

Innovative Work with Family Child Care Providers in Phase 2 and Phase 3 Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge States

This resource was prepared in response to a request for information from a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) State about the innovative work with family child care providers that is being done in RTT-ELC Phase 2 States (**Colorado, Illinois, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wisconsin**) and Phase 3 States (**Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Vermont**). This information will be helpful to other States as they consider how to continue to enhance the quality of early learning in family child care homes in their States.

Innovative Work with Family Child Care Providers

This summary describes family child care activities that States specifically described in their 2015 RTT-ELC Annual Performance Reports (APRs) to the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. States may have additional initiatives that they did not include in their APRs because they were not funded by their RTT-ELC grants.

The initiatives are grouped into the following categories: engaging family child care providers in Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (TQRIS),¹ improving professional development, bringing family child care providers and friend and neighbor child care providers into the licensing system, and extending programs to include family child care providers.

Engaging Family Child Care Providers in Tiered Quality and Improvement Systems (TQRIS)

States have made efforts to include family child care providers in their TQRIS. In 2015, **Vermont** increased participation to 77 percent from 25 percent in 2013, and **Illinois** rated nearly 300 family child care homes in 2015. **Colorado** and **Georgia** specifically noted the challenge of engaging family child care home programs in their TQRIS.

- **Recruitment strategies** targeted specifically to family child care providers:
 - **Colorado** held meetings with local associations that had the trust of family child care providers. They also provided traveling laptops to support owners in cases where additional technology

¹ For the RTT-ELC grant, a QRIS is referred to as a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS). This distinction highlights the importance of common standards and levels across all types of publicly funded early learning and development systems statewide and meaningful differences among the quality levels of a system.

- supports were needed, and translated important Colorado Shines resources, such as the point structure guide, evidence document, and program guide.
- **Georgia** worked with local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&Rs) on recruitment.
 - **Illinois** transitioned family child care providers from their existing TQRIS, *Quality Counts*, to the more rigorous *ExceleRate Illinois*; provided provisional ratings during transition; and created alternate pathway for family child care homes accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). In 2015, Illinois rated 300 homes.
 - **Oregon** focused on supporting family child care networks in rural areas.
 - **Pennsylvania** planned start-up TA peer monitoring and personal assistance that will be targeted to license-exempt friend/neighbor caregivers who are receiving subsidy and must become certified (or licensed) by November 2016.
 - **Vermont's** Child Care Division forged a successful partnership with Vermont Birth to Five, a privately funded initiative that supports and incentivizes family child care home providers to enter *STARS*, Vermont's TQRIS.
 - Local consortia in **Vermont** partnered with other agencies that had the trust of family child care providers, tailored incentives and coaching schedules/practices to meet individual needs, and provided training in technology.
- **Redefined TQRIS criteria or standards** for family child care providers:
 - **Illinois** worked collaboratively to revise and make more rigorous the family child care standards for the new TQRIS.
 - **New Mexico** reviewed, revised, and submitted family child care criteria for approval by the Office of Child Development for *FOCUS*, New Mexico's revised TQRIS.
 - **Incentives** to improve quality
 - **Colorado** leveraged quality incentive funds to offer educational materials for family child care homes. Programs can earn incentives at the completion of Level 2 and again at the completion of Levels 3-5 of the TQRIS.
 - **Illinois** provided one-time bonus payments ranging from \$250 to \$950 after eligibility was established for *Circle of Quality* designations.
 - **Illinois** authorized tiered reimbursement for family child care providers who care for children in the Child Care Assistance Program and that achieve a Silver or Gold *Circle of Quality* (10 percent and 15 percent add-on respectively).
 - **New Mexico** awarded Quality grants for family child care home improvements and adaptations to meet quality standards.
 - **Vermont** offered a RTT-ELC-funded *STARS* maintenance bonus to encourage continued *STARS* participation.
 - **Wisconsin** gave Challenge awards to family child care providers to increase their rating levels. In 2015, 78 licensed family child care programs and 14 certified family child care programs received the monetary awards.

- **Wisconsin** awarded Accreditation scholarships to family child care providers that covered partial costs associated with additional technical consultation and the accreditation process. A family child care home accredited by NAFCC is eligible to earn a 4 or 5 Star rating.
- **Validation data**
 - **Georgia** is determining the best way to collect Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) data in family child care homes.

Improving Professional Development

- **Teacher Toolbox – Georgia** developed and produced a free Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) Teacher Toolbox targeted to family child care providers.
- **Family Child Care Credential**
 - **Illinois** piloted a new Family Child Care Credential and developed training for the credential in six institutions of higher education. They integrated the family child care credential into their TQRIS.
 - **Vermont** offered an Educational Opportunity Grant to complete the family child care credential.
 - **Wisconsin** offered Education Opportunities Grants that provided free credit-based instructions in community settings to complete the Wisconsin Registry approved family child care credential.
- **Learning Communities**
 - **Illinois** developed and launched Town Square (www.townsquarell.org), an online learning and professional community for family child care professionals.
 - **Oregon** implemented additional focused family child care networks (cohorts of providers serving children from targeted communities).

Bringing Family Child Care Providers and Friend and Neighbor Child Care Providers into the Licensing System

- **License-exempt providers**
 - **Pennsylvania** prepared previously license-exempt providers (small family child care providers caring for six or fewer children and friend/neighbor caregivers) for changes due to Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) reauthorization. All family child care homes and relative/neighbor care providers who are receiving subsidy must become certified (or licensed) by November 2016.

Extending Programs to Include Family Child Care Providers

- **Vermont** is extending the Strengthening Families Child Care program to include training of family child care providers. Strengthening Families child care grants are designed to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

APPENDIX: State Examples

To address this request, ELC TA reviewed the 2015 Annual Performance Report data that the 11 Phase 2 and Phase 3 RTT-ELC States submitted to the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the spring of 2016.

The following table gives specific examples from the individual State 2015 Annual Performance Reports for Phase 2 and Phase 3 RTT-ELC States about how they are including family child care providers in efforts to improve the quality of early education for all young children in the State. These examples are intended to provide the reader with information about which States to contact to learn more, rather than providing details of how States are working with family child care providers.

Individual APR Reports are available at <https://elc.grads360.org/#program/annual-performance-reports>.

Table 1 - State Work with Family Child Care Providers to Improve the Quality of Early Childhood Education

Innovative Work with Family Child Care Providers in Phase 2 and Phase 3 RTT-ELC States to Improve the Quality of Early Childhood Education Source: Individual State 2015 RTT-ELC Annual Performance Reports	
State/ Initiative	APR Language Describing Family Child Care Strategy (Text in <i>italics</i> is taken verbatim from the Annual Performance Reports)
Colorado <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing challenge of engaging family child care home programs through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meetings ▪ Laptops ▪ Spanish translations ▪ Incentive funds 	Colorado 2015 APR, Executive Summary Challenges and Strategies to Address Challenges <i>Engagement of family child care home programs - Family child care homes have been slow to engage with Colorado Shines. This license type represents more than fifty percent of all Colorado Shines-eligible programs. To address this challenge, Early Childhood Councils are meeting with local associations to educate program owners about Colorado Shines, providing traveling laptops to support owners in cases where there is additional technology supports needed, and providing Spanish language translation. Additionally, the Colorado Department of Human Services is translating important Colorado Shines resources, such as the point structure guide, evidence document, and program guide. Early Childhood Councils are also leveraging their quality incentive funds to offer educational materials for family child care homes that reach a quality Level 2.</i>
Georgia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing challenge of recruiting FCC 	Georgia 2015 APR, Executive Summary Lessons Learned and Strategies Going Forward <i>While the state has been successful in recruiting programs for Quality Rated, the state's TQRIS, the "early adopters" and "high flyers" have now been recruited. Therefore, in Year Three, the state will expand efforts to recruit specific types of providers, including local school systems and family child care providers.</i>

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Georgia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using CCR&Rs to recruit 	Georgia 2015 APR, Focus Area B2 <i>However, recruitment of family child care homes has gone slower than expected. DECAL is working with each of the state's resource and referral agencies to ensure that they are employing adequate resources dedicated to recruiting family child care. In the one resource and referral agency with a team specifically allocated for family child care providers, the targets are being met.</i>
Georgia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting FCC data in validation studies 	Georgia 2015 APR, Focus Area B4 <i>The first year of the external study, which began in August 2015, is a pilot to prepare for a larger validation study with a representative sample in the following year. The pilot study will determine the feasibility of gathering child attendance and enrollment data and test a measure of the language and literacy richness of the environment. The pilot year study will also determine the best way to collect CLASS data in family child care homes, given that family child care homes often serve multiple age groups, and test teacher and provider-reported measures of social and language skills of infants and toddlers</i>
Georgia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Learning and Development Teacher Toolbox 	Georgia 2015 APR, Focus Area C1 Increasing the Availability of Resources and High Quality Training <i>In 2015, DECAL developed and produced four different versions of the free GELDS Teacher Toolbox. Each GELDS[Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards] Teacher Toolbox version targets a specific age developmental continuum (including a version for multiple age groups targeted to family child care providers) and includes thousands of standards-based activities, adaptations for children with disabilities, and tips for embedding technology and transitioning successfully between activities. Using Early Learning Challenge grant funding, DECAL printed 20,000 GELDS Teacher Toolboxes to be distributed free of charge to a variety of audiences.</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened standards for FCC in TQRIS 	Illinois 2015 APR, Executive Summary Accomplishments <i>Priority 1: Deepening the integration of State supports to create a unified framework for all early learning and development programs.</i> <i>In 2015, Illinois continued the strong momentum of the first two years for its system-building efforts. Accomplishments include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Launched ExceleRate Illinois for licensed family child care homes with significantly more rigor than originally proposed and with higher standards than the State's</i>

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	<i>previous Quality Rating System. Integrated into that framework is the Family Child Care Credential, which also launched as a pilot in 2015.</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piloted new FCC credential 	Illinois 2015 APR, Executive Summary Accomplishments <i>Priority 1: Deepening the integration of State supports to create a unified framework for all early learning and development programs.</i> <i>In 2015, Illinois continued the strong momentum of the first two years for its system-building efforts. Accomplishments include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Piloted three new credentials: Family Child Care; Family Specialist; Technical Assistance,</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online learning community for family child care providers 	Illinois 2015 APR, Executive Summary <i>Priority 3: Increasing program quality: From adequate to good and from good to great</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developed and launched an innovative online destination and learning community for family child care professionals. Town Square (www.townsquareIL.org) supports professional learning, connects family child care professionals with other providers and enhances the knowledge and skills needed for success in meeting the standards of ExceleRate Illinois and the new Family Child Care Credential.</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitioning FCC from old to new TQRIS • NAFCC pathway • Developing FCC credential 	Illinois 2015 APR, Focus Area B1 <i>In 2015, ExceleRate Illinois for family child care was launched with full transition and alignment protocols for existing quality-rated homes and enrollment of new home providers. This included creation of a custom pathway for homes accredited by the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC). Integrated with this work was the pilot of a new Family Child Care Credential, and the development of a full series of ExceleRate Illinois - required trainings embedded in that credential.</i>

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Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised FCC standards to be more rigorous 	Illinois 2015 APR, Focus Area B1 <i>The ExceleRate Illinois standards for family child care homes were developed with significantly more rigor than was proposed in Illinois' Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant application. In the application, the State proposed making only minor revisions to the criteria in place for the Quality Counts system. However, after closely monitoring the development of ExceleRate Illinois standards for centers, the family child care community believed it was important to develop the standards for home-based programs under the framework of "Gold means Gold." Family child care providers believed that the standards reflect the same rigor and quality expectations as the center standards. As a result, there are fewer family child care programs in the top tiers of ExceleRate Illinois at this stage than was initially projected in the grant application.</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitioning FCC to new TQRIS Online professional development tool www.townsquareIL.org 	Illinois 2015 APR, Focus Area B2 <i>Family Child Care Support, Engagement, and Program Alignment Processes</i> <i>Nearly 300 licensed family child care homes were rated and enrolled in Illinois' original Quality Rating System, Quality Counts, when ExceleRate Illinois for family child care was implemented in 2015. The State worked diligently to provide these programs with a seamless and non-disruptive dual enrollment process from Quality Counts to ExceleRate Illinois, with provisional ratings and a reasonable timeframe for programs to align themselves with the higher standards of ExceleRate Illinois.</i> <i>The State values the work of family child care providers and understands the unique challenges they face balancing the needs of their home and small business. Professional development programs and quality supports that are specifically built for family child care providers are critical to the implementation of ExceleRate Illinois, particularly given the rigorous standards for family child care programs in our system. Through RTT-ELC, the State developed and launched an innovative online destination and learning community for family child care professionals. Town Square (www.townsquareIL.org) supports professional learning, connects family child care professionals with other providers, and provides resources to enhance the knowledge and skills needed for success in meeting the standards of ExceleRate Illinois and the new Family Child Care Credential.</i> <i>The State's contractor began work on the portal and online training materials/modules for Town Square in April 2015. The site officially launched in January 2016 and is expected to help providers successfully strive for and reach quality standards, participate in the Credential process, and provide feedback on the focus and quality of support services that are most likely to impact quality of care in FCC homes in Illinois. Town Square is a valuable support for Illinois providers and other family child care providers around the country that</i>

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	<i>are looking for resources and materials on quality early learning and best practices in home-based care.</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives • One-time bonuses after eligibility is established for a Circle of Quality 	Illinois 2015 APR, Focus Area B2 <i>Incentives for licensed child care centers were introduced in July 2014 and in December 2015 for licensed family child care homes. Centers and homes at three levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold) can receive a one-time bonus payment after their eligibility for a Circle of Quality designation is established. Bonus payments for centers range from \$1,000 to \$6,500 and are based on center size and Circle of Quality attained. Bonus payment for family child care homes range from \$250 to \$950 and are based on size (regular family child care home versus group child care home) and Circle of Quality attained. In addition, centers and homes that care for children in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and achieve the Silver or Gold Circle of Quality can receive State-funded tiered reimbursement for the CCAP children in their program (a 10% and 15% add-on respectively).</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Family Child Care Standards for TQRIS 	Illinois 2015 APR, Focus Area B4 <i>Family Child Care Standards Development</i> <i>As described previously in this narrative, Illinois convened a broad and diverse group of early learning experts and stakeholders to develop its TQRIS for Family Child Care. The stakeholders reviewed standards and evidence charts from 15 states to ensure that Family Child Care programs would be developed and included in ExceleRate Illinois with objectivity and diligence. Tier 4, the Gold Circle of Quality, includes the validation of key standards and achievement of quality scores in the learning environment, interactions, and business practices. Benchmarks were set for aligned curriculum and assessment, child screening, culturally and linguistically appropriate practice, and inclusion of children with special needs. Given Family Child Care providers' unique relationship with the families they serve, benchmarks were also set for family-provider communication and collaboration, as well as connecting and supporting families. Additional benchmarks were set for provider/child ratios, provider qualifications and professional development, and continuous quality improvement protocols.</i> <i>The benchmarks set for provider qualifications proved to be the most controversial and required thorough discussions about research, reality, barriers, and supports. Ultimately, the stakeholders recommended that providers hold a BA degree and a Family Child Care Credential Level 5 (or Level 4 if collaborating with a State-approved consultant) to qualify for the Gold Circle of Quality. The ExceleRate Illinois standards for Family Child Care are challenging and require a commitment to quality and professional development. Supports are being developed to encourage and assist providers in reaching these high-quality benchmarks. While the standards are rigorous and challenging, this provides a framework</i>

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	<i>for providers to follow that will help grow the field of high-quality Family Child Care programs.</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piloting family child care credential in six institutions of higher education 	Illinois 2015 APR, Focus Area D2 <i>Illinois implemented pilots for all three credentials during 2015.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Family Child Care Credential (FCC) pilot: Six higher education institutions are participating in the pilot. Each of these IHE's modified and/or aligned coursework to meet Family Child Care Credential requirements and educational competencies. The pilot will close March 30, 2016. To date, more than 50 Family Child Care Credentials have been awarded. The State will survey those who did and did not receive a credential to better understand their experiences with the credential process. The FCC Credential pilot is on track for statewide rollout in August 2016.</i>
Illinois <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality improvement bonus Tiered reimbursement 	Illinois 2015 APR, Focus Area D2 <i>Tiered Reimbursement Rates and Bonuses: As described in section B(2)2, Illinois introduced incentives (bonuses) for licensed child care centers (2014) and licensed family child care homes (December 2015) that pursue continuous quality improvement with ExceleRate Illinois. Centers and homes at three levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold) can receive a one-time bonus payment after their eligibility for a Circle of Quality designation is established. In addition, centers and homes that care for children in the CCAP and achieve the Silver or Gold Circle of Quality can receive State-funded tiered reimbursement for the CCAP children in their program (a 10% and 15% add-on respectively). Most programs report that they use the tiered reimbursement to provide higher compensation to their staff than they would otherwise be able to provide.</i>
New Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated FCC criteria for FOCUS 	New Mexico 2015 APR, Stakeholder Involvement <i>In November, there were two separate workgroups - one for the FOCUS Family Child Care (FCC) criteria and another for the FOCUS Out-of-School Time Criteria. During these workgroups, the criteria was reviewed and revised. The finalized drafts of each were submitted to the Office of Child Development for approval.</i>
New Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing Quality grants 	New Mexico 2015 APR, Focus Area B4 <i>The Quality grants are designed to be used for the following priorities:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Addressing health and safety issues</i> <i>Program/classroom/Family Child Care Home Improvements (under \$5,000) and adaptations to meet quality standards</i>
Oregon	Oregon 2015 APR, Focus Area B4

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting FCC 	<p><i>Partners in the system have been trained and instructed to recruit programs serving children of color, children in poverty, [and] rural communities[,] which have been reflected in the implementation of additional focused family child care networks (cohorts of providers serving children from these targeted communities)</i></p>
<p>Pennsylvania</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing for CCDB-related changes 	<p>Pennsylvania 2015 APR, Proposed Legislation, Policies, or Executive Orders</p> <p><i>Child Care Development Block Grant Reauthorization</i> <i>OCDEL reached out to family child care homes and friend/neighbor caregivers to help them with the upcoming changes as a result of reauthorization. Regional meetings occurred among certification, child care information services (CCIS) agencies, Keystone STARS, Regional Keys, and Early Intervention partners were held. Regional Keys and CCIS agencies scheduled dozens of providers meetings across the state to discuss the upcoming changes and the steps providers can do to prepare. Resources are available for providers on the Department of Human Services website.</i></p>
<p>Pennsylvania</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition FN care to family child care home with start-up TA peer mentoring 	<p>Pennsylvania 2015 APR, Focus Area B2</p> <p><i>In spring 2015, OCDEL, PA Key and RK staff convened as a workgroup to develop start-up TA peer mentoring. The workgroup determined the best solution for potential STARS providers, who may need individualized assistance before entering STARS, is a personalized guiding hand. The workgroup met several times throughout 2015 to analyze and discuss the potential barriers new providers may face. The group determined that peer mentoring and personal assistance will lay the foundation in creating a high-quality child care facility.</i></p> <p><i>The primary focus of start-up TA is targeting potential STARS programs in the identified moderate-high or high-risk counties transitioning from Friend/Neighbor (FN) to a Family Child Care Home (FCCH) provider as part of the CCDBG reauthorization requirements for FN providers to sustain their subsidy agreement.</i></p>

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Vermont <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening Families Child Care includes FCC 	Vermont 2015 APR, Executive Summary <i>Approximately 37 licensed child care centers, serving over 1,300 children, received Strengthening Families child care grants from the Child Development Division, to implement Strengthening Families informed practices. Three of these centers are funded by the Early Learning Challenge grant, reaching 356 children. In addition, the ELC grant funds the expansion of Strengthening Families to child care homes. Sixty-one homes are now being served, serving a total of 618 children.</i> <i>Vermont is one of more than thirty states shifting policy and practice in order to apply the Strengthening Families approach to all programs working with children and families. Strengthening Families™ is a research informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. The Agency of Human Services and communities throughout the state are in the process of adopting the Strengthening Families framework. ELC funds are leveraged, along with funds from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and the Department of Labor, to provide Strengthening Families Training for trainers and for child care professionals. The grant also funds expansion of Strengthening Families Child Care to family child care homes and an evaluation of Vermont's Strengthening Families Child Care models.</i>
Vermont <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing participation in STARS 	Vermont 2015 APR, Executive Summary <i>Participation of family child care homes in STARS increased from 25% in 2013 to 77% in 2015, from a total of 230 homes to a total of 596 homes. This is due to the continued success of the partnership between Vermont Birth to Five and the Child Development Division with support of incentives such as the ELC-funded STARS maintenance bonuses.</i>
Vermont <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailoring recruitment strategies to unique needs of FCC providers 	Vermont 2015 APR, Executive Summary <i>Another key lesson learned was the importance to individualize efforts to recruit, incentivize, support, and retain providers and sites. Building a system that includes feedback from participating sites fosters ownership in QRIS activities and increases participants overall commitment to CQI. Specifically, consortia learned the importance of getting feedback from Family Child Care Home (FCCH) providers about how to best meet their unique needs and reduce their feelings of being overwhelmed by the requirements. Consortia found success in partnering with other agencies that had experience working with FCCHs and had gained their trust; tailoring incentives and coaching schedules/practices; and providing training in technology so they can fully participate in training and upload portfolio documents.</i>
Vermont	Vermont 2015 APR, Focus Area B2

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with a private organization • Peer mentoring • Financial incentives 	<p><i>The state continues to partner with Vermont Birth to Five (VB5), a privately funded initiative that supports and incentivizes family child care home providers to enter the TQRIS (STARS). The work of this organization, that includes peer mentoring and financial incentives, has been a major reason that participation of family child care homes in STARS increased from 25% in 2013 to 77% in 2015, from a total of 230 homes to a total of 596 homes. VB5 and the state have an ongoing commitment and agreement to implement strategies to assist those new to STARS to continue on their pathway to improve program quality and to make the most of their STARS participation.</i></p>
<p>Wisconsin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge awards - financial incentives to increase rating 	<p>Wisconsin 2015 APR, Focus Area B4</p> <p>Challenge Awards <i>A Challenge Award is a monetary award given to YoungStar participating child care providers who increase their YoungStar rating. It was decided that a Challenge Award check would be sent directly to each provider as a separate payment and would not be included with other payments such as Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy payments.</i></p> <p><i>In 2014, RTT-ELC funds were used to give Challenge Awards to 416 child providers who increased their YoungStar rating during 2013. A total of \$326,400 was awarded to providers.</i></p> <p><i>In 2015 a total of 281 Challenge Awards were issued. A total of \$219,200 was divided among the providers. Amounts ranged from \$300 to \$1,300. A total of 110 large group centers, 79 small group centers, 78 licensed family child care programs, and 14 certified family child care programs received Challenge Awards in 2015.</i></p>
<p>Wisconsin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation pathways • Accreditation scholarships 	<p>Wisconsin 2015 APR, Focus Area B4</p> <p>Accreditation Support <i>YoungStar recognizes accreditation by a number of early childhood accreditation organizations as one pathway to a rating. As of January 13, 2016, there are 385 YoungStar participating providers who earned 4 or 5 Stars through accreditation. 9.5 percent of all participating providers are accredited, which is an increase of 1.5 percent from the same period in 2014.</i></p> <p><i>In 2015, RTT-ELC funds were used to provide accreditation scholarships for group and family child care providers participating in YoungStar through two national affiliate membership organizations. The scholarships covered partial costs associated with additional technical consultation, as well as, partial costs of the accreditation process.</i></p> <p><i>The Wisconsin Family Child Care Association, state NAFCC affiliate, was awarded funds to provide scholarships for family child care providers who wish to earn NAFCC accreditation. Programs that successfully complete the NAFCC accreditation process will be eligible to</i></p>

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	<p><i>earn a 4 or 5 Star rating. The Star rating earned for NAFCC accredited sites is variable due to educational requirements of staff. A NAFCC accredited site will eligible to earn a 4 Star rating; if the educational qualifications of staff are equal to a 5 Star rating in YoungStar then the site will earn a 5 Star rating.</i></p> <p><i>The Wisconsin Family Child Care Association has enrolled 17 providers in the scholarship project. In 2015, accreditation scholarship supported the first two providers in the scholarship process to successfully earn NAFCC accreditation and each site is expecting to earn a 4 Star rating. Through 2015, 4 providers have applied for full accreditation, with two of those successfully earning accreditation. 13 providers have received their self-study kits and are in the initial stages of the accreditation process. WFCCA will continue to work with the providers in the project to ensure they are paired with a peer mentor, providing site visits, and preparing recipients for observations and final application.</i></p>
Wisconsin Education Opportunity grant to complete family child care credential	Wisconsin 2015 APR, Focus Area B4 <i>Educational Opportunities Grant</i> <i>In 2015, RTT-ELC funds were used to provide access to free credit-based instruction for YoungStar-participating child care providers who earned 2 and 3 Star ratings. The Educational Opportunities Grant is based on a pilot project done at the Milwaukee Area Technical College in 2013. The grant is providing 2 and 3 Star-rated YoungStar child care providers with the opportunity to complete the Wisconsin Registry approved Preschool, Infant/Toddler, Family Child Care, and Afterschool and Youth Development Credentials, as well as, earn credit for prior learning. The courses are being offered in community settings, at non-traditional times of day and formats, in languages other than English (if applicable), and academic supports such as individual professional development counseling will be included.</i>

Reference

ELC TA. 2015 RTT-ELC Annual Performance Reports. 2016. Individual State reports can be found at <https://elc.grads360.org/#program/annual-performance-reports>.

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