EXHIBIT F



Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education P.O. Box 1437, Slot S140, Little Rock, AR 72203-1437 P: 501.682.8590 F: 501.683.6060 TDD: 501.682.1550

August 19, 2022

Blake Gilliam, Legislative Analyst
Senate Interim Children and Youth Committee and the
House Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs Committee
Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research
Bureau of Legislative Research
#1 Capitol, 5th Floor
Little Rock, AR 72201

Re: Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System

Dear Mr. Blake Gilliam:

Please arrange for the rule to be reviewed by the Children & Youth Committee. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mac Golden, Office of Rules Promulgation at 501-320-6383 by emailing Mac.E.Golden@dhs.arkansas.gov.

Sincerely,

Jonger Williams by Momas Support

Director

TW:th

Attachments

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FILING PROPOSED RULES AND REGULATIONS WITH THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

DF	EPARTMENT/AGENCY	Department of Human Services				
DI	VISION	Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education				
DI	VISION DIRECTOR	Tonya Williams				
CO	ONTACT PERSON	Mac Golden				
ΑI	DDRESS	P. O. Box 1437, Slot S295 Little Rock, AR 72203-1437				
PH	IONE NO. (501) 320.6	Mac.E.Golden (501) 404.4619 E-MAIL @dhs.arkansas.gov				
NA	AME OF PRESENTER AT	T COMMITTEE MEETING Tonya Williams				
PR	RESENTER E-MAIL <u>To</u>	onya.L.Williams@dhs.arkansas.gov				
A	INSTRUCTIONS A. Please make copies of this form for future use.					
	Please answer each questi	ion <u>completely</u> using layman terms. You may use additional sheets, if				
C.	necessary. If you have a method of in	ndexing your rules, please give the proposed citation after "Short Title				
	of this Rule" below.					
υ.		this questionnaire and financial impact statement attached to the front oposed rule and required documents. Mail or deliver to:				
	Arkansas Legi	e Rules Review Section islative Council islative Research Aall, 5 th Floor				
**	********	********************				
1.	What is the short title of thi	is rule? Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System				
2.	What is the subject of the p	proposed rule? See Attached.				
3.	-	ply with a federal statute, rule, or regulation? Yes \(\sumset \) No \(\sumset \) ederal rule, regulation, and/or statute citation.				
4.	Was this rule filed under the	te emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act?				
		Yes No No				
	If ves. what is the effective	date of the emergency rule?				
	ii yes, wilat is the effective					
	When does the emergency i	rule expire?				
	Will this emergency rule be	e promulgated under the permanent provisions of the Administrative				
	Procedure Act?	Yes No No				

5.	Is this a new rule? Yes No No If yes, please provide a brief summary explaining the regulation.
	Does this repeal an existing rule? Yes No No No If yes, a copy of the repealed rule is to be included with your completed questionnaire. If it is being replaced with a new rule, please provide a summary of the rule giving an explanation of what the rule does.
	Is this an amendment to an existing rule? Yes No No If yes, please attach a mark-up showing the changes in the existing rule and a summary of the substantive changes. Note: The summary should explain what the amendment does, and the mark-up copy should be clearly labeled "mark-up."
	See attached.
6.	Cite the state law that grants the authority for this proposed rule? If codified, please give the Arkansas Code citation. <u>Arkansas Code §§ 20-78-206 and 25-10-129.</u>
7.	What is the purpose of this proposed rule? Why is it necessary? <u>See Attached.</u>
8.	Please provide the address where this rule is publicly accessible in electronic form via the Internet as required by Arkansas Code § 25-19-108(b).
	https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/do-business-with-dhs/proposed-rules/
9.	Will a public hearing be held on this proposed rule? Yes No I If yes, please complete the following:
	Date: September 13, 2022
	Time: 10:00am CST
	Place: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88081520577
10	When does the public comment period expire for permanent promulgation? (Must provide a date.) September 19, 2022
11	What is the proposed effective date of this proposed rule? (Must provide a date.) January 1, 2023
	Please provide a copy of the notice required under Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-204(a), and proof of the blication of said notice. See Attached.
13	Please provide proof of filing the rule with the Secretary of State as required pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-204(e). See Attached.
14	Please give the names of persons, groups, or organizations that you expect to comment on these rules? Please provide their position (for or against) if known. <u>Arkansas Child Care providers and parents</u> ,

unknown.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS COMPLETELY

DE	PARTMENT	Department o	f Human Services							
DIV	VISION	Division of C	hild Care and Early	Childhood Education						
PE	RSON COMPL	ETING THIS	STATEMENT La	ura Webb						
TE]	LEPHONE <u>(501</u>) 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				
	IORT TITLE O JLE	F THIS	Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System							
1.	Does this propo	sed, amended,	or repealed rule hav	e a financial impact?	Yes 🔀	No 🗌				
2.	2. Is the rule based on the best reasonably obtainable scientific, technical, economic, or other evidence and information available concerning the need for, consequences of, and alternatives to the rule? 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 early care and educate	ly rule justify its addit	ional cost;					
	To give paren	ts options for h	of the more costly ru higher quality care for he care they are prov	or their children in Ark	cansas, as wel	l as to recognize				
	so, please It will enable	explain; and; parents to enro	ll 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.										
	(a) What is the cost to implement the federal rule or regulation?									
Current Fiscal Year 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	eal Year	Next Fiscal Yea	<u>ur</u>
General Reve Federal Fund Cash Funds Special Reve Other (Identi	\$\frac{\$3,856,010}{\$0.00}\$ nue \$\frac{\$0.00}{\$0.00}\$	Cash Funds Special Revenu	\$1,151,000 \$0.00 \$0.00
5. What is the tot proposed, ame they are affect	nded, or repealed rule? Ide	year to any private individual, enentify the entity(ies) subject to the	ntity and business subject to the proposed rule and explain he
Current Fiscal Y	<u>ear</u>	Next Fiscal Yes	<u>ar</u>
Current Fiscal Y	<u>(ear</u>	<u>Next Fiscal Ye</u> \$	<u>ar</u>
or obligation o private entity,	f at least one hundred thou	Questions #5 and #6 above, is the sand dollars (\$100,000) per year ernment, county government, mud?	to a private individual,
time of filing t	he financial impact stateme	Yes No No note of No.	le written findings at the e filed simultaneously
(1) a statement	of the rule's basis and pur	pose;	
` ' -	n the agency seeks to addrequired by statute;	ess with the proposed rule, include	ling a statement of whether
(a) just (b) des	on of the factual evidence the ifies the agency's need for cribes how the benefits of the rule's costs;		ry 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.

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

Toni Roy

From: legalads@arkansasonline.com
Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 8:20 AM

To: Toni Roy

Subject: Re: Full Ad Run - Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

LOL... yes. Sorry for the confusion. Already been a long day!

Sun 8/21, Mon 8/22, and TUES 8/23.

Thank you.

Gregg Sterne, Legal Advertising Arkansas Democrat-Gazette legalads@arkansasonline.com

From: "Toni Roy" <Toni.Roy@dhs.arkansas.gov>

To: legalads@arkansasonline.com

Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 7:48:01 AM

Subject: RE: Full Ad Run - Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System

Just to confirm, Sun 8/21, Mon 8/22, and Tues 8/23?

Thanks, Toni Roy

From: legalads@arkansasonline.com < legalads@arkansasonline.com >

Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 7:46 AM **To:** Toni Roy < Toni.Roy@dhs.arkansas.gov>

Subject: Re: Full Ad Run - Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Will run Sun 8/21, Mon 8/22, and Sun 8/23.

Thank you.

Gregg Sterne, Legal Advertising Arkansas Democrat-Gazette legalads@arkansasonline.com

From: "Toni Roy" < Toni.Roy@dhs.arkansas.gov > To: "Legal Ads" < legalads@arkansasonline.com >

Cc: "Thomas Herndon" < Thomas.Herndon@dhs.arkansas.gov >, "Mac Golden"

<<u>Mac.E.Golden@dhs.arkansas.gov</u>>, "Kelli Hilburn" <<u>Kelli.Hilburn@dhs.arkansas.gov</u>>, "Lakeya Gipson" <<u>Lakeya.Gipson@dhs.arkansas.gov</u>>, "Debbie Lee" <<u>Debbie.Lee.DO@dhs.arkansas.gov</u>>

Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2022 10:38:48 AM

Subject: Full Ad Run - Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System

Please run the attached public notice:

Sunday, August 21, 2022; Monday, August 22, 2022; and Tuesday, August 23, 2022.

I am aware that distribution will be provided to all counties on Sundays and limited distribution on other days. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Please invoice to: AR Dept. of Human Services

DCFS, ATTN: Margie Hadley P.O. Box 1437, Slot S-140 Little Rock, AR 72203 (501) 320.8956

Thank you,



TONI ROY

Office of Rules Promulgation

Program Administrator

P: 501.320.6164 F: 501.404.4619 700 Main Street P.O. Box 1437, Slot S295 Little Rock, AR 72203-1437 Toni.Rov@dhs.arkansas.gov

humanservices.arkansas.gov





This email may contain sensitive or confidential information.

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Toni Roy

From: Toni Roy

Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 7:53 AM **To:** register@sos.arkansas.gov

Cc:Thomas Herndon; Simone Blagg (DHS); Mac Golden; Kelli Hilburn; Lakeya Gipson; Debbie LeeSubject:DHS/DCCECE - Proposed Filing - Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System

Attachments: SoS - Proposed Rule - Better Beginnings Quality Rating Improvement System.pdf

Tracking: Recipient Read

register@sos.arkansas.gov

Thomas Herndon

Simone Blagg (DHS) Read: 8/19/2022 7:56 AM

Mac Golden

Kelli Hilburn Read: 8/19/2022 7:57 AM

Lakeya Gipson Debbie Lee

This ad will run in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette on the following dates:

Sunday, August 21, 2022; Monday, August 22, 2022; and Tuesday, August 23, 2022.

The public comment period will end on September 19, 2022.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,



TONI ROY

Office of Rules Promulgation

Program Administrator

P: 501.320.6164 F: 501.404.4619 700 Main Street P.O. Box 1437, Slot S295 Little Rock, AR 72203-1437 Toni.Roy@dhs.arkansas.gov

humanservices.arkansas.gov

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.

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



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-programs</u>. (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 <u>Tiered</u> Quality Rating <u>and</u> 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 AND DEFINITIONS

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					
<u>Director</u>	The person who meets MLR as director and is on site a minimum of 50% of					
	the operational day.					
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>	<u>Professional Development Registry</u>					
<u>PQA</u>	Program Quality Assessment					
SACERS	School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale					
PDRTQRIS	Professional Development Registry Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement					
	System					
YPQA	Youth Program Quality Assessment					
YPQI	Youth Program Quality Intervention					

4.00 AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY

- 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 3above, 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 license status of all applicants, as well as status with other DHS programs.
- 4.064.06 The Division or Division consultants will provide technical assistance through consultants to any facilities desiring to achieve certification.
- 4.074.07 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).
- 4.084.08 Facilities will be notified of their certification status. The certification notice will denote the level of certification achieved.

5.00 FLIGIBILITY

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 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 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.
- 5.055.04 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.
- 5.06 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 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 <u>by the Division Director</u>.

6.00 COMPONENT AREAS, REQUIREMENTS, AND LEVELS

6.01 There are five four (54) component areas in Better Beginnings:

Arkansas Better Beginnings – Center – Based Requirements page 2

- Administration, Administrator/
- Staff Qualifications and Professional Development
- Learning Environment, Environment Assessment, 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 CHILD CARE 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	<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 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 completed by a	scores an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
	training.	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.
		The facility shall have a	items 1-21 (items 5 and	School-age programs	School-age programs	Schoolage programs
	The facility has a	PAS review completed	6 <u>are</u> scored, but <u>are</u> not	using YPQI shall have	using YPQI shall have a	using YPQI shall have a
	<u>license in New</u>	by a certified PAS	included in the average).	a PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of
	<u>Provisional or Regular</u>	assessor. School-age	Schoolage programs	4.00 or higher.	4.25 or higher.	4.75 or higher.
	status.	programs using YPQI	using YPQI shall have a			
		shall have a PQA Form B	PQA Form B score of	4.A.2 The director		
	1.A.2 The facility may	review completed by a	3.75 or higher.	shall implement at		
	have a program review	<u>reliable</u> <u>every</u> assessor.		least one (1)		
	completed by a	Every three years.	3.A.2 Administrator The	additional		
	certified PAS assessor.		director shall completes	Strengthening		
	School age programs	2.A.2 Administrator The	the Strengthening	Families action step		
	using YPQI may have a	director shall reviews	Families online self-	for a total of two (2).		
	PQA Form B review	the Strengthening	assessment for three (3)			
	completed by a	Families website,	or more Strategies.			
	reliable assessor.	webinar receives				
		training in the	3.A.3 The Ffacility shall			
		Strengthening Families	develop s a			
		Initiative complete a	Strengthening Families			
		Strengthening Families	action plan and			
		training listed on the	implements at least one			
		PDR.	(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 Administrator 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 YPQI,A all directors	3.B.2 Within the first		
	for PDR Foundation 3	and school-age, staff	year of employment all		
	or higher, including 21	shall complete YPQIA	staff will meet		
	clock hours of training	training.	requirements for PDR		
	in program planning /		Foundation 1 or higher		
	management / and/or	2.B.3 The director and	and at least 50% of		
	leadership.	kitchen manager (if	teaching staff meet		
		applicable) shall	requirements for PDR		
	1.B.3 Within the first	participate in at least	Foundation 3 or higher.		
	year of employment	two (2) clock hours of			
	all staff meet	training on nutrition for			
	requirements for PDR	children annually.			
	Foundation 1 or				
	higher.	2.B.4 The director shall			
		complete training on			
		developmentally appropriate physical			
		activities for			
		children. Qualifications			
		(Education and			
		Experience)			
		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 planning,		
		management or		
		leadership.		
1		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 Center Based Requirements page

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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	<u>Levels 1 5</u>
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.			
		2.8.15 All directors and				
		Aat least 50% of				
		teaching staff shall				
		complete "Early Learning				
		Standards (ELS) Basics				
		training Training.". The				
		director and; Sschool -				
		age staff should shall	•			
		complete				
		"Developmental Assets				
		Training."				
		2.B.26 All administrative				
		directors staff and 50% of				
		teaching staff shall				
		complete an ERS				

training; if the facility is using YPQA school school age staff shallould complete YPQA training. 2.B.37 Administrator The director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children annually.		
of training on nutrition		
2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical		
activities for children.		

Arkansas Better Beginnings – <u>Child Care</u> Center <u>– Based</u> 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	<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 ∧II	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 /	<u>Provisional or</u>	clearly defined interest centers.	spaces shall have a	maintained as	maintained as	maintained as
<u>Environment</u>	Regular status.		minimum of three (3)	follows:	follows:	<u>follows:</u>
<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	<u>4 years 1:10</u>	<u>4 years 1:10</u>
	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.	School age	School age
	written daily plans		daily plans that include	School age	programs using the	programs using the
	for each group.	2.C.1 The facility shall score an	learning goals for	programs using	PQA shall score 4.25	PQA reviewed with
		average of 3.00 or higher on the	children.	PQA shall score	or higher on the	shall score 4.50 or
	1.C.2 The facility	ERS review. School age programs		4.00 or higher on	PQA.	higher on the PQA.
	may have an ERS	using PQA shall score a 3.00 or	3.C.1 The facility shall	the PQA.		
	review. School age	higher on the PQA.	score an average of			
	programs using YPQI		4.00 or higher on the			
			ERS. School age			

	may have a PQA		programs using PQA			
	<u>review.</u>		shall score 3.75 or			
			higher on the PQA.			
			3.C.2 The staff shall			
			maintain a portfolio			
			for each child.			
<u>D.</u>		2.D.1 Facility scores an average of	3.D.1 Facility scores an		Ξ	
Environmental		3.00 or higher on the ERS for each	average of 4.00 or			
Assessment	1.D.1 Facility	classroom reviewed; classrooms	higher on the ERS for			
	completes a self-	reviewed with YPQA must score an	each classroom			
	evaluation using	average of 3.00 or higher.	reviewed; classrooms			
	applicable approved		reviewed with YPQA			
	environment rating		must score an average			
_	tools (ERS or YPQA).		of 3.75 or higher.	4 5 4 7 6 10		0.5.4.71
D.	1.D.1 The facility has	2.E.1 Facility facility shall shares	3.ED.1 The facility shall	4.D.1 The facility	5.D.1 The	6.D.1 The
Child Health	a license in New	with families information regarding medical homes for children.	share information on	shall -use a	facility -shall -use a	facility -shall -use a
and&	Provisional or	medical nomes for children.	nutrition and physical activity for children	<u>Division-approved</u>	<u>Division-approved</u>	<u>Division-approved</u>
Development	Regular status.	2.E.2 Facility shares with families	with families. Facility	tool to -complete a self-assessment in	tool to -complete a self-assessment in	tool to -complete a self-assessment in
	1.E.1 Facility	information regarding stages of	shares with families	child nutrition,	child nutrition,	child nutrition,
	documents	development for children.	information on	physical activity,	physical activity,	physical activity,
	distribution of	development for difficients	nutrition and physical	farm to ECE, oral	farm to ECE, oral	farm to ECE, oral
	ARKids First	2.D.1 The facility shall document	activity for children.	health,	health,	health,
	information to	distribution of ARKids First		breastfeeding &	breastfeeding and&	breastfeeding and
	families of	information to families of	3.D.2 The facility	infant feeding,	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
	uninsured children.	uninsured children.	shall -use a Division-	outdoor play &	outdoor play and	outdoor play and
			approved tool	learning, or screen	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen
	1.E.2 Facility shares	2.D.2 The facility shall share	to -complete a (1)	time and create	time and create and	time and create and
	with families	information on child development,	physical activity self-	and implement two	implement two (2)	implement two (2)
	information on child	stages of development, and	assessment and create	action plans in that	action plans in that	action plans in that
	development and on	children's health with families.	and implement one	module. (2)	module.—	module. and,(2)
	children's health.		action plan in the			=
		2.D.3 All children, birth to	physical activity	4.D.2 The facility	5.D.2 The facility	6.D.2 The facility
	1.E.3 Any medical	kindergarten, shall have an annual	module L	shall use the	shall use the	shall use the
	and educational	developmental screening.		<u>Division – approved</u>	<u>Division – approved</u>	<u>Division – approved</u>

Arkansas Better Beginnings – Center – Based Requirements page 2

care plans involving		3.D.3 The facility shall	tool to complete a	tool to complete a	tool to complete a
a child are written	2.D.4 The facility shall use a	use the Division -	second self-	second self-	second self-
and on file, and	<u>Division-approved tool to complete</u>	approved tool to	assessment in child	assessment in child	assessment in child
implementation is	a child nutrition self-assessment	complete a second	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical
documented while	and create -and -implement -one	self-assessment in the	activity, farm to	activity, farm to ECE,	activity, farm to ECE,
maintaining	(1) -action plan in the child	physical activity	ECE, oral health,	oral health,	oral health,
confidentiality.	nutrition module	module to assess	breastfeeding &	breastfeeding &	breastfeeding &
	z	progress.	infant feeding,	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
	2.D.5 The facility shall -use a		outdoor play &	outdoor play &	outdoor play &
	Division-approved tool		learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen
	to -complete a second self-		time to assess	time to assess	time to assess
	assessment in the child nutrition		progress.	progress.	progress. ₇
	model to assess progress.				
					1





<u>ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS – FAMILY-LICENSED AND REGISTERED CHILD CARE-HOME 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	<u>Levels 1 - 3</u>	<u>Levels 1 - 4</u>	<u>Levels 1 - 5</u>
<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
	<u>Provisional or</u>	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.	higher on BAS.	higher on BAS.
			scored, but <u>is</u> not			
	1.A.1 Primary	2.A.2 The Pprimary	included in <u>the</u>	4.A.2 The primary		
	caregiver attends	caregiver shall reviews	average).	caregiver shall		
	<u>"BAS Basics"</u>	the Strengthening		implement at least one		
	training.	Families website, webinar receives	3.A.2 The Pprimary	(1) additional		
	1 A 2 The facility	training in the	caregiver <u>shall</u> complete s the	Strengthening Families		
	1.A.2 The facility may have a program	Strengthening Families	Strengthening Families	action plan for a total		
	review completed by	Initiative complete a	online self-assessment	of two (2).		
	a certified BAS	Strengthening Families	for three (3) or more			
	assessor.	training listed on the	strategies.			
	<u>ussessor.</u>	PDR.	otrategies.			
		<u></u>	3.A.3 The Pprimary			
			caregiver shall develops			
			a Strengthening			
			Families action plan and			
			implements at least one			
			(1) action step.			
Administrator / B.	<u>Qualifications</u>	2.B.1 The primary	<u>Qualifications</u>			
Staff Qualifications	(Education and	caregiver shall	(Education and			
and/ Professional	Experience)	complete "Early	Experience)			
Development	1.B.1 Primary and	<u>Learning Standards</u>	3.B.1 Primary caregiver			
	secondary caregivers	Basics" training.	meets requirements for			

are members of the	Qualifications	PDR Foundation 3 or
PDR Registry and/or	(Education and	higher and has an
	•	additional 15 clock
ADE Registry	Experience)	
4.000	2.B.1 All Caregivers	hours.
1.B.2 Primary	maintain membership	
caregiver meets	in the PDR Registry	3.B.2 Within the first
requirements for	and/or ADE Registry.	year of employment all
PDR Foundation 2 or		secondary caregivers
higher.	2.B.2 Primary caregiver	meet requirements for
	meets requirements	PDR Foundation 1 or
1.B.1 The facility has	for PDR Foundation 3	higher and at least 50%
a license in New	or higher.	of secondary caregivers
<u>Provisional or</u>		are at PDR Foundation 2
Regular status.	2.B.3-Within the first	or higher.
	year of employment at	
	least 50% of secondary	
	caregivers meet	
	requirements for PDR	
	Foundation 1 or	
	higher.	
	2.B.2 The primary	
	caregiver shall	
	complete an ERS	
	training.	
	traning.	
	2 D 2 The primary	
	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 CareLicensed and Registered Home 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	<u>Levels 1 - 4</u>	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
<u>Learning Environment /</u>	has a license in	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
<u>Environment</u>	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> Administrator	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			
	review.	caregiver and all	for each child.			
	<u>Professional</u>	secondary caregivers	<u>Professional</u>			
	<u>Development</u>	shall participates	<u>Development</u>			
	1.B.3 Primary	annually in 20 clock	3.B.3 The Pprimary			
	caregiver	hours of approved	caregiver and all			
	completes an ERS	professional	secondary caregivers			
	training.	development_annually.	<u>shall participates</u>			
	4.0.40	2.2.45.71	annually in 25 clock			
	1.B.4 Primary	2.B.15 The Pprimary	hours of approved			
	caregiver	caregiver shall	professional			
	completes training on developmentally	completes "Early Learning Standards	development.			
	appropriate	Basics" training.				
	appropriate physical activities	basics training.				
	for children.	2.B.2 The primary				
	tor cimuren.	caregiver shall				
		complete an ERS				
		training.				
		<u>craning.</u>				
		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				
		<u>developmentally</u>				
		appropriate physical				
		activities for children.				
<u>G</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 Environment /	developmentally	spaces <u>shall</u> have a	spaces shall have a	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
Environment Assessment	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.	2.00.14.14				
	4.000	2.C.2 Written daily	3.C.2 Caregivers			
	1.C.2 Caregivers develop and	plans for each group shall include all areas	maintain a portfolio			
	implement written	of development as	tor each child.			
	daily plans for each	defined in the	3.C.3 Facility The			
	T -	Arkansas Child	primary caregiver shall			
	group.	Development and	develops a current			
	1.C.1 The facility	Early Learning	written curriculum			
	has a license in	Standards: Birth	plan and daily plans			
	New Provisional or	through 60 months.	that include learning			
	Regular status.	through oo months.	goals for children.			
	<u></u>	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 CareLicensed and Registered Home 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	Levels 1 – 5
D.	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. E D.1 The primary	4.D.1 The primary	5.D.1 The primary	6.D.1 The primary
Child Health and&	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 -complete a	tool to -complete a	tool to -complete a
	information to		on nutrition and	self-assessment in	self-assessment in	self-assessment in
	families of	2.E.2 The primary caregiver shall	physical activity for	child nutrition,	child nutrition,	child nutrition,
	uninsured	Facility shares with families	children <u>with</u>	physical activity,	physical activity, farm	physical activity, farm
	children.	information regarding medical homes for children with families.	<u>families</u> .	farm to ECE, oral	to ECE, oral health,	to ECE, oral health,
	4.505.30	nomes for children with families.		health,	breastfeeding and	breastfeeding and
	1.E.2 Facility	250276	3.D.2 The primary	breastfeeding and	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
	shares with	2.ED.2 The primary caregiver shall Facility shares with families	<u>caregiver shall -use a</u> Division-approved	infant feeding, outdoor play and	outdoor play and	outdoor play and
	information on	information regarding child	tool to complete a	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen time and create and	learning, OR screen time, and create and
	child development	development, stages of	(1) physical activity	time and create and	implement two (2)	implement two (2)
	and on children's	development, stages of development, and children's health	self-assessment and	implement two	action plans in that	action plans in that
	health.	for children with families.	create and	action plans in that	module.—	module.—
	nearth.	Tor children with lamines.	implement one	module. (2)	module.—	-
	1.E.3-Any medical	2.D.3 All children birth to	action plan in the	-	5.D.2 The primary	6.D.2 The primary
	and educational	kindergarten shall have an annual	physical activity	4.D.2 The primary	caregiver shall use the	caregiver shall use the
	care plans	developmental screening.	module. L	caregiver shall use	Division-approved	Division-approved
	involving a child			the Division-	tool to complete a	tool to complete a
	are written and on	2.D.4 The primary caregiver shall	3.D.3 The primary	approved tool to	second self-	second self-
	file, and	use a Division-approved tool to	caregiver shall use	complete a second	assessment in child	assessment in child
	implementation is	complete a child nutrition self-	the Division -	self-assessment in	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical
	documented while	assessment and	approved tool to	child nutrition,	activity, farm to ECE,	activity, farm to ECE,

	maintaining	create -and -implement -one	complete a second	physical activity,	oral health,	oral health,
	confidentiality.	(1) -action plan in the child	self-assessment in	farm to ECE, oral	breastfeeding and	breastfeeding and
		nutrition module	the physical activity	<u>health,</u>	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
	1.D.1 The facility	Ξ	module to assess	breastfeeding and	outdoor play and	outdoor play and
	has a license in	2.D.5 The primary caregiver	progress.	infant feeding,	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen
	New Provisional or	shall -use a Division-approved tool		outdoor play and	time to assess	time to assess
	Regular status.	to -complete a second self-		learning, OR screen	progress.	progress. ,
		assessment in the child nutrition		time to assess		
		module to assess progress.		progress.		



<u>ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS - SCHOOL-AGEOUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME 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
CONIPONEINIS	LEVEL 1	Must meet all	Must meet all			
				Must meet all	Must meet all	Must meet all
		requirements for Level	requirements for Level	requirements for	<u>requirements for</u>	<u>requirements for</u>
		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 completed by a	scores an average of	shall score an	score an average of	score an average of
	training. The facility has	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	The facility shall have a	PAS items 1-21 (items 5	4.00 .00 or higher	PAS.	PAS.
	Provisional or Regular	PAS review completed	and 6 <u>are scored,</u>	on PAS.	If using YPQI, PAS is not	If using YPQI, PAS is not
	status.	by a certified assessor. If	but scored but are not	If using YPQI, PAS	required; however, a	required PAS is not
		using YPQI, PAS is not	included in <u>the</u>	is not required;	PQA Form B score of	required; however, a
	1.A.2 The facility may	required; however, a	average <u>.)</u> ; items 10 and	however, a PQA	4.25 or higher is	PQA Form B score of
	have a PAS review	PQA Form B review shall	11 not scored).	Form B score of	required.	4.75 or higher is
	completed by a certified	be completed by a	If using YPQI, PAS is not	four 4.00 .00 or		<u>required.</u>
	assessor or a PQA form B	reliable assessor	required; however, a	higher is required.		
	review completed by a		PQA Form B score of			
	reliable assessor.		three and seventy-five	4.A.2 The director		
		2.A.2 <u>The</u>	tenths (3.75) or higher is	shall implement at		
		Administrator director	required.	least one (1)		
		shall reviews the		<u>additional</u>		
		Strengthening Families	3.4A.2 Administrator	Strengthening		
		website, webinar	The director shall	Families action		
		receives training in the	complete s the	plan for a total of		
		Strengthening Families	Strengthening Families	<u>two (2).</u>		
		Initiative complete a	online self-assessment			
		Strengthening Families	for three (3) or more			
		training, listed on the	Strategies.			
		PDR.				
			3.A.3 The Ffacility shall			
			develop s a			
			Strengthening Families			
			action plan and			
			implements at least one			
			(1) action step.			

		1	1		T
Administrator /	Qualifications (Education	2.B.1 All directors -and	Qualifications (Education		
<u>B.</u>	and Experience)	at least fifty percent	and Experience)		
Staff	1.B.1 Administrator and	(50%) of teaching staff	3.B.1 Administrator		
Qualifications	teaching staff are	shall complete	meets requirements for		
<u>and</u> ≁	members of the PDR	<u>"Developmental Assets</u>	PDR Intermediate 1 or		
Professional	Registry and/or ADE	BasicsIntro to the 40	higher, including 45		
Development	Registry.	<u>Developmental Assets"</u>	clock hours of training in		
		training.	program		
	1.B.2 Administrator		planning/management		
	meets requirements for	2.B.2 All directors and,	and/or leadership.		
	PDR Foundation 3 or	and fifty percent (50%)			
	higher, including 21	of the teaching staff	3.B.2 Within the first		
	clock hours of training in	shall complete an ERS or	year of employment all		
	program	YPQIA training.	staff meet requirements		
	planning/management		for PDR Foundation 1 or		
	and/or leadership.	2.B.3 The director and	higher and at least 50%		
		kitchen manager (if	of teaching staff meet		
	1.B.3 Within the first	applicable) shall	requirements for PDR		
	year of employment all	participate in at least	Foundation 3 or higher.		
	staff meet requirements	two (2) clock hours of			
	for PDR Foundation 1 or	training on nutrition for			
	higher. 11.B.1 The	school age			
	facility has a license in	children/youth, annually.			
	New Provisional or				
	Regular status.	2.B.4 The director shall			
		complete training on			
		developmentally			
		appropriate physical			
		activities for			
		children/youth.			
		Qualifications (Education			
		and Experience)			
		2.B.1 Administrator and			
		teaching staff maintain			
		membership in the PDR			
		Registry and/or ADE			
		Registry			

	2.8.2 Administrator meets requirements for PDR Intermediate 1 or higher, including 30 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership. 2.8.3 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.	
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Arkansas Better Beginnings – School-Age Requirements page 2

COMPONENTS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL-3	<u>LEVEL 4</u>	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			
		least 3 clock hours must	clock hours must be in			

	activities for	be in program	program			
	children/youth.	planning/management	planning/management			
	.,	and/or leadership.	and/or leadership			
		'	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,			
		2.B.15 All directors and				
		A <u>a</u> t least 50% of				
		teaching staff shall				
		complete				
		"Developmental Assets				
		Basics" training.				
		2.B.26-All administrative				
		directors, staff and 50%				
		of the teaching staff				
		shall complete an ERS or				
		YPQA training.				
		2.B. <u>37 The</u>				
		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.				
		age children annually.				
		2.B.4 The director shall				
		complete training on				
		developmentally				
		appropriate physical				
		activities for children.				
<u>C.</u>	1.C.1 A developmentally	2.C.1 The facility shall	3.C.1 Facility shall score	4.C.1 The facility	5.C.1 The facility shall	6.C.1 The
Learning	appropriate daily	score an average of	an average of 4.00 .00 or	shall score an	score an average of	staff/participant ratio
Environment /	program schedule is	3.00 .00 or higher on the	higher on the SACERS or	average of 5.00 .00	5.500 or higher on the	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 4.25 or	
<u>Assessment</u>	classroom/program	3.00 .00 or higher on the	higher on the ¥PQA.	SACERS or 4.00 .00	higher on the PQA.	6.C.2 The facility shall
	area.	¥PQA.				score an average of

		2.C.1 ∧II	3.C.2 Staff shall maintain	or higher on the	6.00 .00 or higher on
1.C.2 Staf	f develop and	classrooms/program	a portfolio for each	PQA.	the SACERS or 4.500 or
implemer	nt written daily	spaces have a minimum	participant.		higher on the PQA.
plans for	each group.	of two (2) clearly defined	3.C.1 All		
		interest centers if not	classrooms/program		
1.C.1 The	facility has a	utilizing single-use	spaces have a minimum		
license in	New	spaces. Single use spaces	of three (3) clearly		
Provisiona	al or Regular	are exempt from this	defined interest centers		
status.		requirement as long as	if not utilizing single-use		
		other program spaces	spaces. Single use spaces		
1.C.2 The	facility may	are available to allow for	are exempt from this		
have a SA	CERS or a PQA	other interest center	requirement as long as		
review co	mpleted by a	activities.	other program spaces		
reliable as	ssessor.		are available to allow for		
			other interest center		
			activities.		

Arkansas Better Beginnings – School-AgeOut-of-School Time 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	<u>requirements</u>	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			
Environment		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 SACERS or an average of 3.00 or higher on the YPQA.	3.C.1 Facility shall score an average of 4.00 or 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.			
<u>D.</u> 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 and& 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.	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.E.2 The Ffacility shall shares with families with families information regarding child/or youth development, stages of	3.ED.1 The Ffacility shall shares with families information on nutrition and physical activity for children/youthschool age children with families. (1)L2two ()	(2)	(2)	

		development, and children's		
	1.E.3 Any medical and	<u>health</u> .		
	educational care			
	plans involving a	(1)		
	child/youth are			
	written and on file,			
	and implementation			
	is documented while			
	maintaining			
	confidentiality.			
	1.D.1 The facility has			
	a license in New			
	Provisional or Regular			
	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 7.01 The application will consist of the following items:
 - A. Better Beginnings Application Form An application indicating the level of Better Beginnings that the individual is applying for. -This can be submitted via the provider portal. If the provider portal is not operable, applications may be submitted electronically through email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov.
 - B. Supporting documentation for all items listed in Section 6, (six) regardingfor the facility type and level for which the facility is applying.
 - A. <u>B. Better Beginnings Application Checklist. This document allows the facility to self-select the requirements for which documentation is being provided.</u>
 - 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 annuallyonce every two years; 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.
- 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 participation in Better Beginnings via the provider portal and submit verification of the accreditation. If the provider portal is not operable, applications may be submitted electronically through email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov. 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.
- 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 <u>the submitted</u> documentation <u>submitted</u> does not meet the requirement<u>s</u>, 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 for 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 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 <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 result in loss of certification status.</u>
 Certification will be granted <u>according to achievement of requirements upon completion of all requirements</u> (see section 8.00-<u>Application Review</u>).

9.03 Facilities who do not meet requirements for their current level or higher at recertification will be given the option of accepting the highest level for which they qualify or being placed on a 90-day corrective action agreement. All requirements must be met for the current or higher level by the end of the corrective action agreement. If the requirements are not met, the facility will be certified at the highest level for which they qualify.

<u>9.04</u> -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 or a corrective action agreement at any level.

9.039.05 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.

9.049.06 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 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.

9.0<u>67</u> Unannounced visits, review<u>s</u>, 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 <u>certified-the Better Beginnings-</u>status.

9.08 -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 result from 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—;
- <u>C. Failure to continue to meet the requirements for the component areas for the level which the facility is assigned;</u>
- D. Numerous or serious deficiencies cited by licensing-;
- <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 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 authorized notified by the Division Director.

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 AND DEFINITIONS

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						
Director	The person who meets MLR as director and is on site a minimum of 50% of						
	the operational day.						
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						
PQA	Program Quality Assessment						
SACERS	School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale						
TQRIS	Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System						
YPQI	Youth Program Quality Intervention						

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

- 4.06 The Division or Division consultants will provide technical assistance to any facilities desiring to achieve certification.
- 4.07 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).
- 4.08 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 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 Director.

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 CHILD CARE CENTER 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 The facility shall	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	have a PAS review	score an average of 4.00	score an average of	score an average of	score an average of
	Provisional or Regular	completed by a certified	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 assessor. School-	1-21 (items 5 and 6 are	School-age programs	School-age programs	School-age programs
		age programs using YPQI	scored but are not	using YPQI shall have	using YPQI shall have a	using YPQI shall have a
	1.A.2 The facility may	shall have a PQA Form B	included in the average).	a PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of	PQA Form B score of
	have a program review	review completed by a	School-age programs	4.00 or higher.	4.25 or higher.	4.75 or higher.
	completed by a	reliable assessor.	using YPQI shall have a			
	certified PAS assessor.		PQA Form B score of	4.A.2 The director		
	School age programs	2.A.2 The director shall	3.75 or higher.	shall implement at		
	using YPQI may have a	complete a		least one (1)		
	PQA Form B review	Strengthening Families	3.A.2 The director shall	additional		
	completed by a	training listed on the	complete the	Strengthening		
	reliable assessor.	PDR.	Strengthening Families	Families action step		
			online self-assessment	for a total of two (2).		
			for three (3) or more			
			Strategies.			
			3.A.3 The facility shall			
			develop a Strengthening			
			Families action plan and			
			implement at least one			
_	45471 6 1111 1		(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 "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 YPQI, all directors and school-age staff shall complete YPQI 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.

Arkansas Better Beginnings – Child Care Center 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	Levels 1 - 5
C.	1.C.1 The facility has	2.C.1 The facility shall score an	3.C.1 The facility shall	4.C.1 Staff to child	5.C.1 Staff to child	6.C.1 Staff to child
Learning	a license in New	average of 3.00 or higher on the	score an average of	ratios shall be	ratios shall be	ratios shall be
Environment /	Provisional or	ERS review. School age programs	4.00 or higher on the	maintained as	maintained as	maintained as
Environment	Regular status.	using PQA shall score a 3.00 or	ERS. School age	follows:	follows:	follows:
Assessment		higher on the PQA.	programs using PQA	Birth–18 months	Birth–18 months 1:4	Birth-18 months 1:4
	1.C.2 The facility		shall score 3.75 or	1:4	18-36 months 1:6	18-36 months 1:6
	may have an ERS		higher on the PQA.	18-36 months 1:7	2 ½ - 3 years 1:10	2 ½ - 3 years 1:10
	review. School age			2 ½ - 3 years 1:11	4 years 1:10	4 years 1:10
	programs using YPQI		3.C.2 The staff shall	4 years 1:12	5 years and up 1:18	5 years and up 1:15
	may have a PQA		maintain a portfolio	5 years and up 1:18		
	review.		for each child.		5.C.2 The facility	6.C.2 The facility
				4.C.2 The facility	shall score an	shall score an
				shall score an	average of 5.50 or	average of 6.00 or
				average of 5.00 or	higher on the ERS.	higher on the ERS.
				higher on the ERS.	School age	School age
				School age	programs using the	programs using the
				programs using	PQA shall score 4.25	PQA shall score
				PQA shall score	or higher on the	4.50 or higher on
				4.00 or higher on	PQA.	the PQA.
D.	1.D.1 The facility has	2.D.1 The facility shall document	3.D.1 The facility shall	the PQA. 4.D.1 The facility	5.D.1 The facility	6.D.1 The facility
Child Health and	a license in New	distribution of ARKids First	share information on	shall use a Division-	shall use a Division-	shall use a Division-
Development	Provisional or	information to families of	nutrition and physical	approved tool to	approved tool to	approved tool to
Development	Regular status.	uninsured children.	activity for children	complete a self-	complete a self-	complete a self-
	Regulai Status.	dillibured children.	with families.	assessment in child	assessment in child	assessment in child
		2.D.2 The facility shall share	With families.	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical
		information on child development,	3.D.2 The facility shall	activity, farm to	activity, farm to ECE,	activity, farm to ECE,
	· ·	stages of development, and	use a Division-	ECE, oral health,	oral health,	oral health,
		children's health with families.	approved tool to	breastfeeding &	breastfeeding and	breastfeeding and
			complete a (1) physical	infant feeding,	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
		2.D.3 All children, birth to	activity self-	outdoor play &	outdoor play and	outdoor play and
		kindergarten, shall have an annual	assessment and create	learning, or screen	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen
		developmental screening.	and implement one	time and create	time and create and	time and create and
		_	action plan in the	and implement two	implement two (2)	implement two (2)

2.D.4 The facility shall use a	physical activity	action plans in that	action plans in that	action plans in that
Division-approved tool to complete a child nutrition self-assessment	module.	module	module.	module.
and create and implement one (1)	3.D.3 The facility shall	4.D.2 The facility	5.D.2 The facility	6.D.2 The facility
action plan in the child nutrition	use the Division -	shall use the	shall use the	shall use the
module.	approved tool to	Division – approved	Division – approved	Division – approved
	complete a second	tool to complete a	tool to complete a	tool to complete a
2.D.5 The facility shall use a	self-assessment in the	second self-	second self-	second self-
Division-approved tool to complete	physical activity	assessment in child	assessment in child	assessment in child
a second self-assessment in the	module to assess	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical
child nutrition model to assess	progress.	activity, farm to	activity, farm to ECE,	activity, farm to ECE,
progress.		ECE, oral health,	oral health,	oral health,
		breastfeeding &	breastfeeding &	breastfeeding &
		infant feeding,	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
		outdoor play &	outdoor play &	outdoor play &
		learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen
		time to assess	time to assess	time to assess
		progress.	progress.	progress.

<u>ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS – LICENSED AND REGISTERED HOME 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
A.	1.A.1 The facility has	2.A.1 A program	3.A.1 The facility shall	4.A.1 The facility	5.A.1 The facility	6.A.1 The facility
Administration	a license in New	review shall be	score an average of 4.00	shall score an	shall score an	shall score an
	Provisional or	completed by a	or higher on BAS items	average of 4.00 or	average of 5.00 or	average of 6.00 or
	Regular status.	certified BAS assessor.	2-10 (item 2 is scored	higher on BAS.	higher on BAS.	higher on BAS.
			but is not included in			
	1.A.2 The facility	2.A.2 The primary	the average).	4.A.2 The primary		
	may have a program	caregiver shall	2 A 2 The universe.	caregiver shall		
	review completed by a certified BAS	complete a	3.A.2 The primary	implement at least one		
		Strengthening Families training listed on the	caregiver shall complete the Strengthening	(1) additional		
	assessor.	PDR.	Families online self-	Strengthening Families		
		i bit.	assessment for three (3)	action plan for a total		
			or more strategies.	of two (2).		
			0			
			3.A.3 The primary			
			caregiver shall develop			
			a Strengthening			
			Families action plan and			
			implement at least one			
			(1) action step.			
B. Staff	1.B.1 The facility has	2.B.1 The primary				
Qualifications and	a license in New	caregiver shall				
Professional	Provisional or	complete "Early				
Development	Regular status.	Learning Standards Basics" training.				
		Dasics trailling.				
				l		

2.B.2 The primary caregiver shall complete an ERS training. 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 – Licensed and Registered Home 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 – Licensed and Registered Home 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	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
and 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 complete a	tool to complete a	tool to complete a
			physical activity for	self-assessment in	self-assessment in	self-assessment in
		2.D.2 The primary caregiver shall	children with	child nutrition,	child nutrition,	child nutrition,
		share information regarding child	families.	physical activity,	physical activity, farm	physical activity, farm
		development, stages of		farm to ECE, oral	to ECE, oral health,	to ECE, oral health,
		development, and children's health	3.D.2 The primary	health,	breastfeeding and	breastfeeding and
		with families.	caregiver shall use a	breastfeeding and	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
			Division-approved	infant feeding,	outdoor play and	outdoor play and
		2.D.3 All children birth to	tool to complete a	outdoor play and	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen
		kindergarten shall have an annual	physical activity self-	learning, OR screen	time and create and	time and create and
		developmental screening.	assessment and	time and create and	implement two (2)	implement two (2)
		3 D 4 The prime my conscius and shall	create and	implement two	action plans in that	action plans in that
		2.D.4 The primary caregiver shall	implement one	action plans in that module.	module.	module.
		use a Division-approved tool to complete a child nutrition self-	action plan in the physical activity	module.	5.D.2 The primary	6.D.2 The primary
		assessment and create and	module.	4.D.2 The primary	caregiver shall use the	caregiver shall use the
		implement one (1) action plan in	module.	caregiver shall use	Division-approved	Division-approved
		the child nutrition module.	3.D.3 The primary	the Division-	tool to complete a	tool to complete a
		the child flathtion filodale.	caregiver shall use	approved tool to	second self-	second self-
		2.D.5 The primary caregiver shall	the Division -	complete a second	assessment in child	assessment in child
		use a Division-approved tool to	approved tool to	self-assessment in	nutrition, physical	nutrition, physical
		complete a second self-assessment	complete a second	child nutrition,	activity, farm to ECE,	activity, farm to ECE,
		in the child nutrition module to	self-assessment in	physical activity,	oral health,	oral health,
		assess progress.	the physical activity	farm to ECE, oral	breastfeeding and	breastfeeding and
			module to assess	health,	infant feeding,	infant feeding,
			progress.	breastfeeding and	outdoor play and	outdoor play and
				infant feeding,	learning, OR screen	learning, OR screen
				outdoor play and	time to assess	time to assess
				learning, OR screen	progress.	progress.
				time to assess		
				progress.		

ARKANSAS BETTER BEGINNINGS - OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME 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 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 The facility shall	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	have a PAS review	score an average of 4.00	shall score an	score an average of	score an average of
	Provisional or Regular	completed by a certified	or higher on PAS items	average of 4.00 or	5.00 or higher on PAS.	6.00 or higher on PAS.
	<u>status.</u>	assessor. If using YPQI,	1-21 (items 5 and 6 are	higher on PAS.	If using YPQI, PAS is not	If using YPQI, PAS is not
		PAS is not required;	scored but are not	If using YPQI, PAS	required; however, a	required PAS is not
	1.A.2 The facility may	however, a PQA Form B	included in the	is not required;	PQA Form B score of	required; however, a
	have a PAS review	review shall be	average.).	however, a PQA	4.25 or higher is	PQA Form B score of
	completed by a certified	completed by a reliable	If using YPQI, PAS is not	Form B score of	required.	4.75 or higher is
	assessor or a PQA form B	assessor.	required; however, a	4.00 or higher is		required.
	review completed by a		PQA Form B score of	required.		
	reliable assessor.	2.A.2 The director shall	3.75 or higher is			
		complete a	required.	4.A.2 The director		
		Strengthening Families		shall implement at		
		training, listed on the	3.A.2 The director shall	least one (1)		
		PDR.	complete the	additional		
			Strengthening Families	Strengthening		
			online self-assessment	Families action		
			for three (3) or more	plan for a total of		
			Strategies.	two (2).		
			0.4071 (30. 1 3			
			3.A.3 The facility shall			
			develop a Strengthening			
			Families action plan and			

			implement at least one (1) action step.		
B. Staff Qualifications and Professional Development	1.B.1 The facility has a license in New Provisional or Regular status.	2.B.1 All directors and at least fifty percent (50%) of teaching staff shall complete "Intro to the 40 Developmental Assets" training. 2.B.2 All directors and, and fifty percent (50%) of the teaching staff shall complete an ERS or YPQI training. 2.B.3 The director and kitchen manager (if applicable) shall participate in training on nutrition for school age children/youth, annually. 2.B.4 The director shall complete training on developmentally appropriate physical activities for children/youth.	(1) action step.		

C.	1.C.1 The facility has a	2.C.1 The facility shall	3.C.1 Facility shall score	4.C.1 The facility	5.C.1 The facility shall	6.C.1 The
Learning	license in New	score an average of 3.00	an average of 4.00 or	shall score an	score an average of	staff/participant ratio
Environment /	Provisional or Regular	or higher on the SACERS	higher on the SACERS or	average of 5.00 or	5.50 or higher on the	shall be 1:15.
Environment	status.	or 3.00 or higher on the	3.75 or higher on the	higher on the	SACERS or 4.25 or	
Assessment		PQA.	PQA.	SACERS or 4.00 or	higher on the PQA.	6.C.2 The facility shall
	1.C.2 The facility may			higher on the PQA.		score an average of
	have a SACERS or a PQA		3.C.2 Staff shall maintain			6.00 or higher on the
	review completed by a		a portfolio for each			SACERS or 4.50 or
	reliable assessor.		participant.			higher on the PQA.

Arkansas Better Beginnings – Out-of-School Time 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			
Child/Youth	a license in New	the distribution of ARKids First	share information on			
Health and	Provisional or Regular	information to families of	nutrition and physical			
Development	status.	uninsured participants.	activity for school age			
			children with families.			
		2.D.2 The facility shall share with				
		families information regarding				
		child or youth development, stages				
		of development, and children's				
		health.				



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 via the provider portal. If the provider portal is not operable, applications may be submitted electronically through email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov.
 - 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 the provider portal and submit verification of the accreditation. If the provider portal is not operable, applications may be submitted electronically through email at BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov. 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 for 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 Facilities who do not meet requirements for their current level or higher at recertification will be given the option of accepting the highest level for which they qualify or being placed on a 90-day corrective action agreement. All requirements must be met for the current or higher level by the end of the corrective action agreement. If the requirements are not met, the facility will be certified at the highest level for which they qualify.
- 9.04 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 or a corrective action agreement at any level.
- 9.05 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.
- 9.06 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 the 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.

- 9.07 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.
- 9.08 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 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 authorized by the Division Director.

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.

