

BETTER BEGINNINGS QUALITY RATING IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM
POLICY FOR LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES
PRESCHOOL FACILITIES



The following Better Beginnings policy applies only to the accreditation of programs operated by the public schools or Educational Service Cooperatives. Compliance with the requirements shown will be reviewed and maintained by the school district or Educational Service Cooperative. All other requirements must be met in order to achieve star status. This policy does not apply to programs located on school campuses that are operated by other individuals or agencies. This document is not intended as a replacement for the Better Beginnings Rules and Regulations, but is offered to reduce duplication of effort for standards that are required by the Department of Education.

Policy:

Center-based preschool facilities that are operated by Local Education Agencies (LEA) are eligible to apply for reciprocity from selected Better Beginnings criteria. Certification that these criteria meet or exceed requirements must be provided. The selected criteria includes business and administrative practices for the facility including fiscal management (annual operating budget, recent audit), administrator and staff qualifications, staff evaluations/professional development plans, professional development hours, and participation in the USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) .

The Better Beginnings components and criteria available for reciprocity include:

Administration Component:

1. **A.1** Administrator attends "PAS Basics" training.
2. **A.1** A program review is completed by a certified PAS Assessor.
3. **A.1** Facility scores an average of 4.00 or higher on PAS items 1-21.

Administrator/Staff Qualification/Professional Development Component:

2. **B.7** Administrator and kitchen manager (if applicable) participate annually in at least 2 clock hours of training on nutrition for children.
3. **B.1** Administrator meets requirements for TAPP Intermediate 1 or higher, including 45 clock hours of training in program planning/management and/or leadership.
3. **B.2** Within the first year of employment all staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 1 or higher and at least 50% of teaching staff meet requirements for TAPP Foundation 3 or higher.
3. **B.3** All administrators and teaching staff participate annually in 25 clock hours of approved professional development; for administrators, at least 4 clock hours must be in program planning/management and/or leadership.

A qualifying facility may request the reciprocity by submitting a completed and signed Request for Administrative Practices Reciprocity form along with the Better Beginnings application. Upon verification that the requirements have been met, the certification level will be awarded. Certification is valid for 36 months with annual submission required of the Request for Administrative Practices Reciprocity form.

Additional information may be requested and the applicant may be required to participate in certain portions of Better Beginnings if it is determined that the administrative or professional development practices do not meet requirements.

Local Education Agency (LEA) facilities may choose not to participate in the reciprocity process but may choose to participate by meeting the Better Beginnings criteria for the level requested.