

## QUICK FACTS February 2012

### INITIAL YEAR

We are reminding participating programs of this important information. This information is part of each star award letter sent to centers along with the star rating certificate. This information was also communicated in the [Quick Facts 2009: School Readiness Tax Credits \(SRTC\) Initial Rating](#), as well as being available on the Quality Start website.

**INITIAL RATING:** The initial rating is the star rating achieved by the center in the first year of participation in Quality Start. A center may work toward higher stars during their first year of participation and have until November 30 to complete the process to attain a higher star, if eligible. The rating awarded by November 30 will be effective December 1. This initial rating is used for purposes of determining the SRTC for that year **only**.

**AFTER FIRST YEAR:** The star rating of the center as of **July 1** will be the rating for the SRTC even if the participating center achieves a higher or lower rating after July 1.

### APPLICATION DATES IF YOU ARE TRYING TO MEET A SRTC DEADLINE

All applications are processed as received and every effort is made to ensure award decisions are made as quickly as possible. However, we cannot guarantee a decision will be made for any particular deadline. It is each owner/director's responsibility to ensure that you apply allowing sufficient time for any delays or problems that may arise. Our experience has shown that 12 weeks or more could be needed for your application to be processed. Omissions such as, but not limited to, incorrectly completed applications, failure to provide documentation, failure to keep or rescheduling an appointment or action, and/or a complaint or deficiency will delay the star award process for your center. This year we encourage you to allow additional time if possible.

Please make every effort to submit application for star rating no later than April 1, 2012, if trying to meet the July 1 deadline.

### EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES AND PROGRAM STANDARDS

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is working with the La. Department of Education, and the BrightStart Early Childhood Advisory Council to provide a continuum of EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS that describe what children from birth to kindergarten entry know and are able to do. These standards apply to all settings and provide parents and professionals working with young children a shared language and understanding of what is needed for children to be school ready. Please go to <http://www.dcfslouisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=356> and see the most current versions of these important documents which will be merged into one document over the coming months.

In December we communicated a change to the Quality Start model effective March 1, 2012 requiring staff to have training in the Early Learning Guidelines and Program Standards: Birth to Five. The continuum is the basis for this training. NOTE: This training is available from the child care resource and referral agency in your region or a LA Pathways approved trainer. New trainer requirements will go into effect on July 1, 2012. More information will be available soon.

### STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AUDITS

Be sure to read the Quality Start Model (March 2012) carefully to ensure that appropriate documentation is submitted to LA Pathways so your center has a successful audit. It is your responsibility to update staff information such as "new hires" and departures, and to send certificates for clock hours, transcripts, professional memberships, and service to the professional organization to LA Pathways, as needed. Maintain copies and records of documentation in your Quality Start portfolio.



## VERIFICATION VISITS

It is very important that you keep a scheduled appointment for a Verification Visit. The Child Care Quality Start Specialists carefully plan visits to each area to minimize travel. If you are not available for your scheduled Verification Visit, it may delay your application or review. You should have your portfolio completed and organized including staff folders, qualifications audit, and documentation ready for review.

## NEWS about CHILD CARE QUALITY START SPECIALIST (CCQSS)

Your CCQSS may have changed. You are encouraged to contact your Child Care Quality Start Specialist for assistance. The contact information for your CCQSS is below. Please refer to the list and contact your CCQSS by email. You may also go to the website at [www.grslouisiana.org](http://www.grslouisiana.org) or call the Quality Improvement Unit at (225) 342-0694 or call toll free 1-888-LAHELPU (1-888-524-3578).

QUALITY START SPECIALIST	PARISHES	
<b>Lavonselle Longmyle</b>	Orleans	Terrebonne
<a href="mailto:Lavonselle.longmyle@la.gov">Lavonselle.longmyle@la.gov</a>	Plaquemines	
Jefferson	St. Bernard	
Lafourche	St. Charles	
<b>Monica Dillon</b>	Livingston	Tangipahoa
<a href="mailto:Monica.dillon@la.gov">Monica.dillon@la.gov</a>	St. Helena	Washington
Ascension	St. James	West Feliciana
Assumption	St. John the Baptist	
East Feliciana	St. Tammany	
<b>Mary Jo Smith</b>	Iberia	St. Mary
<a href="mailto:MaryJo.T.Smith@la.gov">MaryJo.T.Smith@la.gov</a>	Iberville	Vermilion
Acadia	Lafayette	
East Baton Rouge	St. Landry	
Evangeline	St. Martin	
<b>Tonya Plauche</b>	Catahoula	Pointe Coupee
<a href="mailto:Tonya.plauche@la.gov">Tonya.plauche@la.gov</a>	Concordia	Rapides
Allen	De Soto	Sabine
Avoyelles	Grant	Vernon
Beauregard	Jefferson Davis	West Baton Rouge
Calcasieu	LaSalle	Winn
Cameron	Natchitoches	
<b>Pamela Futch</b>	East Carroll	Red River
<a href="mailto:Pamela.futch@la.gov">Pamela.futch@la.gov</a>	Franklin	Richland
Bienville	Jackson	Tensas
Bossier	Lincoln	Union
Caddo	Madison	Webster
Caldwell	Morehouse	West Carroll
Claiborne	Ouachita	

## SRTC FOR TEACHER/DIRECTOR

La Pathways has mailed the form to teachers and directors who may be eligible for the tax credit based on their education, experience and membership in a professional organization. The teacher/director must also have worked at a center participating in Quality Start with at least 1 star for at least 6 months during 2011. The form must be completed by the director/owner of the quality rated center. More information about the SRTC for Teacher/Director can be found at [www.grslouisiana.org](http://www.grslouisiana.org)