

Kentucky Governor's Office for Early Childhood
ALL STARS VALIDATION STUDY
Project Update

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SUBMITTED BY:
**COMPASS EVALUATION AND RESEARCH,
INC.**

5720 Fayetteville Rd., Suite 202

Durham, NC 27713

Toll Free: 877.652.0189

Phone: 919.544.9004

Fax: 919.321.6997

www.compasseval.com

EIN: 22-3882438

Kentucky All STARS Validation Study December 2017 Project Update

This document provides a project update on the Kentucky All STARS Validation Study. The study formerly began at the end of July 2017, with the goals of validating Kentucky's All STARS Quality Rating and Improvement System and establishing a sustainability plan for projects funded under the state's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant. Since that time:

- The project has achieved several design and operational milestones, including:
 - Identification and convening of an advisory team, comprised of Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) staff and Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC) members;
 - Development of a sampling approach (described below) and finalization of instruments to be used in data collections;
 - Solicitation and receipt of base data to use in creating a project sample;
 - Institutional Review Board (IRB) review of the study protocol;
 - Development of communications to be issued to the universe of early education sites, regarding the study and its goals;
 - Development and implementation of a survey designed to solicit feedback on All STARS signage; and
 - Hiring and training of almost 30 data collectors, most of whom are based in Kentucky.
- The project has received data from partner agencies, to be used in creating a study sample. The study plans to work with more than 300 sites across the state, with at least one but as many as five classrooms assessed in each site. The sampling approach conceptualizes All STARS as a unified approach to quality, implemented through three operational models: private child care, public preschool, and Head Start/Early Head Start. These three models will be accounted for in the stratified approach to sampling, as will region of the state and the proportional distribution of star ratings across sites. Data collections will begin January 2018 and run for seven-to-eight months. Sampled sites will be eligible for up to \$500 in Lakeshore Learning vouchers, in appreciation of their participation in the study.
- The validation arm of the project has finalized its data collections to include:
 - Classroom observations using the Environment Rating Scale services (inclusive of the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale—3, Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale—R,

- Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale—R, Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, and the School Age Care Environment Rating Scale).
- When applicable, the Special Link Inclusion Scale, intended for use in inclusive classroom settings.
 - In all sampled sites and classrooms, the Family Provider Teacher Relationship Quality survey, which assesses the quality of parent, site, and teacher communication and engagement.
 - Site, teacher, and parent questionnaires designed for the current study.
 - A survey of coaches and consultants who provide support and technical assistance to early education sites and professionals.
 - Interviews with stakeholders including early educators as well as state systems professionals.
 - A “universal” survey to be made available for the duration of the study to any early educator. The universal survey is designed to capture general feedback on All STARS and is a means of ensuring all early educators have a chance to provide input into the study.
 - Additional data may be requested and provided by partner agencies.
- The sustainability arm of the study has finalized its design approach, inclusive of:
 - Convening of an Advisory Council composed of national experts (Gerry Cobb of the BUILD Initiative, Louise Stoney and Anne Mitchell of the Alliance for Early Childhood Finance, and Kelly Maxwell of Child Trends).
 - Leveraging the existing membership and scheduled meetings for ECAC sub-committees.
 - Planned use of rapid turn-around data collections to inform sub-committee deliberations as they proceed from January to June 2018.
 - Over the next one-two months, the study team intends to:
 - Issue a communication to the universe of early education sites to inform sites that the validation study is underway.
 - Confirm a sample of 300+ sites and communicate with these sites to recruit their participation in the study.
 - Begin data collections at sampled sites.
 - Continue to meet with advisors and sub-committees to advance both the validation and sustainability arms of the study.