



## Step Up To Quality 2022 Amendments Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

On April 15, 2022, changes to Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) standards were implemented, as noted in [Child Care Manual Procedure Letter 153](#), to assist programs in achieving and maintaining their SUTQ rating. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) provided an overview of the changes through a series of webinars. This document includes responses to questions asked in those sessions pertaining to paperwork/forms and ratings. Guidance on SUTQ visits will be addressed in a separate document. Additional information regarding SUTQ can be found on the [BOLD Beginning!](#) website.

### Paperwork/Forms FAQ

Question	Response
<b>Are professional development (PD) plans required for any employee who has been employed more than 30 days or administrators that are not used on-site? Can providers explain the PD process, or does it have to be written?</b>	All administrators, family child care owners, lead teachers and assistant teachers are to have written annual professional development plans within 30 days of hire. Providers are to be able to explain their PD process.
<b>How long do programs need to keep documentation that verifies they are meeting a program standard?</b>	It is recommended that programs keep documentation for the current and previous year.
<b>If we already have a curriculum, do we need to fill out the JFS 01507 "Curriculum Selection Process for Two to Five-Star Programs for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)?"</b>	No. The JFS 01507 is a sample form that can be used by a program as a technical assistance document. It does not need to be completed to meet SUTQ standards. Programs may want to use it as a guide when researching curricula.
<b>What are some approved SUTQ curricula besides Creative Curriculum?</b>  <b>Are we able to use any curriculum for school age children or keep our current curriculum?</b>	ODJFS/ODE do not maintain a list of "approved" curricula. Any written, research based, comprehensive curriculum that is aligned with the Early Learning Development Standards meets the SUTQ requirement. Programs are not required to obtain a school-age curriculum for SUTQ.
<b>Are college hours no longer allowed for professional development?</b>	Completed early childhood education (ECE) related college coursework at an accredited University may apply toward the PD Certificate if the course(s) were completed in the current biennium and the grade is a C or higher. For detailed information regarding PD Certificate review <a href="#">Technical Assistance Letter 19</a> .

Question	Response
<p><b>Do we need to keep notes and observations for school age children during non-traditional hours (overnight care and weekends)?</b></p>	<p>Programs are not required to keep notes and observations for school age children during non-traditional hours unless the program is only open during the non-traditional hours and wants to be rated. Programs may choose to keep notes and observations for school age children during non-traditional hours and they can be used for verification if it benefits the program.</p>
<p><b>Are portfolios and goals needed for school-age programs or all preschool children?</b></p>	<p>Portfolios are not required for any child; however, the program is responsible for maintaining documentation to show compliance with the standards at all times and may do so in the manner that works best for their program. Please be reminded, informal assessments are still required for school age children and may be collected/documented in the method of the program's choice.</p> <p>Individual goals must still be created for school-age children. Informal assessment and two individual goals can be documented in the way that works best for the program.</p>
<p><b>The standards include that the state required assessment has to be used for all enrolled preschool aged children for standard CSA2. Early Learning Assessment (ELA) is still mentioned as a requirement. If we use the ELA for our comprehensive assessment, will we be going back to the full 28 progressions next year? Will the ODJFS provider be transitioning to have to use the ELA?</b></p>	<p>Continuing for the 2022-2023 school year, programs that choose to use Ohio's Early Learning Assessment as their comprehensive assessment to meet SUTQ requirements must assess all preschool age children in the set of Ten Required Progressions (including 24 skills, or SKBs) at a minimum of two times during the year following a program determined schedule.</p> <p>ODJFS programs are not required to use the ELA unless they are participating in the ODE Early Childhood Education program.</p> <p>The ELA remains a free option for any licensed provider.</p>
<p><b>We are still waiting on our SUTQ inspection that was due during the 2019-20 school year. What documents will be looked at by the inspector. Will it be documents for 2019?</b></p>	<p>The specialist will assess all programs standards in place effective April 2022 during the onsite visit. Programs are expected to be meeting the standards at all times.</p>

Question	Response
When do forms need to be updated by?	You will need to use the updated forms when a form expires or is required to be updated.
Standard CE-7 requires written documentation of at least two formal and/or information agreements with community partners and other family-serving agencies and entities. Can you provide examples of this?	<p>Community partnerships should be based on the needs of the children/program and what is available in the community such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Mental health agency that provides services to the site</li> <li>•Library that provides programming to the site</li> <li>•Early Childhood PTA that organizes school readiness activities in partnership with the local schools and early childhood programs</li> <li>•Food bank that provides services to the site</li> <li>•College early childhood department that provides educational activities or services to the site</li> </ul>

### SUTQ Rating

Question	Response
Are centers still required to be 3-5 star rated by 2025?	No, this requirement was removed from Ohio Revised Code in July 2021.
How is it a continuous rating?	The program no longer needs to submit a renewal registration or the annual report to maintain the rating. The continuous rating will remain as long as the program is meeting SUTQ requirements.
Do you have to wait six months before you can apply for a higher star rating and how long will it take to be approved?	An ongoing registration can be submitted at any time to request a change in rating. Unless the program's rating was reduced or removed, there is no wait period for registering for a change in rating. The timeframe for approval depends on many factors, some of which are the level of compliance with the standards demonstrated by the program at the time of the desk review and onsite verification visit.
When you are submitting for a 1-star rating, it states that no forms need to be uploaded. Does that mean all items will be verified on site?	Yes, all standards for a 1-Star rating will be verified during an onsite verification visit. Please review the One-Star Requirement Summary on the <a href="#">BOLD Beginning! website</a> for a guide to the rating process.
If we haven't had a site visit and our SUTQ information is not up to date after COVID interruptions, is there anything we need to do?	Rated programs are required to maintain compliance with the standards at all times. If the program is currently rated, continue to follow the standards and maintain documentation required in the standards. If the program is not currently rated, an initial registration may be submitted.