

ACCREDITATION-QRIS CROSSWALK OVERVIEW

This document describes the overlap of local and national quality standards for Santa Barbara County Early Childhood Education centers.

Santa Barbara County
Quality Rating and Improvement System/Accreditation
Crosswalk

Background Information:

The Santa Barbara County early care and education field has strongly supported accreditation for years, and First 5 Santa Barbara County, along with the Orfalea Foundation, has invested in it since 2001.

As a result:

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation rate is 30% of centers; significantly higher than the California or national rates (approximately 5%).
- The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) and NAEYC accreditation are REQUIRED elements for tier 5 in QRIS.
- Accreditation is the framework for how we talk about quality in the county.

Our Plan for the Crosswalk:

In order to build a streamlined, seamless quality improvement system for our county, for the ease of users (providers), clarity of messaging, and sustainability, we are working to integrate our accreditation and QRIS work.

- Coaches will be coaching to the whole matrix, including accreditation, for each site (we previously had an accreditation coach and QRIS coaches).
- Learning communities have always focused on accreditation standards, and now QRIS elements will be blended in.
- Other local quality improvement efforts (Outdoor Classroom, Preschool Foods, Green Care for Children, etc) are integrated into the quality improvement plans and outreach about QRIS sites through the “Plus” component.

Goals:

Develop a crosswalk of the Santa Barbara County Quality Counts requirements (using the California QRIS Matrix) and the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria. The analysis will identify the intersections between the systems as well as potential linkages, illustrating the alignment of the standards, topic areas and criteria.

- The crosswalk will answer the following questions:
 1. Do each of the Quality Counts Requirements meet or, exceed NAEYC standards?
 2. Are there NAEYC standards or, topic areas, which NAEYC addresses not included in the Quality Counts Requirements?
 3. Are there Quality Counts Requirements NAEYC does not address?

4. Identify areas of overlap with the Quality Counts “Plus Programs” (Green Care, Preschool Foods Initiative and Outdoor Classroom)?

- Pilot an assessment protocol for programs to demonstrate the intersection in the documentation of evidence for assessment needed for Santa Barbara County Quality Counts and NAEYC Accreditation. The results of the pilot will identify where “proxies” may exist that could eliminate duplication in the assessment of staff qualifications, training and program policies between the two systems. This will include a series of strategies for programs to use as part of their quality improvement process that will demonstrate achievement of accreditation criteria.
- Create a new accreditation validation tool for Santa Barbara County whereby programs will be validated for accreditation and QRIS at the same time.
- Build in a sustainability mechanism – align our QRIS with the Accreditation schedule and use the lower QRIS elements to build towards accreditation, with NAEYC validating tier 5.
- Help us blend accreditation and QRIS messaging in our communications to the community about quality.
- Give us a structure for creating a similar crosswalk for NAFCC.