

Mission and Goal Statements

Mission and goal statements are explicit written declarations that provide a foundation for QRIS activities and expected outcomes. Mission and goal statements may be included in QRIS statutes, policy manuals, and/or websites; they offer stakeholders a clear vision of the QRIS priorities. Of the 41 QRIS operating in 2016, 38 QRIS (93 percent) include a mission and goals statement.

This fact sheet is one of a series about the state of quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) in the United States. In 2016, there were 41 fully operational QRIS in the United States.¹ Data are from the QRIS Compendium (<http://QRIScompendium.org>), a catalog of the QRIS operating in the United States as of October 31, 2016.²

Common Goal Statements

Quality Improvement and Recognition

A focus on improving and recognizing the quality of early care and education (ECE) programs was the most common goal identified in QRIS mission statements, with 100 percent of those QRIS with a mission or goals statement referencing quality improvement.

Example from Illinois:

“Through tiered standards, training, technical assistance and other supports, ExceleRate Illinois provides early learning programs with the roadmap and resources they need to continuously improve the quality of their services.”

Example from South Carolina:

“ABC Quality... helps child care providers improve the quality of care they provide to children to a level beyond the basics.”

¹ State with a QRIS: AR, AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL (3 localities), GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI. While most QRIS operate at the state level, three represent separate counties in Florida (Duval, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach). The California QRIS, while represented in the Compendium as one system, is implemented at the county level and does not include all counties in the state.

² Data compiled in 2014 and 2015 from <http://QRIScompendium.org> are used to show change in the number of QRIS with specific features. These data are supplemented by an earlier version of the Compendium titled *Compendium of Quality Rating Systems and Evaluations*, which was released in 2010. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/compendium-of-quality-rating-systems-and-evaluations>. Publicly available details about QRIS standards and implementation and interviews with QRIS administrators also inform the fact sheet.

Facilitating Parent and Public Awareness

The second most common QRIS goal was **the promotion of QRIS awareness for parents, early care and education programs, and the public**. Of the 41 QRIS, 24 (59 percent) included this goal.

Example from Arizona:

“Anticipated results of program activities: Identify, assess, and raise quality standards, improve school readiness, decrease need for expensive interventions, inform policy makers and communities about quality standards in the field of ECE, and help families in selecting quality early care settings for their children.”

Example from Nebraska:

“The primary goal of Nebraska Step Up to Quality is to improve early care and education quality and increase positive outcomes for young children. This will be done through informing parents about quality early care and education programs in understandable and measurable ways.”

Access to High-Quality Care

The third most common goal (10 QRIS; 24 percent) was **implementing a QRIS that improves families’ access to high-quality early care and education**.

Example from Minnesota:

“Parent Aware is a voluntary system to market and incentivize quality early learning programs to help... children access quality.”

Supportive of Children’s Healthy Development and School Readiness

The fourth most common goal (9 QRIS; 22 percent) was **providing support for the healthy physical, social, emotional, or academic development of young children to prepare them for school and life**.

Example from Pennsylvania:

“To create a comprehensive quality improvement system in which all early learning programs and practitioners are encouraged and supported to improve child outcomes. Improvements in programming are designed to increase the capacity to support children’s learning and development...”

Example from Nevada:

“Every early childhood program in Nevada facilitates healthy growth and development which prepares and promotes children's success in school as measured by the state rating system.”

Educated and Trained Workforce

The fifth most common goal (7 QRIS; 17 percent) in QRIS mission statements, was **promoting the education and training of the early care and education workforce**.

Example from California:

“The outcome of California's QRIS will ensure children entering kindergarten are ready to learn and succeed by increasing access to high-quality programs for children with high need. California Consortia partners believe that a high-quality early learning program including...Highly effective teachers working in positive, interactive relationships with children.”

Example from Indiana:

“Development of well-trained qualified child care and early education staff through child care professional training and mentoring.”

Other Types of Missions and Goals

Most QRIS have specific goals, in addition to the common ones listed previously, that address the unique concerns in their states and localities. Other goals mentioned were those related to collaboration with programs and other agencies, sound fiscal and administrative practices, and inclusion of children with special needs.

Example from Indiana:

“Paths to QUALITY aims to help child care providers take the necessary steps to achieve higher levels of quality in their programs and empower families with an easy to understand consumer guide to choosing the care that is best for their children. Elevating community awareness on the importance of quality child care and early education requires a systematic approach which involves...collaboration with other community organizations as well as private businesses and foundations to develop solutions to ensure that all of the community's children will have opportunities to develop to their fullest potential.”

Example from Ohio:

“Increase the number of high-needs children [served] in high-quality learning and development programs. High-needs children are defined as children with low income, special needs, or who are English language learners.”

Note:

Quotes in Examples were copied directly from state responses in the QRIS Compendium. Some light editing was done for readability.

References

Mathematica Policy Research Inc. & Child Trends. (2010). Compendium of Quality Rating Systems and Evaluations. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/compendium-of-quality-rating-systems-and-evaluations>

The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2016). A Catalog and Comparison of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) [Data System]. Retrieved from <http://qriscompendium.org/>

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