

# APPENDIX A

## **APPENDIX A, ABOUT OCDEL**

### **OCDEL**

**History:** The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (“OCDEL”) was established in 2007 as a joint initiative between the Departments of Education and Human Services. It was established to promote opportunities for all Pennsylvania children and families by building systems and providing supports that help ensure access to high-quality child and family services. The Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality (“Keys to Quality”) is a quality improvement system in which all early learning programs and practitioners are encouraged and supported to improve child outcomes.

**Mission:** OCDEL provides families access to high quality services to prepare children for school and life success.

#### **Goals**

- Work effectively, collaboratively, creatively, and successfully to ensure that all families have access to high-quality programs for their children.
- Engage stakeholders in actionable ways that provide guidance on programs and policies.
- Identify and use key data and research to improve policies and practices.

#### **Guiding Principles**

1. High-Quality Benefits for Children;
2. Individually and Culturally Appropriate High Expectations for Children’s Learning;
3. Leadership;
4. State and Regional Coordination;
5. Commitment to Quality Content;
6. All Practitioners Participate in Quality Improvement Activities;
7. Focus on Credentials and Professionalism;
8. Systems Coordination, Integration, and Accountability;
9. Compensation, Funding, and Financing; and
10. Public, Stakeholder, and Community input.

#### **Bureau of Child Care Certification Services**

The Bureau of Child Care Certification Services (“Certification Bureau”) is responsible for the regulation of all child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes in Pennsylvania.

The Certification Bureau receives inquiries regarding a variety of topics, including:

- The requirements and process for opening a child care facility.
- The statutes and regulations for operating a child care facility.
- The status and compliance history of specific facilities.
- The complaints regarding child care facilities.

#### **Bureau of Early Intervention and Family Support Services**

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The Bureau of Early Intervention (“EI”) and Family Support Services ensures that all eligible children from birth to five with developmental delays receive services and supports that maximize their development so they are successful in any early education setting. Programs are available to at-risk infants and toddlers or those with developmental delays, as well as to young children three and older who have disabilities, developmental delays, or both. Through its work with local administrators, the Bureau of EI and Family Support Services oversees the EI Program for children from birth to school age.

### **Bureau of Policy and Professional Development**

Through Pennsylvania’s quality rating improvement system, Keystone STARS, the Bureau of Policy and Professional Development develops and implements standards for early learning programs and professionals to improve the quality of early learning for our young children, and provides financial supports and technical assistance for programs and professionals. The Bureau of Policy and Professional Development is also responsible for establishing and maintaining the rules, regulations and procedures for the subsidized child care program, Child Care Works. Both programs are managed at the regional level through grantees known as the Early Learning Resource Centers (“ELRCs”).

### **Bureau of ELRC Operations**

The Bureau of ELRC Operations provides oversight and technical assistance to ELRCs. The Bureau of ELRC Operations is responsible for monitoring ELRC grantee program integrity and accountability, proper use of funds, and accurate application of program rules and procedures. It also serves as a source of support to ELRCs in their daily operations and management of the programs.

### **KEYSTONE STARS**

Keystone Standards, Training, Assistance, Resources, and Support (“STARS”): The Keystone STARS program provides Standards, Training (Professional Development), Assistance, Resources, and Support to facilitate continuous improvement and recognize achievement by early learning and school-age programs in Pennsylvania, including Head Start and Pre-K Counts. Keystone STARS establishes a quality rating improvement system in PA, whereby each STAR designation is based on research-based performance standards or benchmarks that are linked to improving outcomes for children. The standards address staff qualifications and professional development, the learning environment, partnerships with family and community, and leadership and management.

Keystone STARS is managed through a partnership between OCDEL and the new ELRCs.