

Attachment A.2

Screening Protocol for Phone Calls and Related Materials

The VIQI project team will conduct screening calls to ascertain initial interest in participating in the VIQI project and to obtain information on Program¹ and Center characteristics needed to qualify for participation. During the screening calls, the following materials will be used, which are included in this attachment:

- A. VIQI Phone Discussion Email Templates
- B. Email Template Send Prior to Initial Screening Call
- C. Sample Agenda for Initial Screening Call
- D. Sample Phone Script for Initial Screening Call
- E. Screening Protocol for Phone Calls
- F. VIQI Project Description
- G. Email Template for Follow-Up Phone Discussion (If Needed)
- H. Expectations Overview for Localities
- I. VIQI Overview of Curricular Approaches

¹ "Program" refers to an administrative entity that is affiliated with, operates or oversees one or more centers. A program may be a Head Start grantee or delegate agency or a community-based organization or business that operates one or more child care centers. "Center" is a Head Start or community-based facility that houses Head Start or child care classrooms.

A. VIQI Phone Discussion Email Templates

| Email subject line: Discussion re Major National Early Childhood Research Project |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dear: |
| I am writing on behalf of the VIQI project (Variations in Implementation of Quality Interventions: Examining the Quality-Child Outcomes Relationship in Child Care and Early Education), an important national research project funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services. Focusing on children's experiences in early care and education across the country, VIQI aims to build evidence about how best to support young children's learning. |
| This project is a unique opportunity for early care and education centers across the country to contribute to national early care and education policy and receive: |
| free access to high-quality curricular materials free training and coaching for one year for participating teachers ongoing feedback to guide quality improvement efforts; and a stipend to support implementation. |
| (Choose one of the following as appropriate (depending on where we are in timeline): |
| We are in the early stages of gathering information for the project and are scheduling conversations with early childhood leaders across the country. We would love the opportunity to speak with you by phone for about one hour. During the call, we would like to learn more about [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] and hear your feedback and thoughts about the project. |
| Attached is a brief description to give you some additional background on the VIQI project, as well as a list of topics that we'd like to touch on during our call. Please feel free to suggest a time that works for you. Below are a few suggestions. |
| OR |
| We are now contacting centers to discuss potential participation in the VIQI project during the [insert year]. We would like to schedule a phone call to talk with you to learn about your organization and the centers that you operate and discuss their participation in the project. |
| Attached is a brief description to give you some additional background on the VIQI project. Please feel free to suggest a time that works for you. Below are a few suggestions. |
| Best, |
| Attachment: Project Description (see Attachment) |
| An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of |

information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this

information collection is 0970-XXXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

B. Email Template – Send Prior to Initial Screening Call (after we have a confirmed call date)

| Email subject line: In preparation for our discussion re the VIQI project |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dear: |
| Thank you for your interest in the VIQI project! We are looking forward to our call with you on [INSERT DATE AND TIME]. On that call, we will be happy to answer any questions you have about the project. We will also ask for some basic information about your agency/organization and the centers you operate. |
| Attached are: |
| A suggested agenda for our call Examples of the kinds of questions we would like to discuss on our call.² |
| If you can provide any of this information in a report or other source that is already prepared, feel free to send it to us ahead of time. Otherwise, we can go through all of these questions with you during our meeting. In the meantime, please feel free to call with any questions. |
| I am also resending a brief description of our project for your reference. |
| Thanks very much. We look forward to hearing from you. |
| Best, |
| Attachments: |
| Suggested Agenda Sample Questions (Facilitators will pull sample questions from Program-Level Screening Questions and Center-Level Screening Questions as needed, depending on: 1) the expertise of the informants |

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and/or its locality accumulated through reviews of existing data.)

Project Description

with whom they are speaking; and 2) the study team's extant knowledge base about that program

² Facilitators will select, add or edit questions from the Screening Protocol for Phone Calls as needed, depending on: 1) the expertise of the informants with whom they are speaking; and 2) the study team's extant knowledge base about the Program and/or its locality accumulated through reviews of existing data.

C. Sample Agenda for Initial Screening Call

- 1. Introductions
- 2. Review [introductory portion of] VIQI Site Visit PowerPoint and respond to initial questions
- 3. Discuss questions from Project Team
- 4. Wrap-up: Questions, timetable and next steps



D. Sample Phone Script for Initial Screening Call

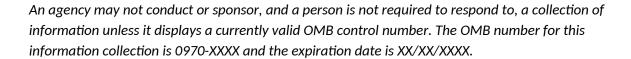
We're contacting you on behalf of the VIQI project (Variations in Implementation of Quality Interventions: Examining the Quality-Child Outcomes Relationship in Child Care and Early Education), a large-scale national research project funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services. Focusing on children's experiences in early care and education across the country, VIQI aims to build evidence about how best to support young children's learning.

This project is an opportunity for early care and education centers across the country to contribute to national early care and education policy and receive:

- free access to high-quality curricular materials
- free training and coaching for one year for participating teachers
- ongoing feedback to guide program improvement efforts; and
- a stipend to support implementation.

We are now recruiting centers to participate in the VIQI project during the [insert year]. During this call we would like to share more information about the VIQI project, answer your questions and learn more about your organization and the centers you operate. All information provided in these discussions will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

Thanks very much. We look forward to hearing from you.





E. Screening Protocol for Phone Calls

Below are sets of illustrative Program-Level³ Screening Questions and Center-Level Screening Questions organized into modules that focus on different topic areas: Structure/Background, Teaching and Learning, and Staffing and Professional Development. The illustrative questions provide examples of the types of questions that may be asked during initial screening calls, site visits, and any follow-up calls, all of which are happening during program and center recruitment in the VIQI Project. Facilitators will not cover all of these questions during any of these calls or visits: they will select, add, or edit questions as needed, depending on: 1) the expertise of the informants with whom they are speaking; and 2) the study team's extant knowledge base about that program and/or its locality accumulated through reviews of existing data.

Questions with an asterisk will be prioritized during screening calls. In many cases, answers to the Center-Level Screening Questions may be provided via email or in follow-up calls, as it may be necessary to contact staff at individual centers (either directly or through Program staff) to obtain this information. Questions that are not covered in the screening calls or follow-up to the screening calls will be covered in site visits.

Standard introductory language to be used by facilitators (not for distribution):

- The Administration for Children and Families' Office of Planning, Research and Development is working with MDRC and its partners on a major new study that will examine how different dimensions and levels of quality in early childhood classrooms relate to children's developmental outcomes. We plan to partner with multiple programs and centers to conduct this study.
- In the initial planning stages for this study, we are reaching out to ECE programs and centers to:
 - o share more details about the study;
 - o ask questions to help us better understand the ECE services being provided and the extent to which different programs and centers could be a good fit for the study; and,
 - o discuss potential opportunities and challenges that our study team should consider in planning and conducting this study.
- This discussion should take about [X] hours.
- Participation is voluntary, and responses will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.
- An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of
 information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this
 information collection is ______and the expiration date is ______.

³ "Program" refers to an administrative entity that is affiliated with, operates or oversees one or more centers. A program may be a Head Start grantee or delegate agency or a community-based organization or business that operates one or more child care centers. "Center" is a Head Start or community-based facility that houses Head Start or child care classrooms.

Program-Level Screening Questions

Module A1. Program Structure/Background

| | re Centers, or Independent Child Care Center): |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ma | ain Contact name: Title: |
| 1. | How many centers do you currently operate that serve 3- and 4-year-old children? * |
| | Note: If NONE, this program is not eligible. Thank the staff person and explain that we need centers serving children ages 3 and 4. |
| 2. | How many of those centers have at least 2 classrooms serving children ages 3 and 4? st |
| | Note: If NONE, this program is not eligible. Thank the staff person and explain that we need centers with at least 2 classrooms serving children ages 3 and 4. |
| 3. | Does this program include a migrant/seasonal Head Start program? If yes, how many of the classrooms mentioned in question #2 are NOT part of your migrant/seasonal Head Start program? |
| 4. | How long has your ECE program been operating? * |
| 5. | Do 3- and 4 year-old children tend to be separated by age, or mixed in the same classrooms?* |
| | Note: Inquire if the program has mixed-age classrooms serving children ages 2 and 3. |
| 6. | Demographics of population served* |
| | Note: If this information differs across centers, please skip this question and answer questions for each center under Module B1 below). |
| | a. Approximate percentage of children served who are from low-income families? b. How do you define low income? c. Approximate percentage of children served who are: |

7. We understand that many ECE Programs have multiple funding streams, and that each funding stream has its own requirements. What are your primary federal/state/local funding streams?*

Note: If the answer varies across centers, please skip this question and answer the questions under Module B1 for each center.

- 8. (Head Start only) When is your next scheduled Head Start monitoring review?*
- 9. Do you anticipate any important changes in your program in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 (e.g., moving centers, changing program options)? *
 - a. If yes, what changes?
- 10. What are the start and end dates of the "school year"? If your program is year-round, what happens in your three and four year-old classrooms during the summer? Do the same children who attend during the "school year" also attend during the summer?
- 11. What is your program enrollment criteria for centers/classrooms serving 3- and 4-year-olds? What is the deadline?
- 12. Do you have a management information systems (MIS) and/or data sources that could be used to understand initial levels of quality across centers you operate?
 - a. What are your data sources and how are they used?
 - b. What child-level information is tracked (individual characteristics, family characteristics, attendance, assessment information, etc.)? What is the quality of the data sources? Would it be accessible to VIQI project staff?
 - c. Does your program feed into a central data system or is there an individual system at the program level?

Program-Level Screening Questions

Module A2. Teaching and Learning

13. What curricular or curricular enhancements do your centers use in 3- and 4-year-old classrooms? By curriculum, we mean an organized framework that lists goals for children's learning and growth, learning experiences to achieve those goals, what teachers can do to help children achieve those goals, and materials needed.

Note: If the answer varies across centers, please skip this question and answer the questions under Module B2 for each center.

| | Creative Curriculum (Teaching Strategies) | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| \square_2 | High/Scope | | | | | | |
| \square_3 | Building Blocks math curriculum (McGraw-Hill) | | | | | | |
| \square_4 | DLM Early Childhood Express (McGraw-Hill) | | | | | | |
| \square_5 | Everyday Mathematics (McGraw-Hill) | | | | | | |
| \square_6 | Frog Street | | | | | | |
| \square_7 | Fundations (Wilson Language Training) | | | | | | |
| □8 | Handwriting without Tears | | | | | | |
| \square_9 | Let's Begin with the Letter People (Abrams Learning Trends) | | | | | | |
| | Number Worlds (McGraw-Hill) | | | | | | |
| | Open Circle | | | | | | |
| | Opening the World of Learning (OWL) (Pearson) | | | | | | |
| | Preschool PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) (Channing Bete Co.) | | | | | | |
| | Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence | | | | | | |
| | Second Step | | | | | | |
| | Tools of the Mind | | | | | | |
| | Teacher- or center-created curriculum | | | | | | |
| | Another published curriculum (specify:) | | | | | | |
| | Don't know | | | | | | |
| | Do not use a curriculum | | | | | | |

14. What assessment tools are used to assess children's learning and development? When and how are these assessments used? Do they help inform teacher practice?

Note: If the answer varies across centers, please skip this question and answer the questions under Module B2 for each center.

15. What quality improvement practices do your centers engage in? (including any documentation)

Note: If the answer varies across centers, please skip this question and answer the questions under Module B2 for each center.

Program-Level Screening Questions

Module A3. Staffing and Professional Development

- 16. Please provide an organizational chart for your program. If no organizational chart is available, please list the titles of staff who are responsible for management/coordination of instruction, family engagement, mental health, as well as overall administration of the program).
- 17. What does in-service training for teachers entail?* (including any documentation)

Note: If the answer varies across centers, please skip this question and answer the questions under Module B3 for each center.

- Who is trained and by whom? (e.g. Are lead teachers and assistant teachers/ paraprofessional trained together? Are a subset of teachers or resource teachers trained, who then train the rest of the staff?)
- How long, how often, and on what topics? Does this differ for teachers who are newly hired? How do you make decisions about training and professional development needs of teachers of 3- and 4-year-olds?
- How does the center provide coverage to enable teachers to attend training? (e.g. substitute teachers, regularly-scheduled PD time)
- Is in-service training required or voluntary?
- 18. Do teachers receive ongoing coaching (not including observations completed by center director/administrator or supervisor)?* [By coach, we mean a professional who provides feedback and support to help improve what a teacher does in his/her classroom.]

Note: If the answer varies across centers, please skip this question and answer the questions under Module B3 for each center.

- How often, how long, by whom, and on what topics?
- Does it involve a classroom observational visit? A sit-down meeting?
- Do teachers receive any mentoring? (e.g., from a peer, head teacher)
- 19. Do teachers have shared planning time?

Note: If the answer varies across centers, please skip this question and answer the questions under Module B3 for each center.

- How long, how often, and with whom (e.g. lead teacher alone, lead with assistant)?
- 20. What are the minimum education requirements for each type of staff listed below? (High school graduate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree or master's degree or higher?)
 - Lead teachers who work with children ages 3-5
 - Assistant teachers/paraprofessionals who work with children ages 3-5
 - Aides who work with children ages 3-5
 - Center administrator (lead administrator of individual center(s))
 - Education director, coordinator or specialist, if this is a different person than the center administrator



Center-Level Screening Questions

| No | te: Please answer for each center that has at least 2 classrooms serving 3- and 4-year-old children. |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Na | me of center: |
| Ad | dress: |
| Ma | ain contact person: Title: |
| | |
| Tel | lephone number: Email address: |
| Ce | nter-Level Screening Questions |
| Mo | odule B1. Center Structure/Background |
| 1. | How long has this center been operating? |
| 2. | What is the publicly funded enrollment for this center? What is the current actual enrollment? |
| 3. | Demographics of population served (Answer only if different for each individual center) a. Approximate percentage of children served who are from low-income families? b. How do you define low income? c. Approximate percentage of children served who are: African American Hispanic White "Other" d. Approximate percentage of children who speak a language other than English? (specify what languages) |
| 4. | Is this center NAEYC-accredited?* |
| 5. | Does this center have an overall quality rating (e.g. through a QRIS or other rating system)? If yes, what is the rating and what agency or group provided the rating?* |
| 6. | Do you anticipate any important changes at this center in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 (e.g., moving location, changing curricula, starting new initiatives)?* |
| 7. | Please answer the questions in Table B1 (below).* |

Center-Level Screening Questions

Module B2. Teaching and Learning

- 8. We understand that many ECE Centers have multiple funding streams, and that each funding stream has its own requirements. What are your primary federal/state/local funding streams? (e.g. Head Start, state or local pre-k)*
- 9. What curricular or curricular enhancements does the center use? (Answer only if different for each individual center.)*
- 10. What assessment tools are used to assess children's learning and development? How are these assessments used? Do they help inform teacher practice? (Answer only if different for each individual center.)
- 11. What quality improvement practices does this center engage in? (Answer only if different for each individual center.)
- 12. Is this center participating (or will/may participate) in any research studies? If yes, on what topics? On what timeframe?
- 13. Does your center have a mission statement? If so, does it include any of the following concepts: quality of care; child development; school readiness; parent engagement; community engagement; meeting needs of families/community? (Please provide a copy, if applicable.)
 - a. In what ways, if any, is a message about the purpose or the focus of the center discussed or communicated with staff who work directly with children?
 - What are the primary goals of your center for children ages 3 and 4, specifically?

Center-Level Screening Questions

Module B3. Staffing and Professional Development

- 14. Please provide an organizational chart for this center or describe the center's organizational structure.
- 15. What does in-service training for teachers entail? (Answer only if different for each individual center.)*
 - Who is trained and by whom? (e.g. Are lead teachers and assistant teachers/ paraprofessional trained together? Are a subset of teachers or resource teachers trained, who then train the rest of the staff?)
 - How long, how often, and on what topics? Does this differ for teachers who are newly hired?
 - How does the center provide coverage to enable teachers to attend training? (e.g. substitute teachers, regularly-scheduled PD time)

- Is in-service training required or voluntary?
- 16. Do teachers receive ongoing mentoring or coaching? (Answer only if different for each individual center.)*
 - How often, how long, by whom, and on what topics?
 - Does it involve a classroom visit? A sit-down meeting?
- 17. What does teacher supervision entail? (including any documentation)
 - a. How often, how long, by whom, and on what topics?
- 18. Do teachers have shared planning time? (Answer only if different for each individual center.)
 - How long, how often, and with whom (e.g. lead teacher alone, lead with assistant, teachers across classrooms)?
- 19. What do teacher pairings/assignments in 3- and 4-year-old classrooms look like (generally kept the same each year, rotated every year)? How stable are pairings within a year?
- 20. What are your typical hiring practices? (including documents regarding hiring policies and processes, typical timeline, position requirements)
- 21. How many lead teachers have left the center in the past 12 months? Assistant teachers?

TABLE B1 - (Module B1, Continued)

| Three year-old classrooms | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Class | Total # Children | Days per week | Classroom hours | Staggered child schedule? | Lead teacher's hours | LT ⁴ highest education level | AT⁵ highest education level |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

| Mixed-age (3- and 4-year-old) classrooms | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| | | Approx. number | | | Staggered | Lead | LT highest | AT highest |
| | Total # | of 3-year- | Days per | Classroom | child | teacher's | education | education |
| Class | Children | olds | week | hours | schedule? | hours | level | level |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

⁴ Lead Teacher

⁵ Assistant Teacher/Paraprofessional

F. VIQI Project Description

Variations in Implementation of Quality Interventions (VIQI): Examining the Quality-Child Outcomes Relationship in Child Care and Early Education is an important national study funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services. Focusing on children's experiences in early care and education across the country, VIQI aims to build evidence about how best to support young children's learning.

What will the VIQI Project involve?

VIQI will study how different levels and features of classroom quality support children's learning using a rigorous experimental design. The project will also help us understand what conditions are necessary to help early care and education programs implement curricular approaches that enhance the quality of classroom practices and teachers' interactions with children to improve child outcomes.

Why should early care and education programs participate?

Early care and education programs that participate in VIQI will have an opportunity to receive:

- Free access to high-quality curricular materials
- Free teacher training and coaching for one year
- On-going feedback to guide program improvement efforts; and
- Stipend to support implementation.

Lessons learned from VIQI will also be used to inform policy and programmatic improvements in early care and education across the nation.

What is the project timeline, and who will be invited to participate?

- 1. The VIQI project team is currently engaging in conversations with stakeholders to ensure that the project is well-designed to inform the field.
- 2. A year-long pilot study will begin in the summer/fall of 2018, in up to 24 centers in one city.
- 3. A **year-long full-scale study** will begin in the summer/fall of 2019, in approximately 165 centers across multiple cities.
- 4. A **final report** is scheduled for public release in 2021.

Participants will include Head Start and child care programs serving children ages three and four in major metropolitan areas.

The VIQI Project is sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. VIQI is being conducted by MDRC and its partners, Abt Associates/Abt SRBI, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, and MEF Associates. For more information, please contact the principal investigator, JoAnn Hsueh, at joann.hsueh@mdrc.org or the program officer, Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, at ivelisse.martinezbeck@acf.hhs.gov.

G. Email Template for Follow-Up Phone Discussion (If Needed)

| Email subject line: Scheduling a Follow-Up Phone Call re VIQI project |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dear: |
| Thank you so much for sharing your insights and expertise with us on our recent call! Your input is critically important to our team as we develop our plans for the VIQI project. As we discussed at the end of our call, there are a few topics we'd like to follow up on. For example: [add bulleted topics here, as needed]. Would it be possible to schedule a brief phone call with you and [add names of staff] in the next week? |
| Below are some potential dates and times for a call with our team. Please let us know if any of these would work for you. |
| [Potential dates] |
| Thank you very much for considering this request. Again, participation in this conversation is voluntary |

and responses will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

H. Variations in the Implementation of Quality Interventions (VIQI): Expectations and Commitments for Programs

This document provides an overview of the anticipated criteria, expectations, and benefits for programs and centers that participate in the VIQI study.

Projected VIQI Project Sample Sizes

The anticipated study size for both the pilot and full-scale study is listed below. Approximately half of the centers will be Head Start and the other half will be child care. [Enter locality-specific information here if relevant]

- A year-long pilot study will begin in the summer/fall of 2018, in up to 24 centers in one city.
- A year-long full-scale study will begin in the summer/fall of 2019, in approximately 165 centers across multiple cities.

Criteria for Selection of Localities

To move forward with a potential pilot locality in the near term or a full-scale study locality in the longer term, we would need to identify whether the locality has the following characteristics:

- A sufficient number of centers that meet the following criteria and expectations:
 - At least two full-day⁶ classrooms serving low-income three- and four-year old children (average of three classrooms for the full-scale study)
 - **o** Agree to work within project guidelines and design
 - **o** Are not already implementing the curricular approaches used in the study
 - o Are not planning major programmatic or structural changes during life of study
- Variation in quality among centers

In addition, we need to understand the contextual factors that impact the feasibility of a study of this type. This could include existing curricular requirements at the state or local level, presence of existing research studies, and general support of local and regional stakeholders.

Understanding these characteristics, especially around capacity and variation in quality, may require a data request to the relevant agencies to understand the possibilities for implementation. If that is the case, we will follow the necessary procedures to make this request.

Benefits to Centers

Centers that have been randomly assigned to a curricular approach will have access to free high quality curricular materials for the curricular approach they are implementing, as well as training and coaching for their teachers. In addition, all centers will receive the following supports:

- Stipend to support implementation
- Ongoing feedback to guide program development
- Opportunity to contribute to growing evidence base
- Increased visibility as part of national project

⁶ In this document we define "full-day" to mean that the same lead teachers and children are present for at least 6 hours per day.

Program⁷ and Center Expectations

Centers will be randomly assigned to a curricular approach or to a comparison group, which will continue to conduct business as usual. Random assignment is the most reliable way to study the effectiveness of the curricular approaches; because random assignment ensures that the characteristics of the centers implementing each approach are the same at the start of the study, differences in outcomes can be attributed to the curricular approaches. It is important to note that the study will not be judging the effectiveness of individual classrooms, centers, or programs.

In addition, we expect that participating early care and education programs will meet the following expectations in supporting the implementation of VIQI:

- Designate a Study Liaison to work with the VIQI team
- Support teachers in implementation of curricular approaches
- Work with VIQI team to apply VIQI funds towards hiring of coach(es)
- Enable teachers to attend training and ongoing, in-classroom coaching sessions
- Enable teachers, center directors, and other staff to participate in the field research, interviews, and surveys
- Ensure that comparison group classrooms (for pilot) or centers (full implementation) do not implement the VIQI curricular approaches during the study period

At the center level, all centers would be expected to meet the following expectations:

- Ensure leadership meets regularly with Study Liaison
- Support teachers, directors, other staff, and children to participate in field research, interviews, and surveys
- Provide periodic updates on teacher and child rosters

Centers assigned to a curricular approach will also be expected to support teachers in the implementation of the identified approach and to enable teachers to attend training and coaching in support of this approach.

Additional Information

The VIQI project is sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. VIQI is being conducted by MDRC and its partners, Abt Associates/Abt SRBI, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, and MEF Associates. For more information, please contact the principal investigator, JoAnn Hsueh, at joann.hsueh@mdrc.org or the program officer, Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, at ivelisse.martinezbeck@acf.hhs.gov.

⁷ In this document, we refer to Head Start grantees, delegate agencies, organizations that operate multiple child care centers, and independent centers as "programs."

I. VIQI - Curricular Approaches

Curricular approaches that will be part of the VIQI pilot phase include *Creative Curriculum*, *Focus*, and *Connect4Learning* (C4L). These three approaches were selected through an extensive review of existing evidence and advice from leading experts in the field. Each is designed to help strengthen the quality of instruction in early care and education classrooms.

As part of the VIQI project, all three curricular approaches will include free resources to support implementation, including teacher training and ongoing, in-classroom coaching, as well as ongoing technical assistance from leading early childhood program developers.

These three approaches meet key criteria for quality curricula in early childhood settings:

- All are developmentally appropriate for three- and four-year-old children.
- All are aligned with relevant standards, including Head Start and [insert relevant state and local standards for that locality].
- All incorporate key school-readiness domains into the curricula, including math, literacy, and social-emotional learning.
- All integrate a combination of large and small group activities, providing a variety of opportunities for children to engage with teachers and peers.
- All provide structured lessons, while allowing opportunities for expansion and adaptation by teachers.
- All allow for differentiated instruction, to ensure that teachers can tailor activities and approaches to children at different developmental levels and with different styles of learning.

Implementation of these curricular approaches will require some shifts in teacher practice, which could include teacher planning, center and/or classroom structure, and flow of the classroom. The degree to which changes will occur may vary by approach, but it is important to expect that flexibility and openness to change will be needed to implement the approaches successfully.

<u>Note</u>: Developers will be asked to create one-pagers for their curriculum to be used during recruitment. These one-pagers will include information such as:

- Overview of the curriculum, including main content areas focused on
- Guiding principles of the curriculum
- What a classroom/classroom's schedule will look like when implementing that curriculum
- Description of the professional development that will be provided (e.g., number, length, and content of training days, frequency of coaching).
- An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of
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