MEETING NOTES

Date: Monday June 19, 2017	Links to Quality Advisory Group Meeting	Place: KASB 1420 SW Arrowhead Rd Topeka, KS 66604

Present: Karen Beckerman, Amy Blosser, Jackie Counts, Deb Crowl, Janelle Harper, Carrie Hastings, Kelly Meigs, Patty Mitts, Patty Peschel, Angie Saenger, Amy Smith, Heather Staub, Sandra Yoder

Absent: Barbara Dayal, Natalie McClane, Staci Ogle, Lori Steelman

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Introductions	Kelly introduced Janelle, a DCF employee who joined the Links to Quality (L2Q) team in November of 2016.	
L2Q Revisions	Kelly shared some details on her participation in the Family Child Care Peer Learning Group sponsored by the National Center for Early Childhood Quality Assurance (NCECQA). Through this learning experience, Kelly was impacted by the discussion on cohort models of QRIS and relationship-based learning. She shared lessons learned from the group and next steps, including two RFPs for contractors in the pilot, which is scheduled to begin this fall. Deb suggested promoting the pilot at the KAEYC conference in October. After the peer learning group experience, Kelly rethought the process for completing the L2Q quality indicators. The indicators had been structured into three, increasing levels across four domains. They have since been revised so that providers complete quality indicators in three domains, building quality one topic area at a time. Participating providers will earn a "link" for each domain of indicators they complete. This approach promotes recognition of provider strengths in each domain rather than simple points or star ratings. It also positions L2Q to grow and add new topic areas for various providers to highlight their strengths, such as those with higher education, accreditation, and Head Start experience. Future links can also showcase providers' work on assessments such as as ERS and CLASS.	Kelly will look into sharing L2Q pilot info at the KAEYC conference.
Quality Indicators	Kelly gave an overview of the steps that providers must complete in each of the three domains: Program Leadership, Family Partnerships, and Learning and Development. She also shared copies of the quality indicator revisions, illustrating how the indicators have been restructured into three domains. The evidence required for each indicator has been detailed into a checklist for the pilot. Providers will be able to turn in their evidence via mail, email, fax, or any other format they choose	

	in the pilot. DCF hopes this flexibility with portfolios will make the pilot accessible to providers without internet access. It will also be a good learning experience for the L2Q staff.	
Portfolio Process	Kelly outlined the process for L2Q participants to complete and submit their portfolios. Janelle will review completeness of each portfolio that is submitted and notify providers who are missing pieces of evidence. Complete portfolios will be reviewed by a quality assurance team comprised of DCF child care team members and other early childhood professionals across the state. Team members will review portfolios individually then compare their notes and compile feedback. Janelle will compile all submitted evidence into portfolios on SharePoint, but she envisions printing off the portfolios for the review process. Once complete, reviewers will send providers their review sheet and a letter stating what they have earned or what they need to improve in their portfolio. The group thought that a flow chart for the portfolio process was very helpful. They recommended that any assistance L2Q can offer to help providers stay organized through this process will be extremely helpful. KU team members have pulled together templates to assist providers with each piece of evidence. However, it is important to Kelly that providers do not all submit the same, cookie-cutter evidence in their portfolios and that they make this work their own. This will be an opportunity for each program to showcase unique strengths and for L2Q to learn from the various evidence pieces that participants submit. Kelly also shared that in the future there will be an organized online approach to submit evidence in a password protected space for each participating provider.	
Child Care Provider's Coalition (CCPC) Feedback	Kelly shared survey responses gathered from her presentation at the CCPC Conference. The data was collected from a small group of 13 providers who have committed to participate in this group and chose to attend the L2Q session. Overall attendance at this year's conference was lower than usual, but the small group of providers was very engaged in discussion.	
Participant Recruitment Update	Provider applications to the L2Q pilot have been open since April. About 60 applications have been received to date. Very few non-DCF providers have applied and DCF wants to make it clear that they are welcome to do so. Kelly created a memo that was sent out to providers through the Child Care Aware and KCCTO listservs, clarifying that non-DCF providers should apply. Patty pointed out that non-DCF providers may be more difficult to recruit in general. The application is currently still open for all providers to apply. Paper applications were passed out to meeting attendees. Applications can also be found	The group will spread the word among child care providers to apply for the pilot.

	online at: http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/ees/Pages/Kansas-Quality-Rating-Improvement-System-(QRIS).aspx	
Quality Initiatives Peer Learning Group	The NCECQA and Build Initiative are sponsoring a new QRIS peer learning group opportunity. Kansas is participating with a small group of other states and territories. Kelly shared a logic model that she and the peer learning group members at DCF have created as part of their homework and asked the group for feedback. Jackie shared that a long-term outcome addressing providers' connection to the links should be added to demonstrate that impact that earning links has on provider practice. Amy suggested adding an independent evaluation as an activity in the outputs section. Sandra suggested that medium range outcomes might be about more than "identifying" supports or gaps in services. Identifying supports and needs could be outputs instead. Karen considered this possibility as well, but thought identifying needs made sense as an outcome. Jackie suggested that in the end, the logic model should be structured however it makes most sense for the L2Q team.	
KQN Website	Janelle shared that the new Kansas Quality Network website has launched. Many attendees at this meeting assisted with the soft launch of the site in April. Feedback from the soft launch was generally positive and helped to identify small improvements before the site went live. The group viewed the new website together and Janelle talked everyone through the content on the pages.	Patty shared that the DCF Provider Handbook on the site was out of date. Janelle will get that fixed.
Next Meeting: September 19, 2017	**Agenda Items:** Final pilot preparations RFP awardees Much more!	**Facilitated by:** Kelly Meigs **Minutes by:** Sandra Yoder