualify within ninety (90) days, they will be removed from participation.

9.00 MAINTAINING CERTIFICATON

- 9.01 Certification for level two (2) and above is valid for thirty-six (36) months unless the facility becomes otherwise ineligible for certification according to section 5.00 Eligibility or 10.00 Adverse Action. Certification for level one (1) facilities will remain valid, as long as the license is in new provisional or regular status.
- 9.02 Facilities, certified as Better Beginnings level two (2) and above programs, must re-submit all application documents, as outlined in section 7.00, thirty-five (35) months after the date of the last certification. Level one (1) facilities are not required to reapply. Failure to submit required documentation may result in loss of certification status. Certification will be granted upon completion of all requirements (see section 8.00).
- 9.03 A certified facility which becomes the subject of an investigation may retain current certification until the investigation is concluded. The outcome of the investigation may be considered in determining continuation of certification at any level.
- 9.04 Facilities requesting to be reviewed for a higher level of certification must submit a new application for the higher level. A full application must be submitted according to section 7.00 and will be processed according to section 8.00. Facilities meeting higher level requirements will be newly certified at the appropriate level. Facilities not meeting higher level requirements will be assigned the level of certification achieved.
- 9.05 Certified facilities that change location must submit a new application for Better Beginnings certification according to section 7.00 and will be processed according to section 8.00. The facility may retain any current certification level, until the application review process is completed. This process shall be completed within ninety (90) days of the relocation. If the facility does not qualify within ninety (90) days, they will be removed from participation.
- 9.06 Unannounced visits, reviews, or random checks may be conducted at any time to verify continued compliance with certification requirements. An unfavorable review may result in a full-scale reassessment, which could change the Better Beginnings status.

9.07 It is recommended that each facility implements a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process with a self-assessment to assist them in maintaining quality practices during the growth years when ERS and PAS reviews are not done. Technical assistance is available upon request.

10.00 ADVERSE ACTION

- 10.01 Adverse actions include denial, suspension, reduction in level, or removal of certified status. Adverse actions may include but are not limited to:
 - A. Ineligibility to participate according to section 5.00 Eligibility;
 - B. Application documentation which is incomplete or does not meet the intent of requirements according to sections 6.00, 7.00, 8.00, and 9.00;
 - C. Failure to continue to meet the requirements for the component areas for the level which the facility is assigned;
 - D. Numerous or serious deficiencies cited by licensing;
 - E. Substantiation of complaints received by the Division;
 - F. Being placed on Corrective Action or Adverse Action by any program in DCCECE;
 - G. Changes in the license status of the facility; or
 - H. Falsification of any document or submission of false information to any DHS Division.
- 10.02 Facilities that have their Better Beginnings certification denied, suspended, or removed are eligible to re-apply after twelve (12) months unless otherwise notified by the Division.

11.00 APPEAL PROCEDURE

- 11.01 Facilities that are denied certification status, are found to be ineligible for a particular level or have had their certification status reduced or removed; may request an appeal. A written request for appeal shall be submitted to the Better Beginnings Program Administrator within ten (10) days of the notice of action, asking that certification status decision be reviewed.
- 11.02 Upon receipt of the request for appeal, the Better Beginnings Program Administrator will conduct an internal review to ensure that the appropriate processes were followed and to determine the validity of the decision. The Better Beginnings Program Administrator will review the findings with the Division Director and will transmit the findings of the internal review to the facility within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the request to appeal.
- 11.03 If the outcome of the internal review is unsatisfactory to the facility, the facility has ten (10) days in which to ask for further review by the Better Beginnings Appeal Review Committee. The committee will schedule a hearing and notify the facility in writing of the date and time of the hearing. The committee members are appointed by the chair of the Early Childhood Commission. A decision of the Better Beginnings Appeal Review Committee is the final DHS administrative decision.
- 11.04 In the event that there are appeals made to multiple units in DCCECE, regarding the action that resulted in the Better Beginnings action being appealed, the Better Beginnings appeal will not be heard until the outcome of the other appeals has been determined. If the action is overturned, then the

Better Beginnings appeal will be scheduled. If the action is upheld, the decision is final and there will be no Better Beginnings appeal hearing.

