

## FOCUS Policy and Procedure Memo

Memo #1

July 2, 2024

### Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to clarify and inform providers about the new policies and procedures within the FOCUS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

For questions or clarifications on the information below, please contact Rosario Roybal, FOCUS Program Manager, at [rosario.roybal@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:rosario.roybal@ececd.nm.gov) or 505-695-6804.

### New Procedures

#### Training Requirements

- FOCUS Professional Qualifications now include the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential among the 5-Star requirements for educators, and 4-Star requirements for directors.
- FOCUS Professional Qualification requirements as written in the center-based criteria are currently replaced with what is written in the FOCUS Verification Tool found [here](#).
- FOCUS participants are required to complete annual training hours as outlined in Child Care Licensing Regulations based on the setting where the individual is employed.

### Clarification for Existing Procedures

#### Annual FOCUS Verification

- Providers enrolled in FOCUS can request a verification of their demonstrated Star-Level at any time.
- All providers holding a 3, 4, and 5-Star license, are required to apply for and complete an annual verification unless nationally accredited by one of the \*seven accrediting agencies approved by Child Care Licensing.

### Equivalency Requests

Equivalencies apply only to FOCUS. Equivalencies should be emailed to Jamie O'Malley at [jamie.omalley@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:jamie.omalley@ececd.nm.gov), and will be responded to within 5-business days. To request an equivalency, please submit the following:

1. A completed request form
2. A transcript that includes the student's name, institution, and a passing grade (C or better). Ensure the course for consideration aligns with one of the five required courses for the New Mexico Child Development Certificate as outlined [here](#).

### Quality Initiatives Team

#### Deanna Balderrama

Bureau Chief

[deanna.balderrama@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:deanna.balderrama@ececd.nm.gov)

#### Jamie O'Malley

Early Care and Education Manager

[jamie.omalley@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:jamie.omalley@ececd.nm.gov)

#### Rosario Roybal

FOCUS Manager

[rosario.roybal@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:rosario.roybal@ececd.nm.gov)

#### Maria Wickstrom

Quality Program Manager

[maria.wickstrom@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:maria.wickstrom@ececd.nm.gov)

**\*The seven currently approved national accreditation agencies are:**

*Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI); Council on Accreditation (COA); International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA); National Accreditation Commission (NAC); National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC); or National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA).*