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Playbook  
2019-2021

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## About Bright & Early ND

Bright & Early ND is North Dakota's Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) that helps identify high-quality childcare and early education programs that prepare children for school and life. We are part of a national movement to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in childcare and early education programs across our state.

Bright & Early ND is an initiative led by the ND Department of Human Services to ensure that North Dakota's children receive the quality childcare and early education they need to succeed. We recognize talented childcare and early education programs for going above and beyond, and we deliver professional rewards for a job well done. It is a must for providers trying to influence and change kids' lives in a positive way!

## Purpose of the Playbook

The Bright & Early ND Playbook is your go-to guide. It establishes a statewide level of quality and contains four steps proven to deliver positive results for children. Commit to carry out the steps in the Playbook, and children in your program are more likely to enter kindergarten with the skills needed to be successful in school and life.

Use the Playbook as a resource to help you successfully participate in Bright & Early ND. Its purpose is to:

- Help you and your program understand the framework, requirements, support, and benefits associated with Bright & Early ND;
- Provide an overview of the four Bright & Early ND Steps to Quality;
- Serve as an ongoing reference tool for programs participating in Bright & Early ND.



## Learn

Bright & Early ND uses a building block approach which incorporates four levels, or steps, to quality. Each of the Bright & Early ND Steps to Quality focuses on a specific component of care and builds upon the others to deliver a higher level of care. For details, see page 4.

## Prepare

You're busy. We get it. Bright & Early ND isn't going to give you more to do, it's going to show you what to focus on to get the maximum results for kids. We take the guesswork out of preparing children for kindergarten. Great school years start with great childcare years—it's that simple. If you are ready to begin your quality improvement journey, let the Playbook guide you!

## Join

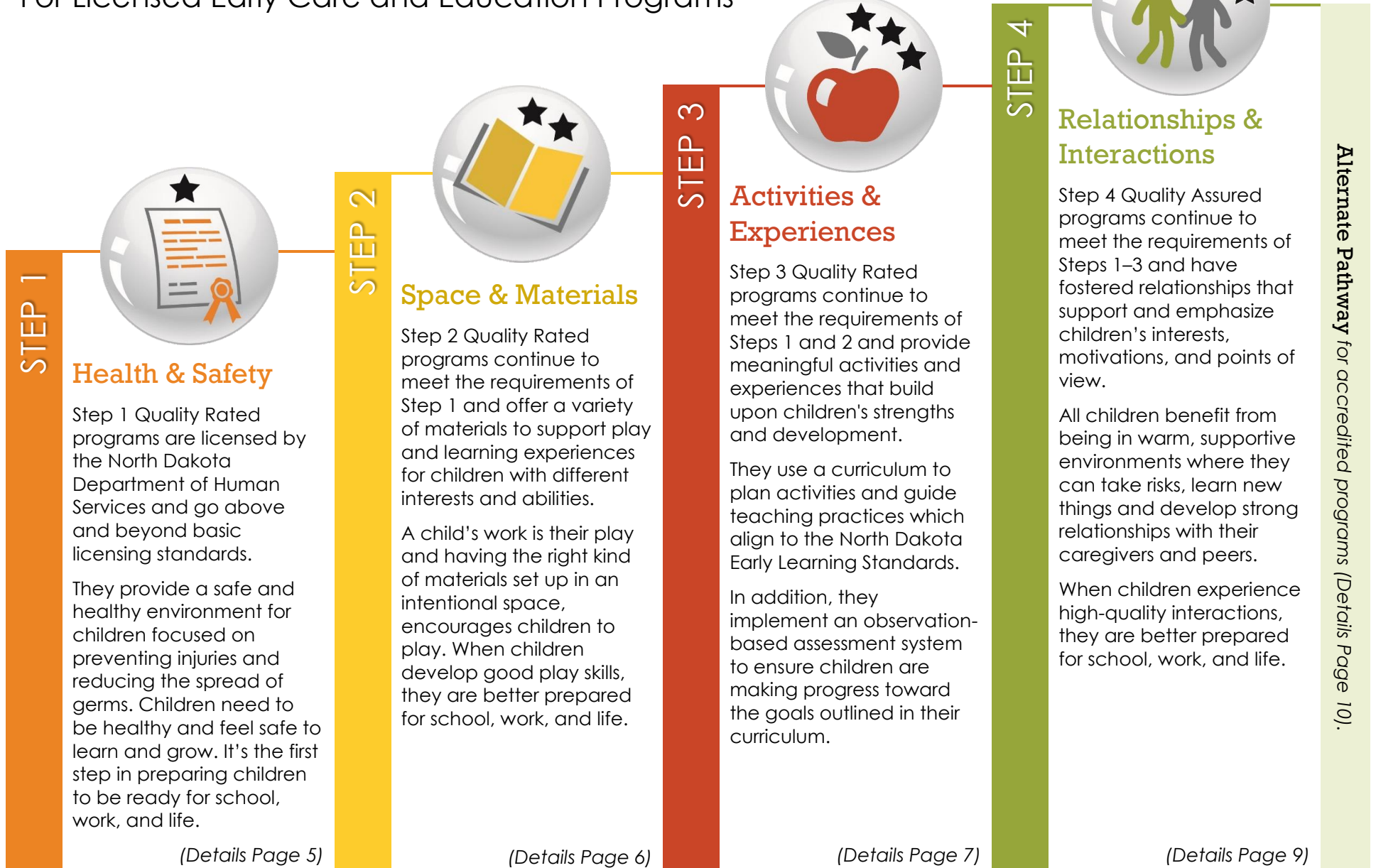
Since the Bright & Early ND Steps to Quality build upon each other, all licensed programs start at Step 1: Health & Safety. Children need to be healthy and feel safe to learn and grow. It's the first step in preparing children to be ready for school, work, and life. Programs can apply for a Step 1 Quality Rating at any time. We have partnered with ND Growing Futures to make the application process quick and streamlined. For application details, see page 17.

## Benefit

Since day one, Bright & Early ND has made it a priority to recognize and reward providers for going above and beyond! Are you looking to enhance your environment or add new learning materials? Do you want recognition for a job well done? You've got it. You'll have support every step of the way with exclusive benefits at your fingertips. For a list of benefits, see page 16.

# Bright & Early ND Steps to Quality

For Licensed Early Care and Education Programs



# Bright & Early ND Quality Standards Inventory

## Step 1 | Health and Safety



### The Goal

Provide a safe and healthy environment for children focused on preventing injuries and reducing the spread of germs.

### Why It Matters

Children need to be healthy and feel safe to learn and grow. It's the first step in preparing children to be ready for school, work and life.



## Quality Indicators

## Verification Process

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed by the North Dakota Department of Human Services for at least 6 months. | Bright & Early ND will verify the status of your license with your county licensor; therefore, no additional evidence is needed.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program serves children between the ages of birth to five.                       | Bright & Early ND will verify the status of your license with your county licensor; therefore, no additional evidence is needed.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Review of the program's license history for the past 6 months.                   | Bright & Early ND will verify the status of your license with your county licensor; therefore, no additional evidence is needed.<br><br>Please see the Bright & Early ND Eligibility Requirements, found online at <a href="https://www.brightnd.org/resources">https://www.brightnd.org/resources</a> , for additional details on the verification process. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meet Professional Development Quality Standards.                                 | Bright & Early ND will verify Professional Development Quality Standards via the ND Growing Futures organization profile. For more details, see pages 11-15.   |

## Ready to Join?

Before you begin, make sure your program has a registered organization profile with the ND Growing Futures Workforce Registry. Creating an organization profile with the ND Growing Futures Workforce Registry is simple and free. With your account, you'll be able to quickly track your employees' training and easily provide information to your licensor at renewal time. For details, visit [www.ndgrowingfutures.org/organizations](http://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/organizations).

Once you have created an organization profile you can apply for Bright & Early ND. Check out the Bright & Early ND Resources at <https://www.brightnd.org/resources> for tip sheets and tutorials on how to apply. Don't forget to bookmark this page to stay connected to the most current Bright & Early ND resources and information!

# Bright & Early ND Quality Standards Inventory

## Step 2 | Space and Materials



### The Goals

- Offer a variety of materials to support play and learning experiences for children with different interests and abilities.
- Serve nutritious food to children.

### Why It Matters

A child's work is play! Having the right materials set up in an engaging and interactive environment encourages children to play. When children develop good play skills, they are better prepared for school, work, and life.

## Quality Indicators

- Continue to meet the Health and Safety Quality Standards in Step 1.
- Demonstrate how your program serves nutritious food to children.

- Program receives an Environment Rating Scale® (ERS®) observation and meets the minimum score thresholds.

- Meet Professional Development Quality Standards.

## Verification Process

For more details on the Step 1 indicators and verification process, see page 5.

There are four ways to demonstrate that your program serves nutritious food to children. Programs must choose one option that best fits your program. For more information, visit <https://www.brightnd.org/nutrition>.

Bright & Early ND will determine which ERS® tool to use in your program based off your program type.

### Preschool and Center-Based Programs

- The Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale®, Third Edition (ITERS-3™) is used in classrooms with children age birth to 36 months.
- The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale®, Third Edition (ECERS-3™) is used in classrooms with children age 3 to 5 years.

Observations are conducted in 33% of randomly selected classrooms. Programs must earn an average program score of 3.5 or greater on each tool used.

### Family and Group Programs

- The Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale® (FCCERS-R™) is used with mixed ages and accommodates the wider age range often found in family childcare programs. One observation is conducted per family or group childcare program. Please note, if your program separates by age groups, multiple observations may be conducted.

Programs must earn an average program score or 4.0 or greater.

Bright & Early ND will verify Professional Development Quality Standards via the Growing Futures organization profile. For more details, see pages 11-15.



The Environment Rating Scale® is a reliable, valid, research-based observational tool, which is designed to assess the quality of the environment. For more information, visit <https://www.brightnd.org/about-environment-rating-scales>.

# Bright & Early ND Quality Standards Inventory

## Step 3 | Activities and Experiences



### The Goals

- Use a curriculum to plan activities and guide teaching practices which align to the North Dakota Early Learning Standards: Birth to Kindergarten.
- Use the approved assessment tool to learn about each child's development. Use the results of the assessment to:
  - set goals with families for each child's learning and development
  - plan learning activities that build upon each child's strengths and provide opportunities for further growth
  - recognize any areas of concern regarding individual child development
- Demonstrate continued commitment to providing quality space and materials.

### Why It Matters

Development is so important in the early years that we do not simply want to hope that children get all the experiences they need to learn. Instead, we want to put a long-term plan in place to make sure learning happens. We call this plan for the children's learning the "curriculum". Assessment shows you if your curriculum is working. By using an assessment tool, you can see progress in children's development over time.

### Quality Indicators

### Verification Process

<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to meet the Health and Safety Quality Standards in Step 1.	For more details on the Step 1 indicators and verification process, see page 5.
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to meet the Space and Materials Quality Standards in Step 2.	For more details on the Step 2 indicators and verification process, see page 6.
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete an Environment Self-Assessment (ESA) proving your program continues to provide quality space and materials for the children in your care. <input type="checkbox"/> In addition, each classroom or group must set a minimum of three goals for continued quality improvement.	Programs will complete and submit one ESA for each separate classroom or group of children as evidence. To download the ESA, visit <a href="https://www.brightnd.org/resources">https://www.brightnd.org/resources</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses a curriculum that aligns with the North Dakota Early Learning Standards: Birth to Kindergarten as reflected through the Curriculum Alignment Worksheet.	Bright & Early ND does not require programs to use a specific curriculum. Rather, curricula should reflect the values and philosophy of the program and the children and families served. Programs will complete and submit the Curriculum Alignment Worksheet as evidence. To download the Curriculum Alignment Worksheet, visit <a href="https://www.brightnd.org/resources">https://www.brightnd.org/resources</a> .

# Bright & Early ND Quality Standards Inventory Cont.

## Step 3 | Activities and Experiences

### Quality Indicators

### Verification Process

- Adopt GOLD® as your program's assessment system and create a financial sustainability plan for ongoing use.

Bright & Early ND will verify the financial stability plan via the ND Growing Futures organization profile. In addition, programs will upload a copy of their GOLD® subscription agreement and receipt of purchase.

Bright & Early ND will randomly select 33% of the portfolios within each classroom or group. Documentation within these portfolios must be objectively recorded and any documentation that is subjective, tagged incorrectly, or does not have supportive evidence will not count towards the minimum requirements.

Each portfolio must include a minimum number of documentation pieces. Please see the details below:

*A minimum of 3 pieces of documentation per child needed in the following areas:*

- Social-Emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive

*A minimum of 2 pieces of documentation per child needed in the following areas:*

- Literacy
- Mathematics

Please note, infants ages birth to 1 year are exempt from the Literacy and Mathematics requirements.

- Observes children regularly and records information in MyTeachingStrategies™.

- Program completes GOLD® checkpoints during the three yearly periods (fall, winter, spring) in MyTeachingStrategies™.

Bright & Early ND will verify a program's ongoing assessment of children using GOLD® checkpoints. Programs will be required to complete checkpoints during the three yearly periods:

- Fall Checkpoint Period (9/1-12/31)
- Winter Checkpoint Period (1/1-4/30)
- Spring Checkpoint Period (5/1-8/31)

Bright & Early ND will verify GOLD® checkpoint progress via MyTeachingStrategies™, therefore no additional evidence is needed. Programs will be expected to continually complete checkpoints throughout the Quality Rating period.

- Meet Professional Development Quality Standards.

Bright & Early ND will verify Professional Development Quality Standards via the ND Growing Futures organization profile. For more information, see pages 11-15.



# Bright & Early ND Quality Standards Inventory

## Step 4 | Relationships and Interactions



### The Goals

- Develop warm and supportive relationships with children and help children develop positive relationships with each other.
- Place an emphasis on children's interests, motivations and points of view in daily activities and interactions.
- Facilitate children's critical thinking and language development through interactions with children.
- Demonstrate continued commitment to providing quality space and materials.
- Continued verification your program is accurately assessing the needs of the children you care for.

### Why It Matters

All children benefit from being in warm, supportive environments where they can develop strong relationships with their caregivers and peers. In addition, research shows that children in programs with higher CLASS® scores have better social, emotional, and academic outcomes.

### Quality Indicators

- Continue to meet the Health and Safety Quality Standards in Step 1.
- Continue to meet the Space and Materials Quality Standards in Step 2.
- Continue to meet the Activities and Experiences Quality Standards in Step 3.

### Verification Process

For more details on the Step 1 indicators and verification process, see page 5.

For more details on the Step 2 indicators and verification process, see page 6.

For more details on the Step 3 indicators and verification process, see page 7.

Programs will receive onsite CLASS® observations and must earn an average program score of the following:

#### Infant CLASS®

Responsive Caregiving 4.0

#### Toddler CLASS®

Emotional Support 5.0  
Engaged Support for Learning 3.5

#### Pre-K CLASS®

Emotional Support 5.0  
Classroom Organization 5.0  
Instructional Support 3.0

#### Preschool and Center-based Programs

Observations will be conducted in each classroom with the tool that best reflects the age group in care. Classroom scores are averaged to calculate a program level score for each tool used.

#### Family and Group Programs

Observations will be conducted program-wide with the tools that best reflect the age groups in care. A total of two tools will be used throughout the observation.

Bright & Early ND will verify the average program score once the CLASS® observation is complete, therefore no additional evidence is needed.

Bright & Early ND will verify Professional Development Quality Standards via the Growing Futures organization account. For more information, see pages 11-15.

- Meet Professional Development Quality Standards.

# Bright & Early ND Quality Standards Inventory

## Step 4 Alternate Pathway | Relationships and Interactions



The alternate pathway or sometimes referred to as the 'accreditation pathway' is for programs that have a current certification of accreditation through one of the following approved organizations. Bright & Early ND honors accreditation from NAEYC, NAFCC, NAC and COA. A certificate of accreditation from one of these organizations serves as confirmation that the program meets the Bright & Early ND Quality Standards for Step 2 and Step 3 along with the Professional Development Quality Standards for Step 2 and Step 3. To qualify for Step 4, accredited programs must first become Step 1 Quality Rated and then can proceed to the Step 4 Alternate Pathway as listed below.



### Quality Indicators

### Verification Process

- Continue to meet the Health and Safety Quality Standards in Step 1.

For more details on the Step 1 indicators and verification process, see page 5.

Programs will receive onsite CLASS® observations and must earn an average program score of the following:

<b>Infant CLASS®</b> Responsive Caregiving 4.0	<b>Toddler CLASS®</b> Emotional Support 5.0 Engaged Support for Learning 3.5	<b>Pre-K CLASS®</b> Emotional Support 5.0 Classroom Organization 5.0 Instructional Support 3.0
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- Program receives a Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®) observation and meets the minimum score thresholds.

**Preschool and Center-based Programs**  
Observations will be conducted in each classroom with the tool that best reflects the age group in care. Classroom scores are averaged to calculate a program level score for each tool used.

**Family and Group Programs**  
Observations will be conducted program-wide with the tools that best reflect the age groups in care. A total of two tools will be used throughout the observation. Bright & Early ND will verify the average program score once the CLASS® observation is complete, therefore no additional evidence is needed.
- Meet Professional Development Quality Standards.

Bright & Early ND will verify Professional Development Quality Standards via the Growing Futures organization account. For more information, see pages 11-15.



Programs pursuing the Step 4 Alternate Pathway must upload a copy of their current accreditation certificate to their ND Growing Futures organization profile. Log in to your organization profile and complete the required information under the 'Program Info' tab.

# Professional Development

The Professional Development Quality Standards Inventory is a resource for all programs working towards a Quality Rating through Bright & Early ND. This inventory will help your program meet the goals needed for each Quality Rating Step and plan for future training opportunities.

## The Goals

- Individuals have the knowledge and skills needed to work with children birth through five and their families.
- Director, Lead Caregivers, and/or Principal has specialized preparation in business and program administration specific to early education.

## Why It Matters

Early Education, like many other fields, requires ongoing education to keep up with the vast amount of child development research happening so rapidly. It is imperative that Bright & Early ND Programs stay on top of research so each child receives the opportunities necessary to succeed in school and life.

## Plan for Success

Professional Development starts in one place, with the ND Growing Futures Workforce Registry. Below are some of the steps you may want to accomplish before applying for Bright & Early ND. For additional information or questions, visit [www.ndgrowingfutures.org](http://www.ndgrowingfutures.org).



- Create a Growing Futures Organization Profile

With an organization profile, sometimes referred to as your business profile, your program will have a place to track enrollment and classroom information, quick and easy access to current employee Learning Records, and much more.

If your program does not have a Growing Futures organization account, visit <http://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/organizations> for easy step-by-step directions.

- Update Your Employment Records

Bright & Early ND Quality Standards require the Director, Lead Teachers and/or Lead Caregivers are linked to the program's organization profile with verified employment. Please note, if you are a Family or Group Licensed program, you will have to report that you are employed at your own business. Check out the Bright & Early ND Resources page at <https://www.brightnd.org/resources> for additional tip sheets.





- Maintain Your Individual Membership

Bright & Early ND Professional Development Quality Standards require the Director, Lead Teachers and/or Lead Caregivers to be individual members of the ND Growing Futures Workforce Registry with a current Career Pathway placement.

If you or your employees do not have an individual membership, visit <http://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/individuals> for easy step-by-step directions.

# Professional Development Quality Standards Inventory





For Preschool and Center Licensed Child Care Programs

 <b>STEP 1</b>	 <b>STEP 2</b>	 <b>STEP 3</b>	 <b>STEP 4</b>
<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Director and all Lead Teachers are linked to the program's Growing Futures organization profile with verified employment.</li> <li>□ <b>Director<sup>1</sup></b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher</li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Teachers<sup>2</sup></b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher</li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Director</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-OR-</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and meets Director qualifications according to licensing section:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preschool: 75-03-11-08.1</li> <li>▪ Center 75-03-10-10</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Teachers</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-OR-</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and have completed the following coursework:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area II. Learning Environment and Curriculum</li> <li>▪ At least 3 clock hours specific to the Environment Rating Scales<sup>®</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Director</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-OR-</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and meets Director qualifications according to licensing section:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preschool: 75-03-11-08.1</li> <li>▪ Center 75-03-10-10</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Teachers</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-OR-</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and have completed the following coursework (Step 2 Requirements):                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area II. Learning Environment and Curriculum</li> <li>▪ At least 3 clock hours specific to the Environment Rating Scales<sup>®</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>□ The Director and all Lead Teachers have completed specific GOLD<sup>®</sup>-based professional development.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to GOLD<sup>®</sup> presented by Teaching Strategies<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 3 Module)</li> <li>▪ GOLD<sup>®</sup> Interrater Reliability</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Director</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category G or Higher <b>-AND-</b> Has a current Aim4Excellence Director Credential</li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Teachers</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher</li> <li>□ All Lead Teachers have completed specific CLASS<sup>®</sup>-based professional development relating to the age groups served in the classroom.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to the Infant CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Toddler CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Pre-K CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

For a glossary of definitions, please see page 18.

# Professional Development Quality Standards Inventory





For Family and Small Group Child<sup>3</sup> Care Programs

 <b>STEP 1</b>	 <b>STEP 2</b>	 <b>STEP 3</b>	 <b>STEP 4</b>
<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ The Lead Caregiver is linked to the program's Growing Futures organization profile with verified employment.</li> <li>□ <b>Lead Caregiver<sup>4</sup></b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher</li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Lead Caregiver</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher</li> <li>-OR-</li> <li>Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and has completed the following coursework:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area II. Learning Environment and Curriculum</li> <li>▪ At least 3 clock hours specific to the Environment Rating Scales<sup>®</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Lead Caregiver</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher</li> <li>-OR-</li> <li>Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and has completed the following coursework (Step 2 Requirements):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area II. Learning Environment and Curriculum</li> <li>▪ At least 3 clock hours specific to the Environment Rating Scales<sup>®</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>□ The Lead Caregiver has completed specific GOLD<sup>®</sup>-based professional development.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to GOLD<sup>®</sup> presented by Teaching Strategies<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 3 Module)</li> <li>▪ GOLD<sup>®</sup> Interrater Reliability</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Lead Caregiver</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher</li> <li>-AND-</li> <li>Has completed the following coursework:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area VIII. Program Planning and Evaluation</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ The Lead Caregiver has completed specific CLASS<sup>®</sup>-based professional development relating to the age groups served in the classroom or group.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to the Infant CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Toddler CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Pre-K CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

For a glossary of definitions, please see page 18.

# Professional Development Quality Standards Inventory



For Large Group<sup>5</sup> Child Care Programs

 <b>STEP 1</b>	 <b>STEP 2</b>	 <b>STEP 3</b>	 <b>STEP 4</b>
<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ All Lead Caregivers are linked to the program's Growing Futures organization profile with verified employment.</li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Caregivers<sup>4</sup></b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher</li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>All Lead Caregivers</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-OR-</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and have completed the following coursework:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area II. Learning Environment and Curriculum</li> <li>▪ At least 3 clock hours specific to the Environment Rating Scales<sup>®</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>All Lead Caregivers</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-OR-</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher and have completed the following coursework (Step 2 Requirements):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area II. Learning Environment and Curriculum</li> <li>▪ At least 3 clock hours specific to the Environment Rating Scales<sup>®</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>□ All Lead Caregivers have completed specific GOLD<sup>®</sup>-based professional development.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to GOLD<sup>®</sup> presented by Teaching Strategies<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 3 Module)</li> <li>▪ GOLD<sup>®</sup> Interrater Reliability</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>All Lead Caregivers</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-AND-</b> Have completed the following coursework:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area VIII. Program Planning and Evaluation</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ All Lead Caregivers have completed specific CLASS<sup>®</sup>-based professional development relating to the age groups served in the classroom or group.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to the Infant CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Toddler CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Pre-K CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

For a glossary of definitions, please see page 18.

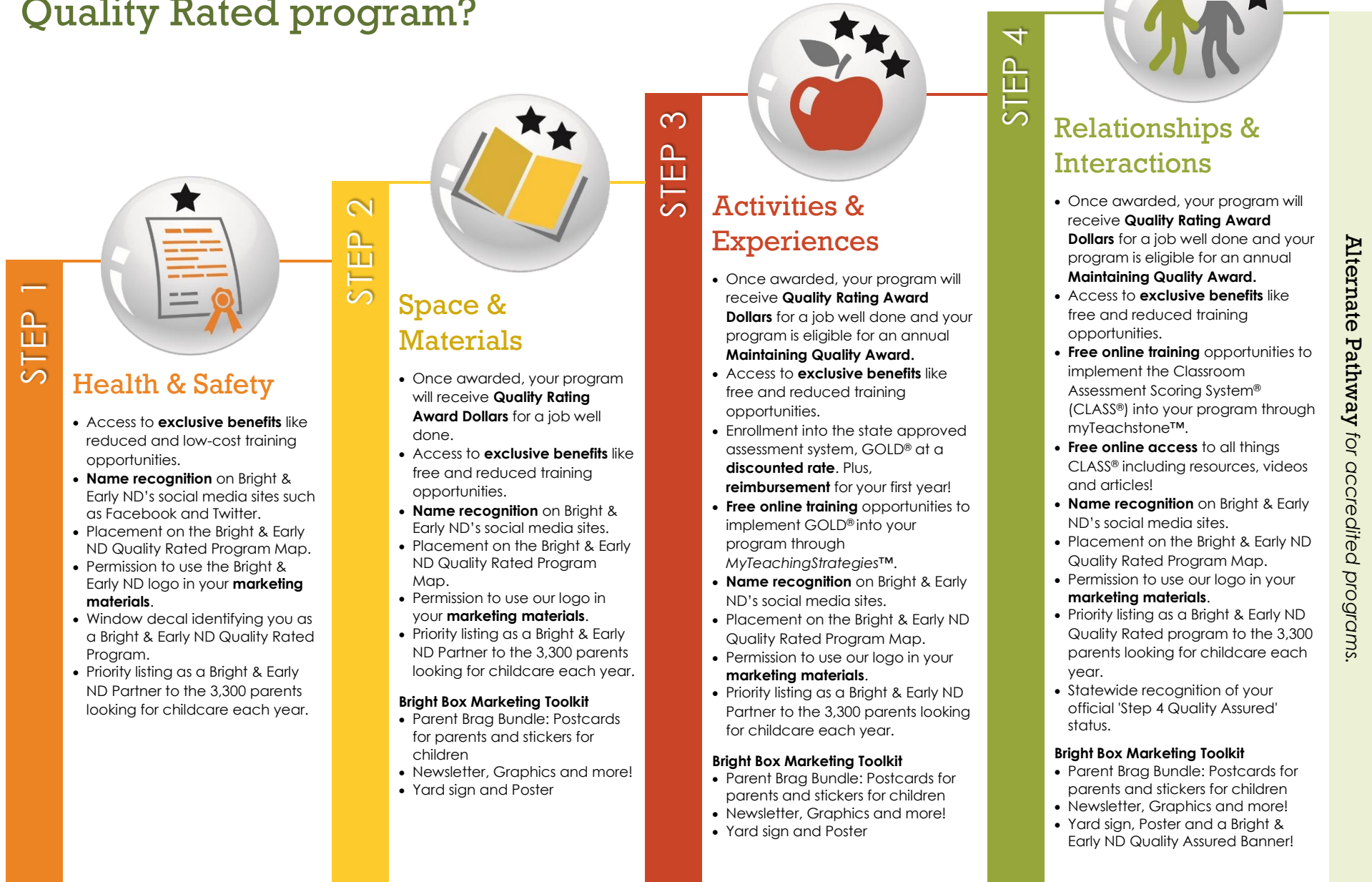
# Professional Development Quality Standards Inventory

For Step 4 Alternate Pathway for Accredited Programs

 <b>STEP 1</b>	 <b>STEP 2</b>	 <b>STEP 3</b>	 <b>STEP 4</b>
<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Director<sup>1</sup></b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher</li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Teachers<sup>2</sup></b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher</li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Caregivers<sup>4</sup></b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category A or Higher</li> </ul>	<p><i>Programs current certificate of accreditation meets the Step 2-3 Professional Development Quality Standards.</i></p>		<p><b>Employee Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Director</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category G or Higher <b>-AND-</b> Has a current Aim4Excellence Director Credential</li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Teachers</b> Have a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher</li> <li>□ <b>All Lead Caregivers</b> Has a current Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher <b>-AND-</b> Has completed the following coursework:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 10 clock hours in Core Competency Area VIII. Program Planning and Evaluation</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ All Lead Teachers and/or Lead Caregivers have completed specific CLASS<sup>®</sup>-based professional development relating to the age groups served in the classroom or group.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to the Infant CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Toddler CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> <li>▪ Introduction to the Pre-K CLASS<sup>®</sup> presented by myTeachstone<sup>™</sup> (Bright &amp; Early ND Step 4 Module)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

For a glossary of definitions, please see page 18.

# What benefits will I gain as a Bright & Early ND Quality Rated program?



Recognition for Going Above & Beyond



# Applying for Bright & Early ND

## For programs applying for a Step 1 Quality Rating

The great part of Step 1 is that programs can apply at any time! It's easy. Check out the Bright & Early ND Resources page at <https://www.brightnd.org/resources>, for a step-by-step tutorial on 'How to Apply for Bright & Early ND'.

## For programs applying for a Step 2-4 Quality Rating

The Bright & Early ND Quality Rating process is implemented during four cycles, referred to as cohorts. Think of this period as time where you will work with a Coach, learn from other programs, pinpoint your strengths, take training and reach your quality goals! Cohorts are available throughout the year. Specific dates and time frames are listed below:

Application Due:	Cohort Starts:	Cohort Ends:	Quality Standards Inventory Due:
December 9 <sup>th</sup>	January 1 <sup>st</sup>	September 30 <sup>th</sup>	September 1 <sup>st</sup>
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	April 1 <sup>st</sup>	December 31 <sup>st</sup>	December 1 <sup>st</sup>
June 9 <sup>th</sup>	July 1 <sup>st</sup>	March 31 <sup>st</sup>	March 1 <sup>st</sup>
September 9 <sup>th</sup>	October 1 <sup>st</sup>	June 30 <sup>th</sup>	June 1 <sup>st</sup>

Programs can apply for a Bright & Early ND cohort at any time but are only reviewed four times per year (December 15th, March 15th, June 15th, and September 15th). Upon application review, a member of the Bright & Early ND Team will contact you 2 weeks prior to the start of the cohort to inform you of your applications status. Check out the Bright & Early ND Resources page at <https://www.brightnd.org/resources>, for a step-by-step tutorial on 'How to Apply for a Bright & Early ND Cohort'.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How does Bright & Early ND verify the professional development requirements?

Bright & Early ND will verify an individual's professional development via the program's organization profile. Employees must have a current Career Pathway placement on the date the program submits their Quality Standards Inventory for a Quality Rating. The Career Pathway placement will not be verified if the status is labeled as expired. All required training must be Career Pathways training and listed on the individual's Learning Record.

### How often will my program renew our Quality Rating?

All Bright & Early ND Quality Ratings will need to be renewed every 3 years. Programs with a Step 2-4 Quality Rating will be encouraged to join a Bright & Early ND cohort 9-months prior to your expiration date.

## What if my Quality Rated program receives a licensing violation?

Bright and Early ND Programs are considered the best of the best. When parents are looking for a quality environment for their child to thrive in, we want to ensure that the environment is also safe. If a Bright & Early ND Quality Rated program receives a licensing violation, it is brought in front of the Bright & Early ND Review Team to determine if the program should still be listed as Quality Rated. For more information please read our eligibility requirements at <https://www.brightnd.org/resources>.

## Glossary of Definitions

**<sup>1</sup>Director:** The individual located on site who is responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating the program. This individual must be present at least sixty percent of the time during operating hours.

**<sup>2</sup>Lead Teacher:** The individual assigned to teach a group of children and who is responsible for daily lesson planning, child assessment and curriculum planning. There must be a lead teacher assigned to each classroom. This individual may also supervise other members of the teaching team. In some settings, this person is called the Head Teacher or Teacher. Bright & Early ND requires each classroom to be assigned a Lead Teacher. A Lead Teacher cannot be assigned to more than one classroom at a time.

**<sup>3</sup>Small Group Child Care Program:** This is a Group licensed program that is licensed to serve up to 18 children at a time. For a Small Group Child Care program, the Lead Caregiver is the individual listed on the Group program license.

**<sup>4</sup>Lead Caregiver:** The individual listed on the Family or Group program license that oversees the day-to-day operations of the program. In a Large Group Child Care Program, the Lead Caregivers include the individual listed on the Group program license and any additional employees that oversee a specific classroom or group of children. A Large Group Child Care program must identify a minimum of two Lead Caregivers.

**<sup>5</sup>Large Group Child Care Program:** This is a Group licensed program that is licensed to serve between 19-30 children at a time. For a Large Group Child Care program, the Lead Caregivers include the individual listed on the Group program license and any additional employees that oversee a specific classroom or group of children. A Large Group Child Care program must identify a minimum of two Lead Caregivers.

**Core Competency:** The North Dakota Core Competencies for Early Education and Care Practitioners are standards that define the expectations we have for caregiver/teacher knowledge and skill. For more information, please visit [www.ndgrowingfutures.org](http://www.ndgrowingfutures.org).

**Director Qualifications** (*for Step 2 and Step 3*): Program Directors that do not have a Career Pathway placement of Category E or Higher, must complete the Director Qualification Worksheet to ensure they are meeting the Director qualifications according to the following licensing sections; Preschool: 75-03-11-08.1; Center 75-03-10-10. To download the Director Qualifications Worksheet, visit <https://www.brightnd.org/resources>.

**Eligibility Requirements:** For additional details on the verification process, visit <https://www.brightnd.org/resources>.



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