ChildTRENDS

# Quality Rated Validation Study Report #2:
## A Further Look at the Programs in Quality Rated

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## Acknowledgments:

# REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

## Key Findings

**1** **The distribution of ratings differed depending on the populations of children that programs served.** Programs with Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) scholarships—that is, funding to serve children from low-income families—had lower ratings than those that did not. The difference in ratings for programs with and without CAPS was more prominent in Child Care Learning Centers (CCLCs) than in Family Child Care Learning Homes (FCCLHs). In addition, CCLCs that served infants and/or toddlers had lower ratings than those that did not.

**2** **CCLCs with accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the most common accreditation among programs in Quality Rated, had higher ratings than CCLCs that did not.**

**3** **Programs took about a year to submit their portfolio, the second step in the rating process, after applying to Quality Rated.** FCCLHs tended to submit their portfolios faster than CCLCs or those categorized as Others. After the portfolio was submitted, it took about four months to receive a rating. The length of time that each step took, along with the number of programs entering Quality Rated, peaked in 2015 and has since decreased.

**4** **Most programs that were re-rated—because their rating was expiring or at their request—either maintained (44 percent) or increased (39 percent) their rating.** Only 17 percent of programs decreased in rating when they were re-rated. However, programs with a lower star rating, such as 0-star or 1-star, showed much higher rates of increase upon re-rating. For example, the rating for almost all 0-star programs and most 1-star programs increased when re-rated, compared to less than one-third of 2-star programs. This pattern was primarily driven by CCLCs; FCCLHs tended to increase in rating no matter their initial star rating.

**Quality Rated is Georgia's systemic approach to assessing, improving, and communicating the level of quality in early childhood and school-age care and education programs.**

### Background

This report is the second in a series of four in the Quality Rated Validation Project. It examines the distribution of ratings among different types of programs, the timing of each step in the rating process, and the re-rating of programs. The latter includes percentages of programs that decreased, maintained, or increased their rating when they were re-rated according to different program characteristics.

In Quality Rated, programs are assigned a star rating based on a combination of an online portfolio and Environmental Rating Score (ERS) observations. There are five steps in the rating process: 1) the program applies; 2) the program submits the portfolio, which measures Structural Quality; 3) Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) approves the portfolio; 4) ERS observations occur in a randomly selected portion of classrooms or in the family child care home, measuring Process Quality; and 5) DECAL applies a rating formula to assign a star rating and communicates that rating to the program.

### Methods

This report relies on administrative data as of December 31, 2017 from 1,648 programs: 1,143 CCLCs, 433 FCCLHs, and 72 programs categorized as *Others*.

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# Quality Rated Validation Study Report #2:
## A Further Look at the Programs in Quality Rated

## OVERVIEW

This report examines how ratings differed according to the populations of children that programs served and program accreditation, how long the rating process took, and a comparison of programs' re-ratings to their initial ratings. The questions addressed in the report stem from an analysis plan jointly developed by the Child Trends and DECAL research teams, with input from the Quality Rated External Validation Committee.

This report builds on findings released in the Quality Rated Validation Study Report #1 (Early et al., 2017), which examined the Quality Rated structural quality and process quality components using administrative data through May 2017. The key findings included:

1. The most common rating was 2-star, followed by 1-star. There were differences in the distribution of star ratings among different types of programs.

2. Programs earned a higher proportion of the available Structural Quality points than Process Quality points.

3. Programs that were held to more rigorous standards, such as Georgia's Pre-K and Head Start, generally attained a higher star rating.

4. The star rating is driven almost entirely by the Process Quality component (i.e., Environmental Rating Score, or ERS).

## METHODS

This report relies on data from the Quality Rated Administrative Data System collected and maintained by DECAL as part of the process of assigning a star rating. Quality Rated star ratings range from 1 to 3. For the purposes of this report, programs that complete the rating process but do not meet the criteria for 1, 2, or 3 stars are referred to as *0-star*. From a policy standpoint, DECAL considers these programs to be not rated and does not use the term *0-star*. However, because these programs sought a rating, took part in all aspects of the rating process,

### Introduction to the Quality Rated Validation Project

As part of Georgia's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant application, Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) committed to expanding and evaluating Quality Rated. One part of that evaluation is the Quality Rated Validation Project, led by Child Trends, in partnership with Georgia State University. The Quality Rated Validation Project seeks to address three primary objectives for Quality Rated leaders:

1. Improve their understanding of the strengths and limitations of the Quality Rated administrative data system, as well as their understanding of how the rating system functions.

2. Improve their understanding of the extent to which Quality Rated ratings are accurate and meaningful indicators of program quality.

3. Improve their understanding of the extent to which Quality Rated program ratings, and the standards that comprise the ratings, are related to children's development and learning.

The current report is the second in a series, and addresses the first primary objective using analysis of administrative data. Future reports will include analyses of data that are currently being collected to address the second and third primary objectives of the project. These data will include a) information from teachers, providers, and directors about their experiences with Quality Rated; b) independent classroom and program observations; c) audio recordings of teacher and provider interactions with children to understand language use; and d) assessments of children's emerging academic and social skills. Collectively, the Quality Rated Validation Project aims to support Quality Rated leaders in considering future implementation and revision.

and have usable data in the Quality Rated system, we believed that including them here was important for understanding how the rating is working.

Three components go into the star rating: The online portfolio, observations at the program, and bonus points. Programs submit evidence in an online portfolio to earn points based on increasingly difficult criteria aligned with five standards. Once the portfolio has been accepted, a Quality Rated assessor from DECAL conducts an unannounced ERS observation. The score from the online portfolio is converted to Structural Quality points and the average ERS score is converted to Process Quality points. Programs can also earn Bonus Points based on accreditations such as National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Total points—calculated by adding together structural quality points, process quality points, and bonus points—determine the program's star level.

The current report includes 1,648 programs with a rating (0-, 1-, 2-, and 3-star) as of December 31, 2017. This includes 1,143 Child Care Learning Centers (CCLCs), 433 Family Child Care Learning Homes (FCCLHs), and 72 programs categorized as *Others*. In Georgia, some unlicensed programs that are subject to different government oversight (e.g., programs on military bases, some Head Start programs,[a] some programs housed at universities or colleges, and some school-based programs[b]) can elect to take part in Quality Rated. DECAL calls this category *Others* and we use that label throughout this report. See [Appendix A](#) for a breakdown of the programs included in this category.

These 1,648 programs represent 33 percent of all Quality Rated-eligible programs statewide (35 percent of CCLCs, 25 percent of FCCLHs, and 41 percent of Others). Throughout this report we make comparisons among CCLCs, FCCLHs, and Others to provide insight into which aspects of the rating are more or less challenging for programs that vary in licensing requirements and may serve different populations. To provide context for this report, Figure 1 shows the distribution of ratings for all 1,648 programs rated by the end of 2017. CCLCs were significantly[c] more likely to be 1-star and less likely to be 3-star than FCCLHs, and significantly more likely to be 0- or 1-star and less likely to be 2-star than Others. FCCLHs were significantly more likely to be 3-star and less likely to be 2-star compared to Others. This distribution is very similar to the distribution in the first validation report using data through May 2017.

**Figure 1.** Distribution of star ratings

*Over three-quarters of all programs were 1- or 2-star.*
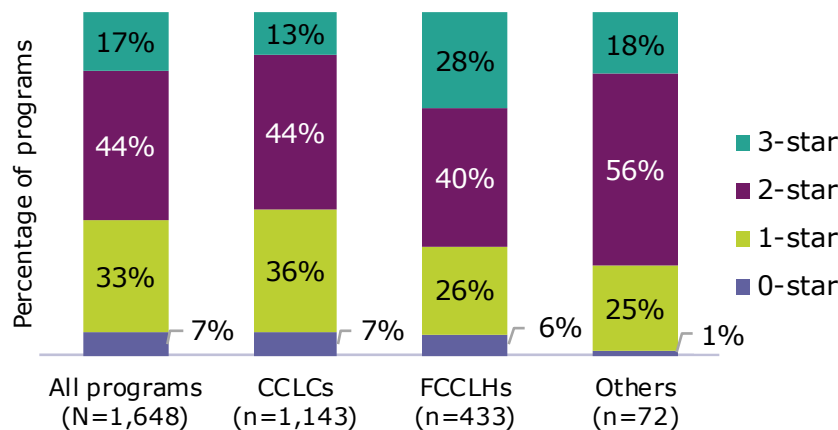


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

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[a] Although Others includes many Head Start programs, they can also be licensed as CCLCs, so Others does not encompass all Head Start programs in Quality Rated.
[b] Typically, local school systems are not eligible to take part in Quality Rated. The local school systems included in the Others group in the current analyses took part in a Quality Rated pilot initiative to determine the feasibility of including local school systems in Quality Rated in the future.
[c] Throughout this report, we use the modifier "significantly" to refer to a probability of less than five percent ($p < .05$) that the two groups being compared are the same according to a statistical test. Pairs of Chi-square tests were used to compare rating distributions, independent sample t-tests were used to compare means, and Mann-Whitney tests were used to compare medians. Thus, if the probability is less than five percent, we conclude that the groups are different.

# FINDINGS

**1** How did ratings differ among programs that served various populations of children in Quality Rated?

## Programs with and without CAPS scholarships[d]

Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) is Georgia's state-administered child care subsidy program funded through the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) to help families with limited resources offset the cost of child care. Families in Georgia must meet eligibility requirements to participate in the CAPS program.[e] In December 2016, the DECAL Advisory Committee adopted a rule that required all providers receiving CAPS funding who were eligible for Quality Rated to be rated by the end of 2020.

The CAPS program is linked to a tiered reimbursement system in Quality Rated that distributes "bonus payments" according to a program's star rating. Prior to October 2016, 1-star programs received two percent more than the base CAPS rate, 2-star programs received five percent more, and 3-star programs received 10 percent more. As of October 2016, the bonus payment rates increased to five percent, 10 percent, and 25 percent, respectively. DECAL has tied CAPS payments to Quality Rated star ratings as a way to ensure that children from low-income homes have access to high-quality programs. Thus, investigating links between programs with CAPS scholarships and rating is a key question of interest to DECAL.[f]

As seen in Figure 2, almost three-quarters (73 percent) of CCLCs and FCCLHs had at least one CAPS scholarship. Programs with CAPS were significantly more likely to be 0- or 1-star and less likely to be 3-star. This comparison does not shed light on the differences in programs based on the number or percentage of CAPS scholarships (i.e., percentage of children enrolled in the program who receive subsidies). Although this was a research question of interest, it was not feasible to answer with the current data because the number of CAPS scholarships commonly fluctuates. Furthermore, the current data did not include total program enrollment.

**Figure 2.** Distribution of star ratings for programs with and without CAPS scholarships

*Programs with at least one CAPS scholarship tended to have lower ratings.*
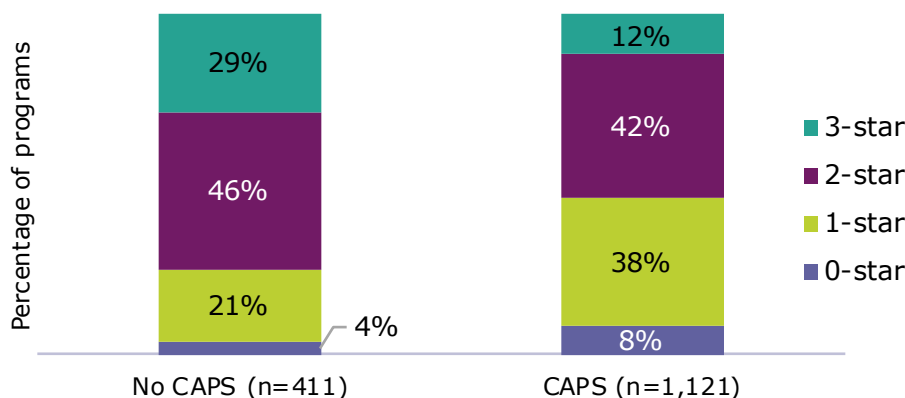


Note: Others were excluded because very few Others (n = 2) had at least one CAPS scholarship.[g]
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

[d] In 2017, the CAPS program transitioned from the Division of Families and Children Services to DECAL and "certificates" were renamed "scholarships."
[e] For more information about the CAPS program, see http://caps.decal.ga.gov/.
[f] For the analysis in this report, programs in Quality Rated were divided by whether they had no CAPS scholarships or at least one CAPS scholarship in September 2016. This method is less than ideal because the timing of the rating and the data from CAPS is not in alignment and some programs are missing data (n=46); however, it is presented here because we believe the findings still bear importance.
[g] As seen in Appendix A, many programs included in Others are Georgia Early Head Start or Head Start. Although they may not serve children with subsidies, these programs serve low-income families through a different funding stream.

We also examined the differences in the rating distributions according to program type (see Figure 3). Overall, 78 percent of CCLCs had at least one CAPS scholarship, compared to just over half (52 percent) of FCCLHs. CCLCs with CAPS were significantly more likely to be 0- or 1-star and less likely to be 2- or 3-star than those without CAPS. FCCLHs with CAPS were significantly less likely to be 3-star than those without, but the proportion rated at the other levels did not differ according to CAPS status. See Appendix B for more information about how programs with and without CAPS scored on the Quality Rated standards in the portfolio and on the ERS.

**Figure 3.** Distribution of star ratings among CCLCs and FCCLHs with and without CAPS scholarships

*The differences in the distribution of star ratings between programs with and without CAPS scholarships was more pronounced among CCLCs than FCCLHs.*
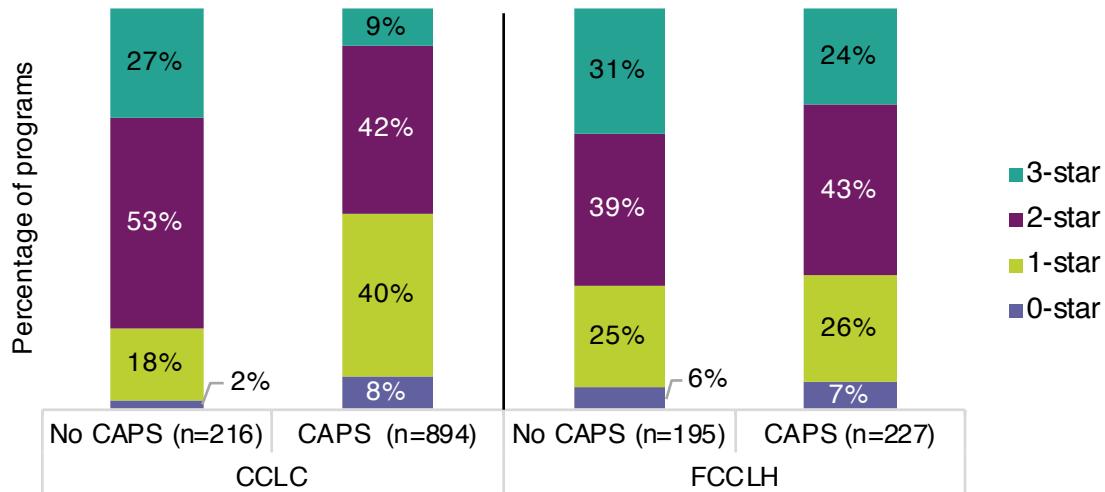


Note: Others were excluded because very few Others (n = 2) had at least one CAPS scholarship.
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

## CCLCs that did and did not serve infants and/or toddlers

Among CCLCs in Quality Rated, 86 percent reported serving infants and/or toddlers (see Figure 4). Previous research has indicated that quality is typically lower in infant and toddler classrooms than in preschool classrooms, possibly because providing high-quality care for infants and toddlers is more expensive than for older age groups. This cost is sometimes subsidized by paying lower wages to teachers with less education (Whitebook, Austin, & Amanta, 2015).

CCLCs that served infants and/or toddlers were significantly more likely to be 0- or 1-star and less likely to be 2- or 3-star than those that did not serve infants and/or toddlers. See Appendix C for more information about how programs that did and did not serve infants and/or toddlers scored on the Quality Rated standards in the portfolio and on the ERS.

**Figure 4.** Distribution of star ratings for CCLCs that did and did not serve infants and/or toddlers

*CCLCs that served infants and/or toddlers tended to have lower ratings.*
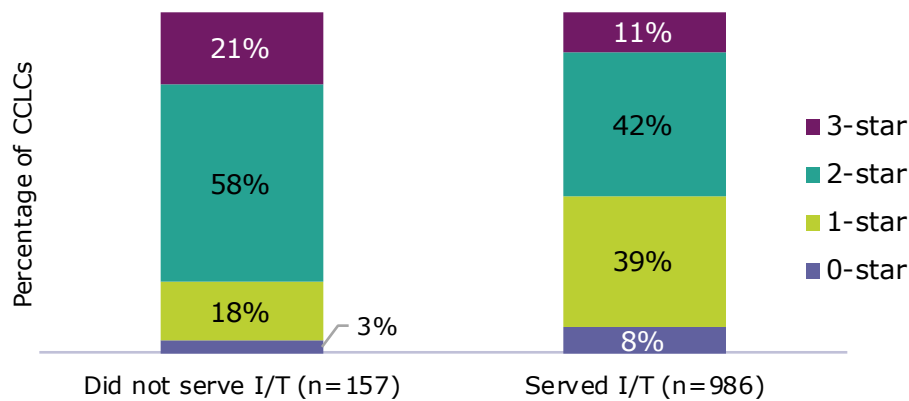


Note: Others and FCCLHs were excluded because few Others (n=17) served infants and/or toddlers and few FCCLHs (n=12) did not serve infants and/or toddlers.
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

**2**

# How did ratings compare for Child Care Learning Centers that were and were not NAEYC-accredited?

In Quality Rated, programs can earn up to four bonus points[h] as a component of the star rating if they are accredited by any one of 10 national accrediting bodies—the most common being the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Among CCLCs in Quality Rated, 12 percent were NAEYC-accredited. Across all programs, five percent earned another type of accreditation recognized by Quality Rated. To earn NAEYC accreditation, programs must meet standards grouped into 10 areas, including curriculum, teaching approaches, staff qualifications, and physical environment.[i] NAEYC standards are often used as benchmarks for measuring quality and their accreditation process is demanding; in line with this, there is some evidence that NAEYC accreditation is related to facets of structural and process quality (Whitebook, Sakai, & Howes, 1997; Whitebook, Sakai, & Howes 2004; Zan 2005; Jorde-Bloom 1996; Gerber, Whitebook, & Weinstein, 2007). Therefore, we expected that NAEYC accreditation would be associated with higher star ratings.

CCLCs with NAEYC accreditation were significantly less likely to be 0- or 1-star and more likely to be 3-star than CCLCs that were not NAEYC-accredited (see Figure 5). Although programs that were NAEYC-accredited earned bonus points, bonus points are not a primary driver of star ratings; instead, star ratings are determined largely by ERS scores (Early et al., 2017). As seen in Appendix D, average ERS scores were significantly higher in NAEYC-accredited CCLCs than in non-NAEYC-accredited CCLCs; therefore, the difference in the rating distribution seems to be driven by higher observed classroom quality in NAEYC-accredited CCLCs. Appendix D also includes information on how CCLCs with and without NAEYC accreditation scored on the Quality Rated standards.

**Figure 5.** Distribution of star ratings among CCLCs with and without NAEYC accreditation

*CCLCs with NAEYC accreditation had higher star ratings than those without NAEYC accreditation.*
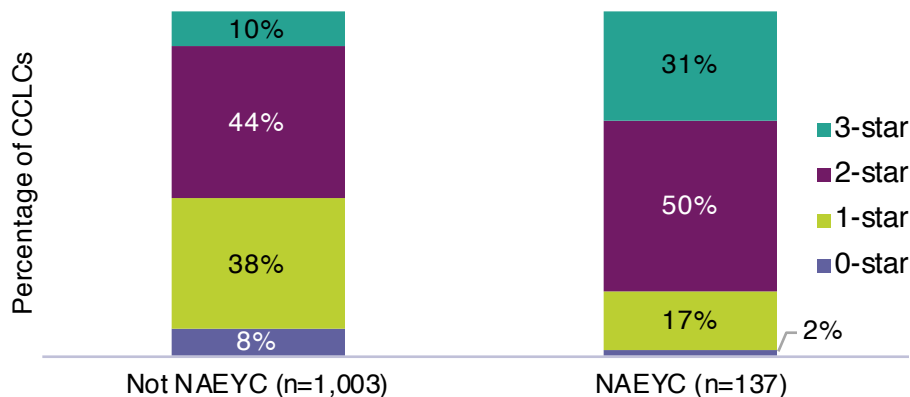


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

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[h] Programs earn two bonus points for accreditation from NAEYC, National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC), Association Montessori International (AMI), American Montessori Society (AMS), or Council on Accreditation (COA). Programs earn one bonus point for accreditation by National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA), AdvancED/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), National Accreditation Commission (NAC), the National Lutheran School Accreditation, or the Association of Christian Schools International.

[i] For more information on NAEYC accreditation, see https://www.naeyc.org/accreditation.

# 3 How much time did each rating step take?

The process from the beginning to the end of receiving a rating in a TQRIS depends on many factors, including the complexity of the application and submission procedures, the scheduling of on-site visits, and the capacity of the staff that review and assign ratings. There are five key steps in the rating process for Quality Rated:

1. the program submits an application to be part of Quality Rated;

2. the program submits the portfolio, which measures Structural Quality;

3. DECAL approves the portfolio and observations are assigned to observers;

4. ERS observations occur in a randomly selected portion of classrooms or in the home;

5. DECAL applies a rating formula to assign a star rating and communicates that rating to the program.

The Quality Rated program manual provides programs with guidelines regarding how long the steps should take. After the portfolio is approved, observations should be scheduled within 90 calendar days. The time between the first and last observation—if the program requires multiple observations—should be no longer than 10 business days. Finally, the time between the last observation, the calculation of the star rating, and the date that programs are notified of their rating by email should be within 60 calendar days.

Depending on certain programs' situations, the rating process may not follow these guidelines, which can occasionally lead to long delays. For example, if a program is closed during the summer but submits the portfolio to Quality Rated in the spring, the ERS observations may not occur until the fall. For that reason, the days presented throughout this section are *medians*[j] to reduce the influence of extreme values. To further help the reader identify the most common values, the 10th–90th percentile ranges and total ranges are provided in the appendices. This section uses programs' initial rating because the timeline stated in the program manual applies to the full rating process only. It is likely that the steps in re-ratings take a different amount of time due to the various requirements and processes.

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[j] The median is the middle score. By definition, half of the values are below the median and the other half are above the median.

## Time between applying to Quality Rated and submitting the portfolio

We examined the time between the date on which a program applied to Quality Rated and when the portfolio was submitted online. During this time, programs receive technical assistance to improve quality and prepare their portfolios. As seen in Figure 6, programs took about one year (373 days) after applying to Quality Rated to submit their portfolio. FCCLHs took significantly less time (303 days) to submit their portfolio after applying to Quality Rated than CCLCs (412 days) and Others (461 days). See Appendix E for the 10th–90th percentile range and total range for all programs and by program type.

**Figure 6.** Median days between a program's application submission and portfolio submission

*Programs took about a year to submit their portfolio after applying to Quality Rated.*

Median days

| | |
|---|---|
| All Programs (n=1,646) | 373 |
| CCLCs (n=1,130) | 412 |
| FCCLHs (n=434) | 303 |
| Others (n=82) | 461 |

Note: Some (n=2) programs were excluded from the analysis due to inaccurate or missing dates.
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

We also examined how long this step took over time by splitting programs into six-month intervals based on when their portfolio was submitted. As seen in Appendix E, the time between application and portfolio submission was longest in 2015 and has reduced in the time periods since.

## Time between submitting the portfolio and receiving a rating

Once the portfolio is submitted, the length of the rating process is dependent on DECAL. DECAL approves the portfolio, conducts ERS observations, and calculates a rating that is emailed to the program.

Figure 7 shows the median number of days between each step of the rating process. The median days between portfolio submission and approval was two weeks (14 days). The time between portfolio approval and completion of the observations was almost two months (54 days). Nearly seven weeks (47 days) elapsed between the end of the observation and the rating. Several lengths of time between steps varied significantly by program type; however, as seen in Figure 8, all differences were small. See Appendix E for sample sizes, 10th–90th percentile ranges, and total ranges for all programs and each program type for the respective rating process step.

**Figure 7.** Median days for each of DECAL's steps in the rating process for Quality Rated

*The Quality Rated process took the longest for Others and was shortest for CCLCs.*

■ Portfolio submitted to approved ■ Portfolio approved to end of ERS (guideline is 90 days) ■ End of ERS to rated (guideline is 60 days)



| | Portfolio submitted to approved | Portfolio approved to end of ERS | End of ERS to rated | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All Programs | 14 | 54 | 47 | 115 |
| CCLCs | 14 | 52 | 47 | 113 |
| FCCLHs | 15 | 59 | 46 | 120 |
| Others | 14 | 59 | 55 | 128 |

Median days
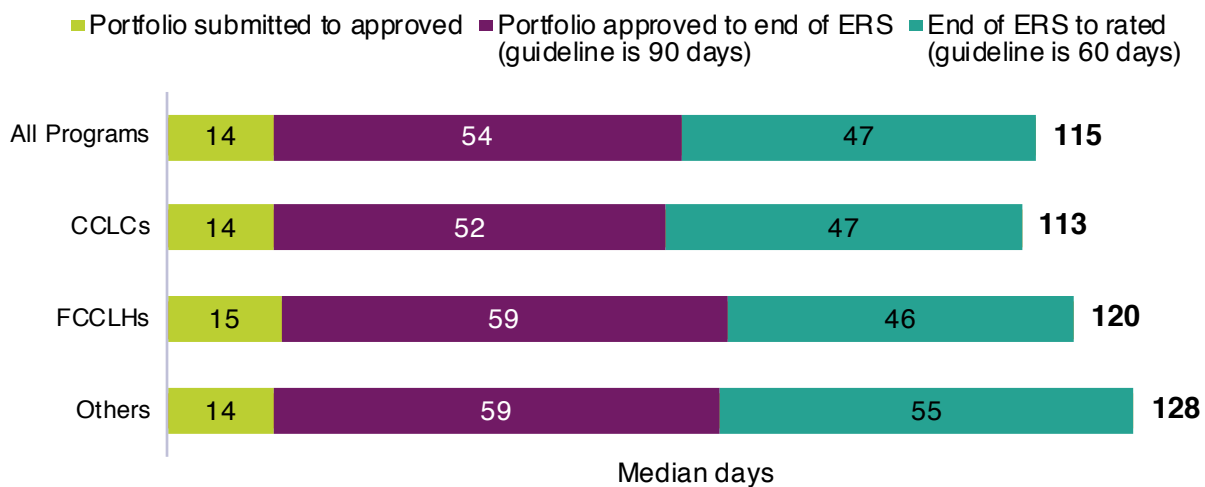
Note: Some (between 2 and 192) programs were excluded from the analysis due to inaccurate or missing dates.
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

We also calculated how long these steps took over time. The total time between portfolio submission and program rating went steadily up through 2015, along with the number of programs rated by DECAL. It peaked in early 2015 and has declined steadily since then. During the final months of 2017, the median number of days from portfolio submission to program rating was 65. See Appendix F for more information about the rating steps over time.

Additionally, the Quality Rated program manual specifies guidelines to frame the length of the rating process for programs. We examined the percentage of programs for which the length of the rating step was within the guideline from the program manual. The program manual states that a program will receive its rating within 60 calendar days of its final ERS observation. A large majority of programs (71 percent) met this criterion. The manual also specifies that programs will have all ERS observations completed within 10 business days, if multiple ERS observations are required. Almost all (93 percent) programs had all ERS observations completed by DECAL within 10 business days. See Appendix G and Appendix H for more information about the percentage of programs falling within these guidelines, overall and by program type, as well as over time.

**4**

## Was a program's re-rating different than its initial rating?

Quality Rated star ratings are awarded for a three-year period with an annual check-in process. At their annual check-in, programs can choose to maintain their rating or request a reassessment. Programs that request a reassessment submit a new portfolio and have an ERS observation, as with their initial rating process. This section includes the subset of 375 programs that went through the Quality Rated process at least twice.

### Outcome of re-ratings

We examined the initial and second ratings of programs that had been re-rated. Most commonly, programs that were re-rated maintained (44 percent) or increased (39 percent) their rating. Only 17 percent decreased in rating.

FCCLHs were significantly more likely to increase and less likely to maintain their rating than CCLCs (see Figure 8). In addition, Others were significantly less likely to decrease in rating than CCLCs and FCCLHs. There were no other significant differences between program types.

**Figure 8.** Percentage of programs that decreased, maintained, or increased when re-rated

*It was most common for programs to earn the same or increased rating when they were re-rated.*
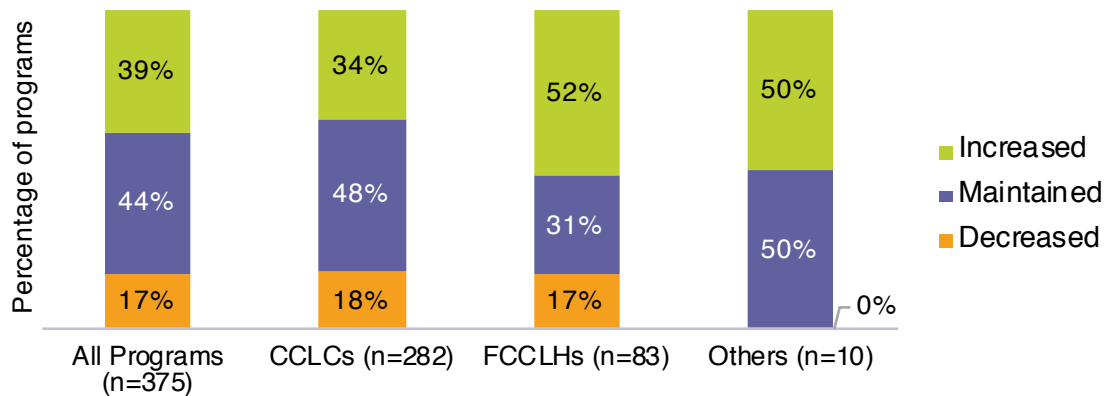


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

Figure 9 shows the percentage of programs grouped by their initial rating that decreased, maintained, or increased in rating. Almost all (96 percent) 0-star programs and most (59 percent) 1-star programs increased in rating when reassessed, compared to less than one-third (31 percent) of 2-star programs. See Appendix I for the number of programs at each initial star rating (e.g., 0-star, 1-star, etc.) that earned a certain star rating when re-rated.

**Figure 9.** Percentage of programs grouped by initial rating that decreased, maintained, or increased when re-rated

*Almost all 0-star programs and most 1-star programs that were re-rated increased their rating.*
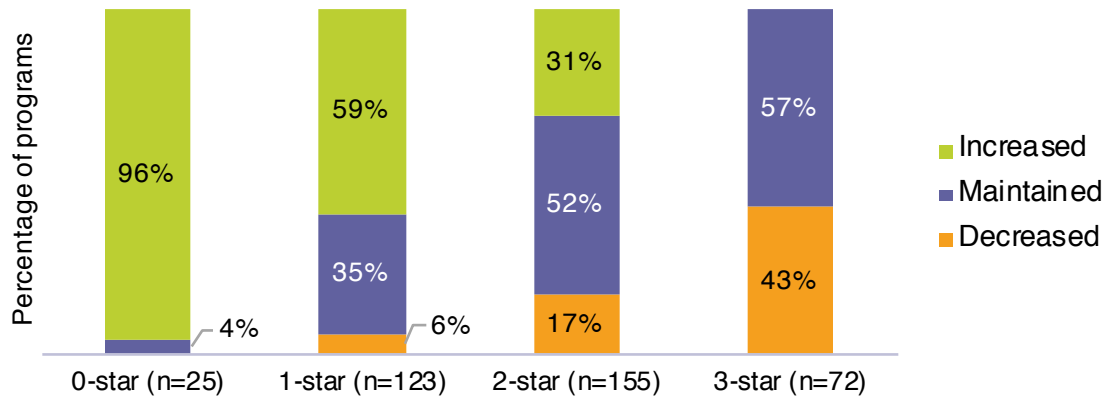


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

Figure 10 further separates the programs at each initial rating presented in the previous figure into CCLCs and FCCLHs. Zero-star CCLCs and 0- and 1-star FCCLHs were especially likely to increase when they were re-rated. Interestingly, over half (60 percent) of CCLCs initially rated 2-star *maintained* their rating at the reassessment, while almost two-thirds (64 percent) of FCCLHs initially rated 2-star *increased* their rating at the reassessment. Additionally, two-thirds (67 percent) of FCCLHs initially rated 3-star maintained their rating when reassessed, compared to half (51 percent) of CCLCs.

**Figure 10.** Percentage of CCLCs and FCCLHs grouped by initial rating that decreased, maintained, or increased when re-rated

*1- and 2-star FCCLHs were more likely to increase in rating than 1- and 2-star CCLCs.*

■ Decreased  ■ Maintained  ■ Increased

**CCLCs**



**FCCLHs**
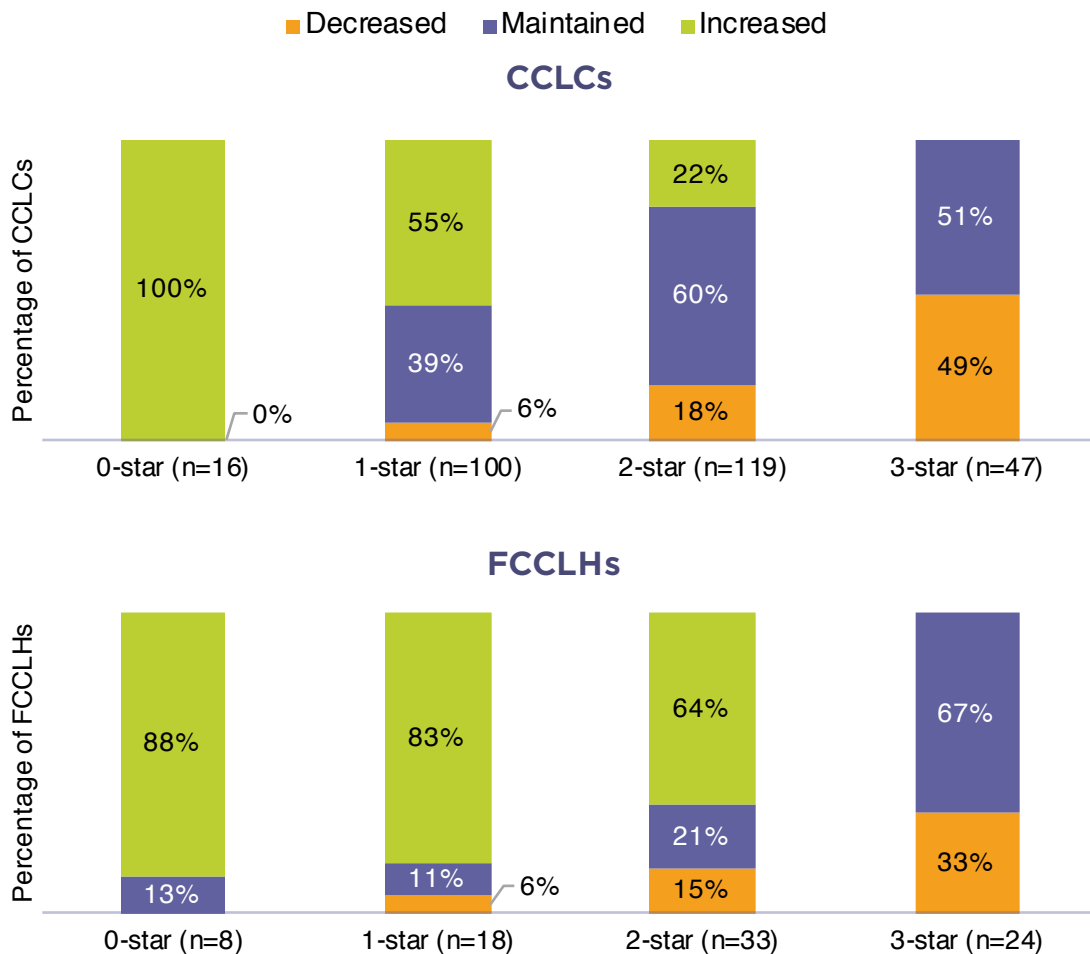


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

## Type of re-rating application

To further understand the characteristics of programs that decreased, maintained, or increased their rating when re-rated, we compared outcomes for programs that were required (52 percent) to be re-rated because their initial rating had taken place three years earlier to those that voluntarily (48 percent) requested re-ratings. The percentage of re-ratings that were voluntary versus required varied by initial star rating (see Figure 11). All 0-star programs that were re-rated did so voluntarily, and the percentage of programs that applied to be re-rated voluntarily decreased as the rating increased.

**Figure 11.** Percentage of programs grouped by initial rating that went through each application type when re-rated

*Lower rated programs were more likely to voluntarily apply to be re-rated.*
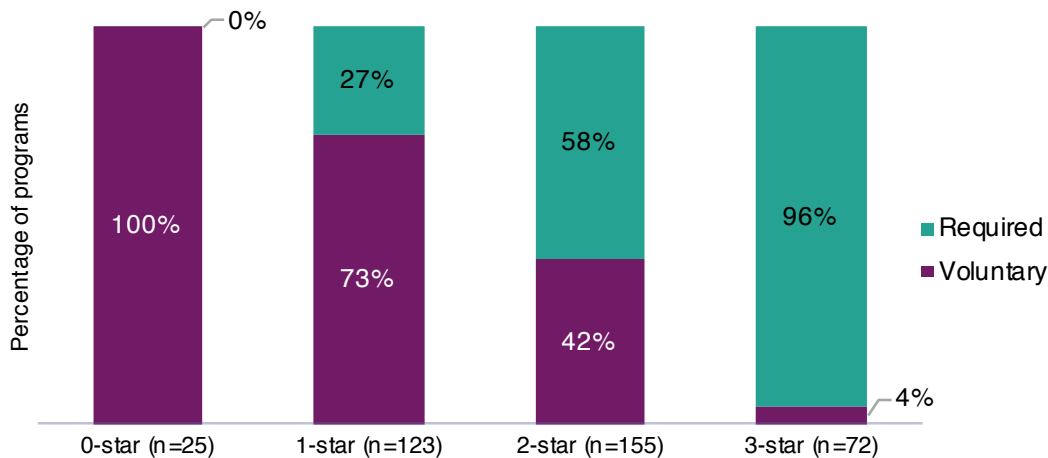


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

We examined the outcome of re-ratings for 1- and 2-star programs that voluntarily requested a re-rating and those that waited for their required reassessment (see Figure 12). Only 1- and 2-star programs are included because no 0-star programs were required to be re-rated and only four percent of 3-star programs voluntarily requested a re-rating. There were no large differences in the outcome of re-ratings based on the type of re-rating application.

**Figure 12.** Percentage of 1- and 2-star programs grouped by type of re-rating application that decreased, maintained, or increased when re-rated

*One- and 2-star programs that went through re-rating voluntarily had similar re-rating outcomes as those that waited until their required reassessment.*
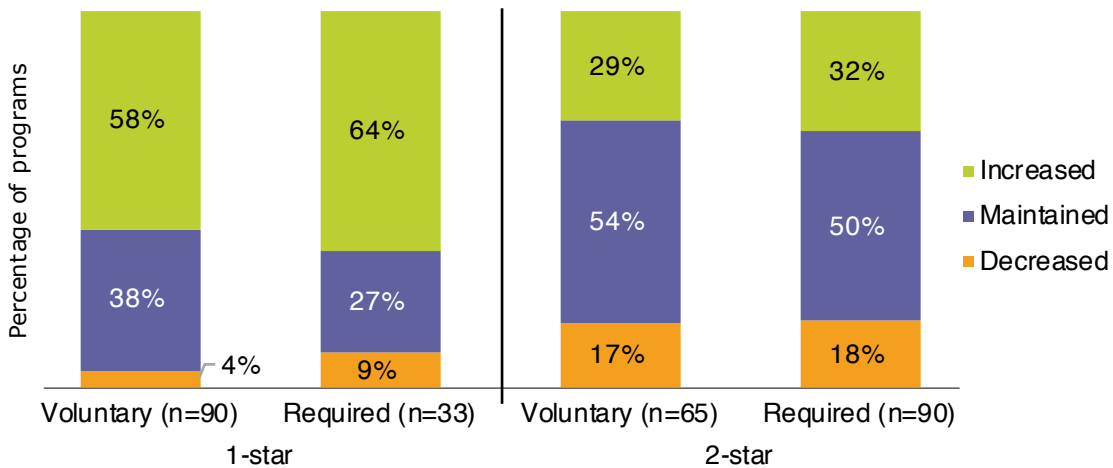


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

## Time between re-ratings

To understand more about when programs are re-rated, we calculated the median number of days between the initial rating and the re-rating. Overall, programs were re-rated slightly more than three years (1,150 days) after their initial rating and there were no large differences between program type.

As seen in Figure 13, only about one and a half years elapsed between the first and second rating for programs initially rated 0- and 1-star—half of the three-year Quality Rated requirement. As the initial star rating increased, so did the median number of days between the two ratings: 2- and 3-star programs were re-rated after about three years.[k]

**Figure 13.** Median days between initial rating and re-rating grouped by initial rating

*There was less time between the initial rating and re-rating for lower rated programs than for higher rated programs.*



Median days between initial and re-rating

| | |
|---|---|
| 0-star (n=25) | 638 |
| 1-star (n=123) | 552 |
| 2-star (n=155) | 1,168 |
| 3-star (n=72) | 1,198 |
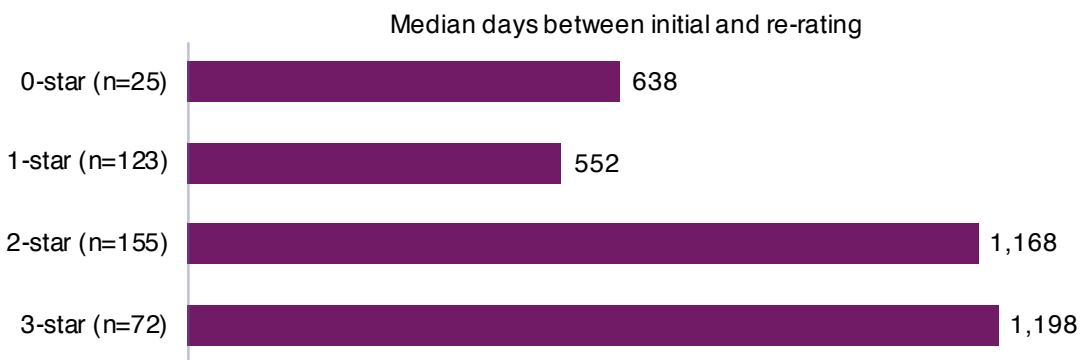
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

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[k] Note that the three-year reassessment requirement for Quality Rated only asks that programs submit a portfolio by the three-year anniversary of the current rating, and that the rating process may extend beyond the anniversary itself.

# SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The Quality Rated Administrative Data System is an asset to DECAL. It provides a depth of insight about the programs and their experiences in Quality Rated, which in turn will help DECAL support programs in the future and improve the rating system.

## Differences in rating distributions among various programs

We examined differences in the distributions of star ratings for programs serving various populations of children. Programs with at least one CAPS scholarship were lower rated than those without CAPS scholarships. Additional information is needed to understand why programs with CAPS tend to receive lower ratings, and to inform DECAL's strategies to improve the quality of programs serving children from low-income families. The Quality Rated Administrative Data System does not include such information. Cost may be one factor; CAPS scholarships typically cover some, but not all, of the tuition that the program charges other families. If programs enroll several children who receive CAPS scholarships, then the program may not have the funds needed to meet or maintain high-quality care required at the higher rating levels of Quality Rated.

CCLCs serving infants and/or toddlers were lower rated than CCLCs serving only preschool-age or older children. Supporting classrooms with infants and/or toddlers may pose special challenges to programs because of the increased cost of providing high-quality infant and toddler care. Therefore, the finding that quality (as measured by star rating) is lower among these programs is not surprising (Whitebook, Austin, & Amanta 2015).

CCLCs with NAEYC accreditation were rated higher than CCLCs without NAEYC accreditation. This is not surprising because NAEYC accreditation requires programs to meet a set of 10 high-quality standards. Thus, CCLCs that are NAEYC-accredited would be expected to earn higher ratings on Quality Rated.

## The length of time for each rating step

We also looked closely at the length of time that programs needed to complete each step in the rating process. To keep programs invested in the system, it is important to ensure that the rating process is relatively quick and that the steps are completed within the guidelines set forth in the program manual. However, there are valid explanations for why some steps take longer for certain programs (e.g., summer breaks). It took about one year for programs to submit their portfolio after applying to Quality Rated, and about four months from submitting a portfolio to receiving a rating. The findings generally indicated that DECAL has adhered to the guidelines set forth for the length of the rating process. Given the large number of programs that have been rated, this is an important accomplishment that is likely to engender positive relationships with programs.

## Programs that were re-rated

Finally, we examined a subset of 375 programs that received both an initial rating and a re-rating. The most common outcome of a re-rating was that a program maintained its initial rating (44 percent). A slightly smaller percentage of programs increased their rating (39 percent). FCCLHs were more likely to increase in rating than CCLCs. Almost all 0-star programs and most 1-star programs increased in rating when re-rated. Less than one-third of 2-star programs increased to a 3-star. We cannot know why this was the case, but it may indicate that the move from 2- to 3-stars is harder than moving among the lower ratings. Almost half of 3-star programs decreased in rating when re-rated, possibly suggesting that programs have difficulty maintaining the 3-star rating. We also found that lower rated programs voluntarily applied for a re-rating more often than higher rated programs. In addition, 0- and 1-star programs applied for a re-rating in half the amount of time than 2- and 3-star programs; such programs might have applied sooner (and voluntarily) because they wanted to earn a higher rating.

## Limitations

There are some inherent limitations to using administrative data. First, the data are purely descriptive and cannot explain why we see these patterns. For instance, we do not know why CCLCs that serve infants and/or toddlers tended to have lower star ratings. Likewise, we do not know why some programs that were re-rated increased their rating while others remained the same or even decreased. Second, the information about the CAPS scholarships comes from a different source than the Quality Rated data, and was gathered at a single point in time (September 2016) that did not necessarily align with when the rating occurred. CAPS data that align with the date of the program's rating were not available. Although the number of scholarships a program has can fluctuate on a weekly or even daily basis, we assumed that accepting scholarships (or not) was more static. Therefore, the data from this one timepoint were useful for understanding the association between quality and CAPS participation. Third, some data in the Quality Rated data system were excluded from the analyses regarding time (up to a 3 percent loss in data) due to circumstances such as change in ownership or license number.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results in this report and authors' expertise, we offer the following recommendations for DECAL's consideration:

- **Given the lower ratings in CCLCs with at least one CAPS scholarship and CCLCs that served infants and/or toddlers, Georgia could consider expanding supports aimed at improving quality in those programs.** Georgia is already making special efforts through initiatives such as tiered subsidy reimbursement and Quality Rated Subsidy Grants, which award grants to 2- or 3-star programs that serve infants and/or toddlers eligible for CAPS. By 2020, DECAL aims to have two-thirds of children receiving scholarships in 2- or 3-star Quality Rated programs.[I] Expanding initiatives that support quality improvements in lower rated programs currently accepting CAPS, and providing incentives for higher rated programs to begin accepting CAPS, could improve the likelihood of meeting DECAL's goals in serving its most vulnerable populations.

- **If DECAL is interested in further streamlining aspects of the rating process, DECAL may want to explore simplified rating pathways for certain types of programs, such as those with NAEYC accreditation, Head Start funding, or Georgia's Pre-K funding.** Eighty percent of programs with NAEYC accreditation were rated at the 2- or 3-star level. Furthermore, as of May 2017, 78 percent of CCLCs with Head Start funding and 58 percent of CCLCs that included a Georgia's Pre-K classroom were rated at the 2- or 3-star level (Early et al., 2017). According to the QRIS Compendium (2017), 25 of 43 state QRIS have an automatic or accelerated option available for certain types of programs. Providing these programs with a less-intensive process, such as automatically awarding portfolio points or exempting them from the portfolio entirely, could reduce DECAL's burden in rating programs that have already met high standards in another system.

- **To *maintain* the number of 3-star programs, DECAL may want to provide special supports to help 3-star programs as they prepare for re-rating**. Nearly half (46 percent) of 3-star programs earned a lower star rating when they were reassessed. While DECAL may choose to target most of its efforts at improving quality, it might also be useful to consider strategies for helping 3-star programs maintain their quality. DECAL could examine available information about the 3-star programs that earned a lower re-rating or talk with these programs to learn more about their experiences and challenges, which could inform their strategy to support these programs.

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[I] See the DECAL Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 for more information: http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/DECALStrategicPlan_SFY2017-2020.pdf

- **Additional supports for 2-star programs may be helpful to *increase* the number of 3-star programs.** Our results showed that the percentage of programs that increased in star level when re-rated decreased as the initial rating went up; this was especially true for CCLCs compared to FCCLHs. Specifically, it appears to be more difficult for a 2-star program to increase its rating to a 3-star than for a 1-star program to increase its rating to a 2-star. Our previous report found that the star rating is mostly determined by a program's average ERS score, so increases in star rating when programs are re-rated are most likely due to increases in average ERS scores. The fact that programs were less likely to move from a 2- to a 3-star than they were to move between the lower star levels suggests that the amount of effort and quality improvement required to increase ERS scores is greater at the upper end of the ERS than the lower end.

# FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

We suggest that DECAL continue to work with research partners to collect and analyze Quality Rated administrative and other data to evaluate and monitor the Quality Rated system. In particular, it would be valuable for DECAL to address the following questions in the future:

- **How does the percentage of CAPS scholarships (i.e., subsidy density) in a program relate to its star rating**? The current CAPS dataset includes the number of active scholarships, but not the total enrollment for the program. Therefore, it was not possible to calculate a percentage of children attending the program that received CAPS scholarships. Working with CAPS to improve connections between data sources would allow for closer inspection of the links between subsidy and rating.

- **How does the time between each step of the rating process change as the proportion of eligible programs applying for Quality Rated increases and DECAL implements new systems for handing the workload?** Quality Rated is a dynamic system that continually works to increase participation rates and streamline the systems to support data collection and ratings. Monitoring the amount of time at each step will be important for maintaining programs' perceptions of Quality Rated.

- **How do the quality improvement or technical assistance supports provided to programs affect re-ratings?** We hope to shed light on this question using survey data currently being collected as part of the Quality Rated Validation Project. We also encourage DECAL to continue reviewing the findings about re-rating, and to consider gathering additional information to learn more about what best supports programs in improving or maintaining their rating.

- **As more programs are re-rated, do these early findings change?** Quality Rated is relatively new (it began in 2012), and these findings reflect the first wave of programs that have been rated more than once. As more programs are re-rated, it will be important to continue analyzing the data to address the questions posed in this report and to determine whether the patterns of findings persist or change. Although Georgia, like other Early Learning Challenge states, has initially focused on bringing as many programs into Quality Rated as possible, the state may shift its focus to helping programs maintain or improve their quality in the future. Thus, data about changes in ratings over time will be especially helpful in documenting quality improvement efforts.

We hope that the information provided in this report gives DECAL valuable insights into programs in Quality Rated and their experiences with the rating process. Future reports will present programs' perceptions of Quality Rated and the results of independently collected observation and child outcome data, and how these data are linked to the star ratings.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: What types of programs were included in Others?

Some different types of programs do not fit into the CCLC or FCCLH categories. In the current report, we refer to these programs as Others. Table A1 details the types of programs included in Others according to programs' current rating and program type.[a]

**Table A1.** Types of programs included in Others

*Programs in the Others group included some Head Start, military, and school-based programs.*

| Program type | Number included in Others |
|---|---|
| Head Start or Early Head Start (GAHS or GAEHS)[b] | 55 |
| Local school system (LSS)[c] | 9 |
| Military (DOD) | 7 |
| College or university (UNIV) | 1 |
| **Total** | **72** |

Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

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[a] Fourteen programs changed program type, most commonly from Others to CCLCs, during their participation in Quality Rated. Table A1 presents their current rating and program type (as of December 31, 2017), which is the program type used in most analyses in the report. However, in the section on the timing of the rating steps, the initial rating and program type are used. Therefore, there may be some inconsistencies between the number of each program type across the sections of this report.
[b] Although Others includes many Head Start programs, such programs can also be licensed as CCLCs. Therefore, Others does not encompass all Head Start programs in Quality Rated.
[c] Typically, local school systems are not eligible to take part in Quality Rated. The local school systems included in the Others group in the current analyses took part in a Quality Rated pilot initiative to determine the feasibility of including LSS in Quality Rated in the future.

# Appendix B: How did programs with and without CAPS scholarships earn points in Quality Rated?

Programs submit a portfolio to Quality Rated that DECAL uses to score five standards:

- **Standard 1:** *Director and Teacher Qualifications and Professional Development Registry Verification* focuses on the qualifications of staff and continued development of their professional skills.

- **Standard 2:** *Child Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity* focuses on health practices that go above and beyond licensing standards.

- **Standard 3:** *Family Engagement* focuses on practices that connect families and providers with communities to improve child outcomes.

- **Standard 4:** *Intentional Teaching Practices* focuses on alignment of teaching practices and curriculum to Georgia's Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS), and on integrating planning and assessment.

- **Standard 5:** *Teacher: Student Ratio Requirements* focuses on having smaller groups of children per adult to enhance the learning environment.

Figure B1 shows the average points earned in each standard out of possible points on that standard[a] for programs with and without CAPS scholarships. Programs with CAPS earned significantly fewer points on every standard except for FCCLHs without additional staff, where the difference in points earned between programs with and without CAPS did not differ on *Standard 1: Provider Qualifications.*

**Figure B1.** Average points earned on each standard for programs with and without CAPS scholarships

*Programs with CAPS tended to earn fewer points on each standard than programs without CAPS.*
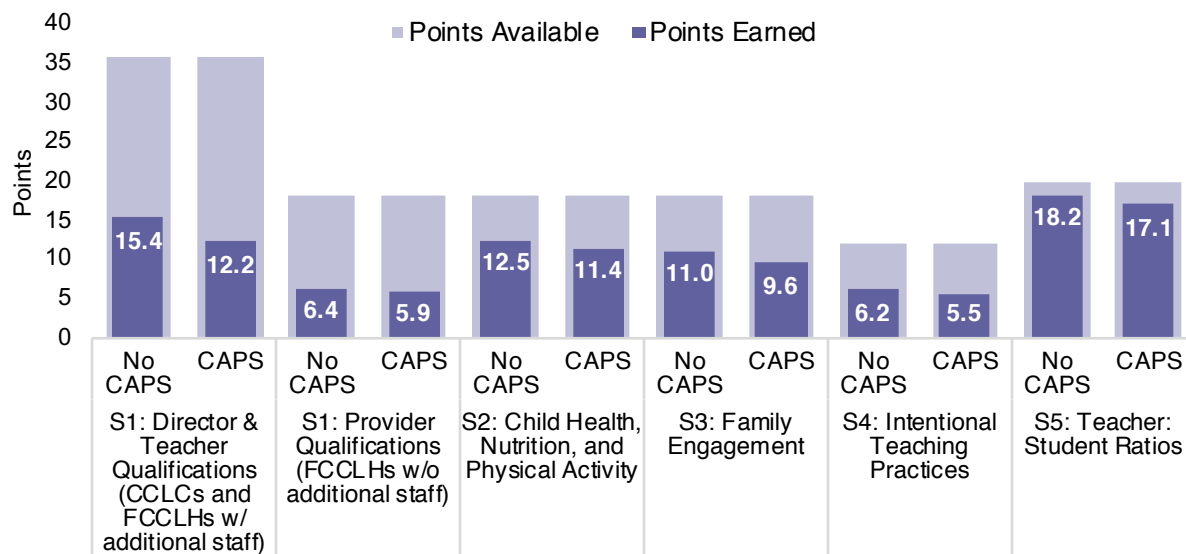


Note: Others were excluded from this comparison because very few Others (n=2) had at least one CAPS scholarship.
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

Once the online portfolio has been accepted, a Quality Rated assessor from DECAL conducts an unannounced ERS observation. If there is more than one classroom in the program, observations are conducted in one-third of the classrooms of each age group, which are selected at random. The assessor uses the version of the ERS that is appropriate for the setting or the age group. If multiple ERS observations are conducted, the average ERS score is used in the rating process.

The ERS includes the ECERS-R and ECERS-3,[b] which are used in classrooms serving children ages 2 to 5; the ITERS-R, which is designed for use with children from birth to 2.5 years old; and the FCCERS-R, which is designed to be used in family child care programs.[c] In the Quality Rated system, an average ERS score of 5.0 or more corresponds to three stars, a score between 4.0 and 4.9 corresponds to two stars, and a score between 3.0 and 3.9 corresponds to one star. However, if any classroom within a program scores less than a 3.0 on the ERS, the program cannot earn more than a 1-star rating.

As seen in Figure B2, the average ERS score for programs with CAPS was 4.0 and the average for programs without CAPS was 4.4; although this difference is significant, 0.4 points is overall a small difference. The range for programs regardless of CAPS status was large, from less than 2.0 points to over 6.0 points. According to the authors of the ERS, a 2.0 is between inadequate and minimal quality; a 6.0 is between good and excellent quality.

**Figure B2.** Average ERS scores for programs with and without CAPS scholarships

*Programs with CAPS had lower average ERS scores than programs without CAPS.*
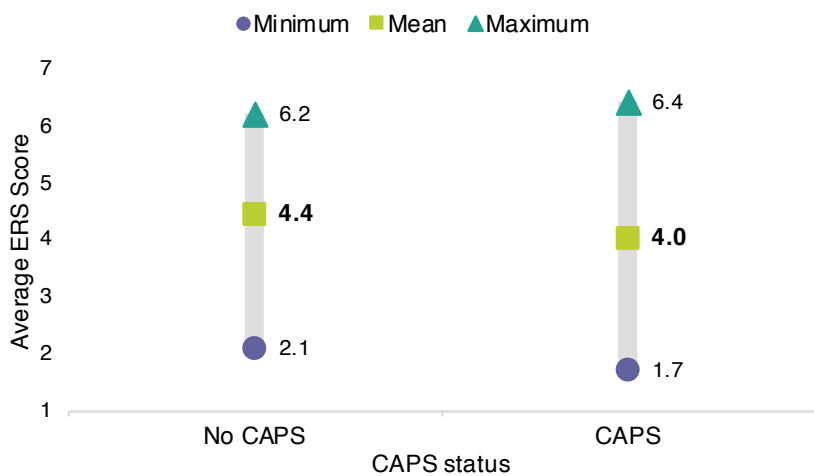


Note: Others were excluded from this comparison because very few Others (n=2) had at least one CAPS scholarship.
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

[a] Standard 1: Director and Teacher Qualifications is divided on this chart because, for most programs, 36 points are available. However, only 18 points are available for FCCLHs without additional staff because these programs do not have teachers. The rubric used to convert portfolio points to star ratings is different for FCCLH programs without additional staff to account for the different in maximum points.
[b] The ECERS-3 is the latest version of the ECERS. DECAL transitioned to using it in early 2017.
[c] For more information about the ERS, see http://ersi.info/.

# Appendix C: How did CCLCs that did and did not serve infants and/ or toddlers earn points in Quality Rated?

Figure C1 shows the average number of points earned in each standard out of possible points on that standard among CCLCs that did and did not serve infants and/or toddlers. CCLCs that did not serve infants and/or toddlers (n=157) scored significantly higher on every standard except for *Standard 2: Child Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity* compared to CCLCs that did serve infants and/or toddlers (n=986).

**Figure C1.** Average scores earned on each standard among CCLCs that did and did not serve infants and/or toddlers

*CCLCs that did not serve infants and/or toddlers tended to earn more points on each standard than CCLCs that did serve infants and/or toddlers.*
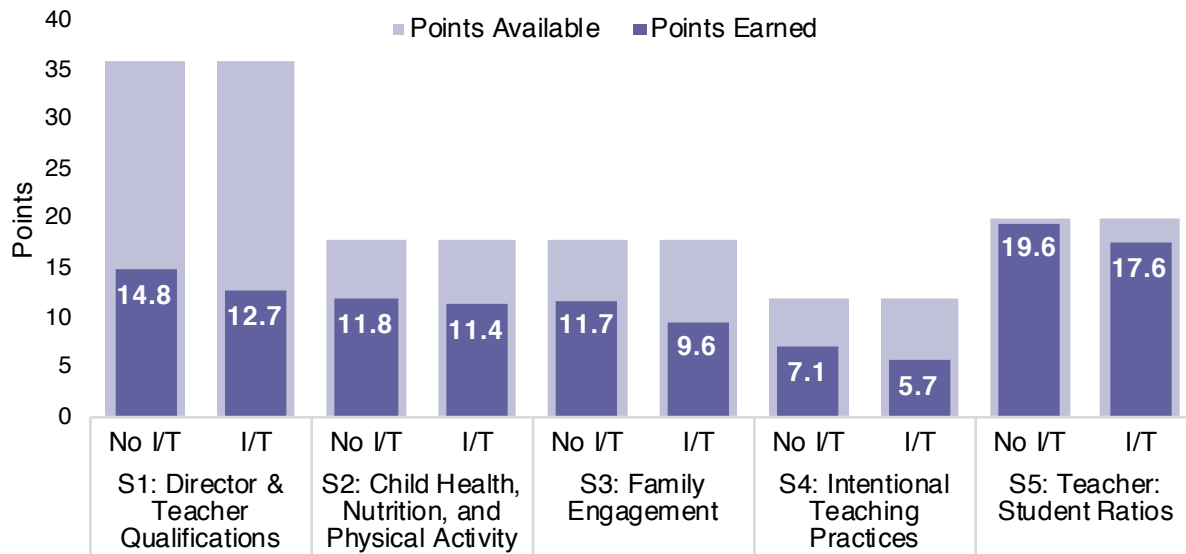


Note: Others were excluded from this comparison because very few Others served infants and/or toddlers (n=17), and FCCLHs were excluded because very few FCCLHs did not serve infants and/or toddlers (n=12).
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

In addition, CCLCs that did not serve infants and/or toddlers had significantly higher average ERS scores than programs that did serve infants and/or toddlers (see Figure C2).

**Figure C2.** Average ERS scores for CCLCs that did and did not serve infants and/or toddlers

*CCLCs that did not serve infants and/or toddlers had higher average ERS scores than programs that did serve infants and/or toddlers.*
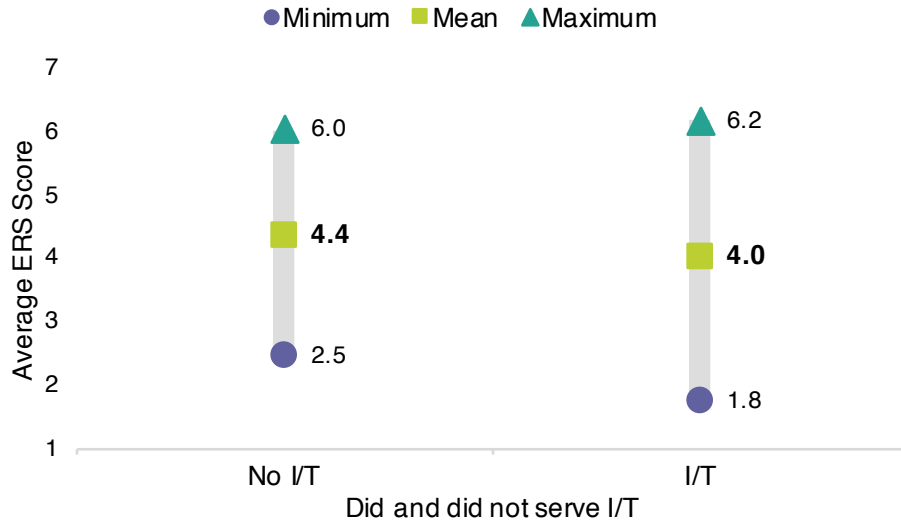


Note: Others were excluded from this comparison because very few Others served infants and/or toddlers (n=17), and FCCLHs were excluded because very few FCCLHs did not serve infants and/or toddlers (n=12).
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

## Appendix D: How did CCLCs that were and were not NAEYC-accredited earn points in Quality Rated?

Figure D1 shows the average scores on each of the five standards—as well as the available scores on the standard for CCLCs—by NAEYC accreditation status. CCLCs that were NAEYC-accredited scored significantly higher on every standard except for *Standard 2: Child Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity.* The difference in scores between NAEYC-accredited CCLCs and CCLCs without NAEYC accreditation was higher, especially in the *Director and Teacher Qualifications, Teacher: Student Ratios, and Intentional Teaching Practices* standards.

**Figure D1.** Average points earned on each standard for CCLCs with and without NAEYC accreditation

*CCLCs with NAEYC accreditation earned more points than CCLCs without NAEYC accreditation on almost every standard.*
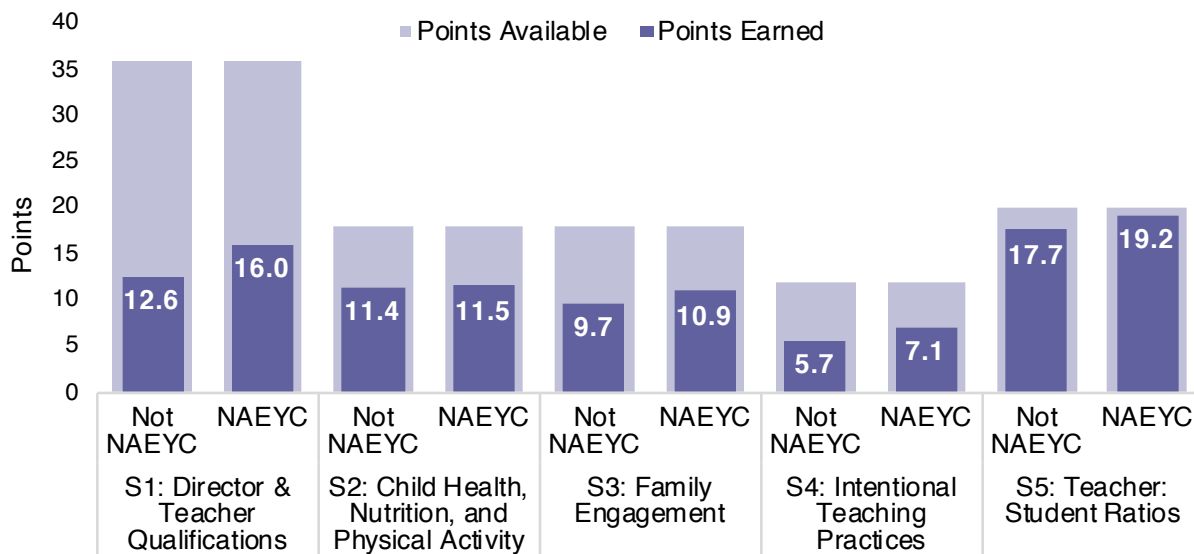


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

In addition, CCLCs that were NAEYC-accredited had significantly higher ERS scores than programs that were not (see Figure D2). The range of ERS scores was also smaller in programs with NAEYC accreditation, suggesting that quality may be slightly more consistent within the group of NAEYC-accredited CCLCs than in the group without NAEYC accreditation.

**Figure D2.** Average ERS scores among CCLCs with and without NAEYC accreditation

*CCLCs with NAEYC accreditation scored higher on the ERS than CCLCs without NAEYC accreditation.*
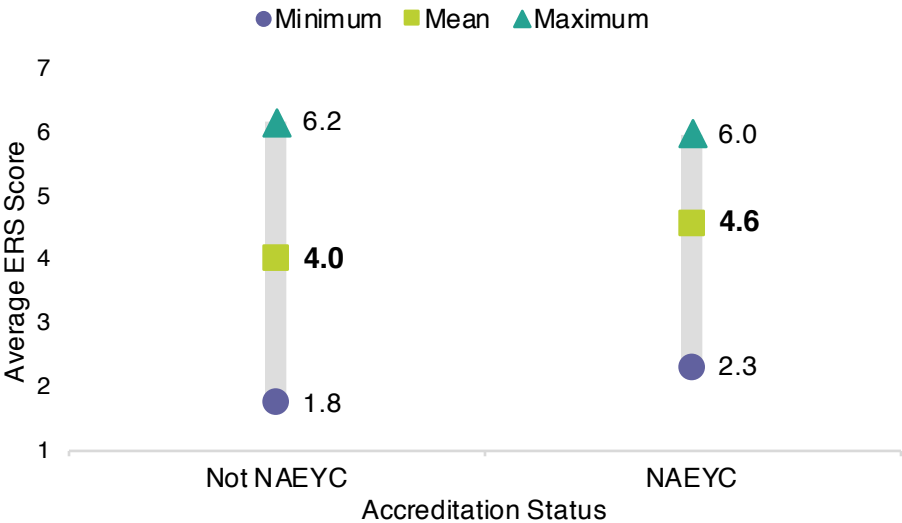


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

# Appendix E: Additional information about the length of time between each rating step in Quality Rated

Table E1 presents additional information about the lengths of time between each rating step in the Quality Rated process, such as sample sizes and ranges.

**Table E1.** Median, 10th–90th percentile range, and total range for days between each of DECAL's steps in the rating process

*The ranges for the length of time in each rating step were large across all program types.*

| Quality Rated Process Step | Program Type | Median | 10th–90th Percentile | Total Range |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Application Submitted to Portfolio Submitted | All Programs (n=1,646) | 373 | 162 - 960 | 13 – 2,042 |
| | CCLC (n=1,130) | 412 | 188 - 993 | 16 – 1,961 |
| | FCCLH (n=434) | 303 | 131 - 759 | 13 – 2,042 |
| | Others (n=82) | 461 | 142 - 775 | 19 - 961 |
| Portfolio Submitted to Portfolio Approved | All Programs (n=1,592) | 14 | 2 - 48 | 0 - 236 |
| | CCLC (n=1,079) | 14 | 2 - 47 | 0 - 236 |
| | FCCLH (n=432) | 15 | 2 - 60 | 0 - 152 |
| | Others (n=81) | 14 | 3 - 41 | 0 - 78 |
| Portfolio Approved to Completion of ERS | All Programs (n=1,456) | 54 | 20 - 87 | 1 - 442 |
| | CCLC (n=990) | 52 | 21 - 85 | 1 - 442 |
| | FCCLH (n=396) | 59 | 16 - 89 | 1 - 381 |
| | Others (n=70) | 59 | 21 - 98 | 3 - 152 |
| Completion of ERS to Rating | All Programs (n=1,572) | 47 | 21 - 73 | 1 - 259 |
| | CCLC (n=1,078) | 47 | 22 - 71 | 3 - 259 |
| | FCCLH (n=412) | 46 | 18 - 76 | 2 - 175 |
| | Others (n=82) | 55 | 25 - 77 | 1 - 105 |

Note: In the QR data system, a few programs (n=44) had portfolio approved dates after their rating date, due to changes in record keeping. Other observations were missing or out of order. These programs were excluded from these analyses.
Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

# Appendix F: How long did programs take to complete the rating process steps in Quality Rated?

DECAL has worked to increase the number of programs applying for Quality Rated and the speed at which portfolios are submitted. To further examine the effectiveness of their efforts, we calculated the medians and ranges for the steps in the rating process split into six-month intervals. The two most recent intervals were divided at August 8, 2017 due to a change in the Quality Rated system, which was intended to speed up the rating process.[a] As seen in Figure F1, the median days between application and portfolio submission rose steadily when Quality Rated was new, but dropped markedly at the start of 2015. After a discussion with DECAL, we learned that the decrease in the time for this step in the beginning of 2015 was likely due to a concerted effort on DECAL's part to encourage programs to submit their portfolios. It appears that effort was successful. See Table F1 for the sample sizes, median, and 10th–90th percentile range and total range of median days for each time interval.

**Table F1.** Median, 10th–90th percentile range, and total range for days between application submitted and portfolio submitted over time

*Programs took longer to submit the portfolio after applying to Quality Rated prior to 2015, and the ranges of median days between the application and portfolio submission were generally large.*

| Date Portfolio Submitted | Median | 10th–90th Percentile | Total Range |
|---|---|---|---|
| Before July 1, 2013 (n=211) | 284 | 120 - 455 | 34 - 542 |
| 2013: July through December (n=40) | 473 | 274 - 629 | 92 - 691 |
| 2014: January through June (n=115) | 541 | 247 - 783 | 89 - 890 |
| 2014: July through December (n=228) | 704 | 341 - 998 | 130 – 1,090 |
| 2015: January through June (n=229) | 265 | 116 – 1,019 | 16 – 1,183 |
| 2015: July through December (n=303) | 285 | 168 – 1,010 | 13 – 1,414 |
| 2016: January through June (n=117) | 330 | 139 - 772 | 19 – 1,554 |
| 2016: July through December (n=167) | 390 | 205 - 702 | 55 – 1,823 |
| 2017: January through March (n=97) | 361 | 148 - 866 | 40 – 1,821 |
| 2017: April through August 8 (n=76) | 517 | 241 - 1826 | 92 – 1,961 |
| 2017: August 9 through December (n=63) | 417 | 245 - 975 | 107 – 2,042 |

Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

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[a] A new feature was added to the Quality Rated system that asks programs to choose "black-out days" within the next 90 calendar days after they have completed their portfolio but before they submit their portfolio into the system. This change allowed Quality Rated staff to expedite scheduling observations and proceed through the rating process more quickly.

As seen in Tables F2, F3, and F4, the time between portfolio submission and program rating increased steadily in 2013 and 2014. It peaked in the beginning of 2015 and declined steadily since then.

**Table F2.** Median, 10th–90th percentile range, and total range for days between portfolio submitted and portfolio approved over time

*The median number of days between portfolio submission and approval has decreased since 2015.*

| Date Portfolio Submitted | Median | 10th–90th Percentile | Total Range |
|---|---|---|---|
| Before July 1, 2013 (n=204) | 11 | 0 - 87 | 0 - 152 |
| 2013: July through December (n=35) | 5 | 0 - 12 | 0 - 16 |
| 2014: January through June (n=108) | 15 | 2 - 26 | 0 - 236 |
| 2014: July through December (n=219) | 18 | 1 - 47 | 0 - 49 |
| 2015: January through June (n=216) | 22 | 3 - 68 | 0 - 98 |
| 2015: July through December (n=295) | 18 | 7 - 41 | 1 - 68 |
| 2016: January through June (n=115) | 14 | 4 - 49 | 0 - 61 |
| 2016: July through December (n=164) | 12 | 4 - 35 | 0 - 42 |
| 2017: January through March (n=97) | 12 | 5 - 23 | 3 - 29 |
| 2017: April through August 8 (n=76) | 7 | 3 - 19 | 2 - 68 |
| 2017: August 9 through December (n=63) | 5 | 1 - 8 | 0 - 21 |

Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

**Table F3.** Median, 10th–90th percentile range, and total range for days between portfolio approved and completion of observations over time

*The median number of days between portfolio approval and the end of ERS observations has decreased since 2015.*

| Date Portfolio Submitted | Median | 10th–90th Percentile | Total Range |
|---|---|---|---|
| Before July 1, 2013 (n=149) | 30 | 8 - 82 | 1 - 442 |
| 2013: July through December (n=34) | 51 | 21 - 91 | 14 - 265 |
| 2014: January through June (n=99) | 60 | 27 - 115 | 4 - 214 |
| 2014: July through December (n=188) | 66 | 29 - 91 | 8 - 169 |
| 2015: January through June (n=206) | 65 | 28 - 92 | 4 - 207 |
| 2015: July through December (n=283) | 63 | 22 - 87 | 8 - 210 |
| 2016: January through June (n=105) | 42 | 14 - 79 | 6 - 98 |
| 2016: July through December (n=161) | 48 | 21 - 81 | 10 - 133 |
| 2017: January through March (n=95) | 48 | 26 - 77 | 10 - 90 |
| 2017: April through August 8 (n=73) | 42 | 16 - 78 | 7 - 108 |
| 2017: August 9 through December (n=62) | 35 | 19 - 62 | 8 - 67 |

Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

**Table F4.** Median, 10th–90th percentile range, and total range for days between observations completed and program rated over time

*The median number of days between the end of the observations and the rating has decreased since 2015.*

| Date Portfolio Submitted | Median | 10th–90th Percentile | Total Range |
|---|---|---|---|
| Before July 1, 2013 (n=210) | 34 | 10 - 61 | 2 - 175 |
| 2013: July through December (n=39) | 29 | 14 - 71 | 13 - 112 |
| 2014: January through June (n=108) | 36 | 11 - 63 | 1 - 154 |
| 2014: July through December (n=197) | 64 | 40 - 82 | 6 - 115 |
| 2015: January through June (n=218) | 64 | 35 - 83 | 13 - 259 |
| 2015: July through December (n=290) | 53 | 28 - 71 | 11 - 196 |
| 2016: January through June (n=114) | 51 | 35 - 73 | 10 - 120 |
| 2016: July through December (n=165) | 41 | 27 - 55 | 7 - 141 |
| 2017: January through March (n=95) | 48 | 35 - 55 | 15 - 58 |
| 2017: April through August 8 (n=73) | 33 | 17 - 49 | 12 - 57 |
| 2017: August 9 through December (n=62) | 25 | 13 - 37 | 8 - 52 |

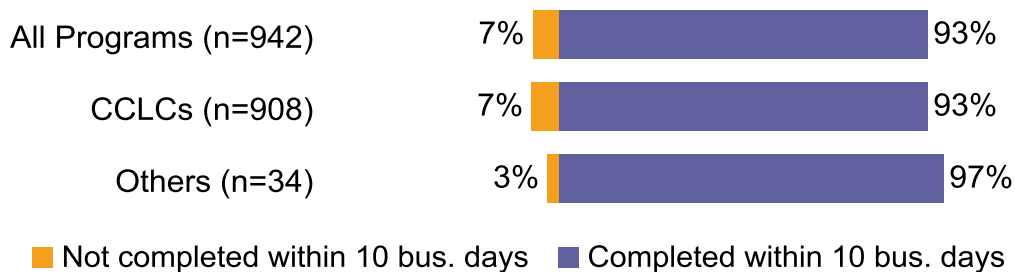Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

# Appendix G: Time between first and last ERS observations among programs that needed multiple ERS observations

Over half (57 percent) of programs required more than one observation, because they had both preschool and infant/toddler classrooms and/or because they had a large number of classrooms (note that one-third of each type of classroom is observed as part of the rating). Therefore, this analysis excludes programs that only required one observation as part of their rating, such as FCCLHs and some small CCLCs and Others. The Quality Rated program manual specifies that programs will have all ERS observations completed within 10 business days.

As shown in Figure G1, almost all (93 percent) of programs had all ERS observations completed by DECAL within 10 business days. This percentage was slightly higher for Others (97 percent) than CCLCs (93 percent). See Appendix F for a breakdown of the percentage of programs that did and did not have all ERS observations completed within 10 business days by six-month intervals.

**Figure G1.** Percentage of programs that did and did not have all ERS observations completed within 10 business days

*Almost all programs that needed multiple ERS observations had them completed by DECAL within 10 business days.*

| | Not completed within 10 bus. days | Completed within 10 bus. days |
|---|---|---|
| All Programs (n=942) | 7% | 93% |
| CCLCs (n=908) | 7% | 93% |
| Others (n=34) | 3% | 97% |

Note: Excludes programs that only required one ERS observation as part of the rating process, such as FCCLHs and some CCLCs and Others.
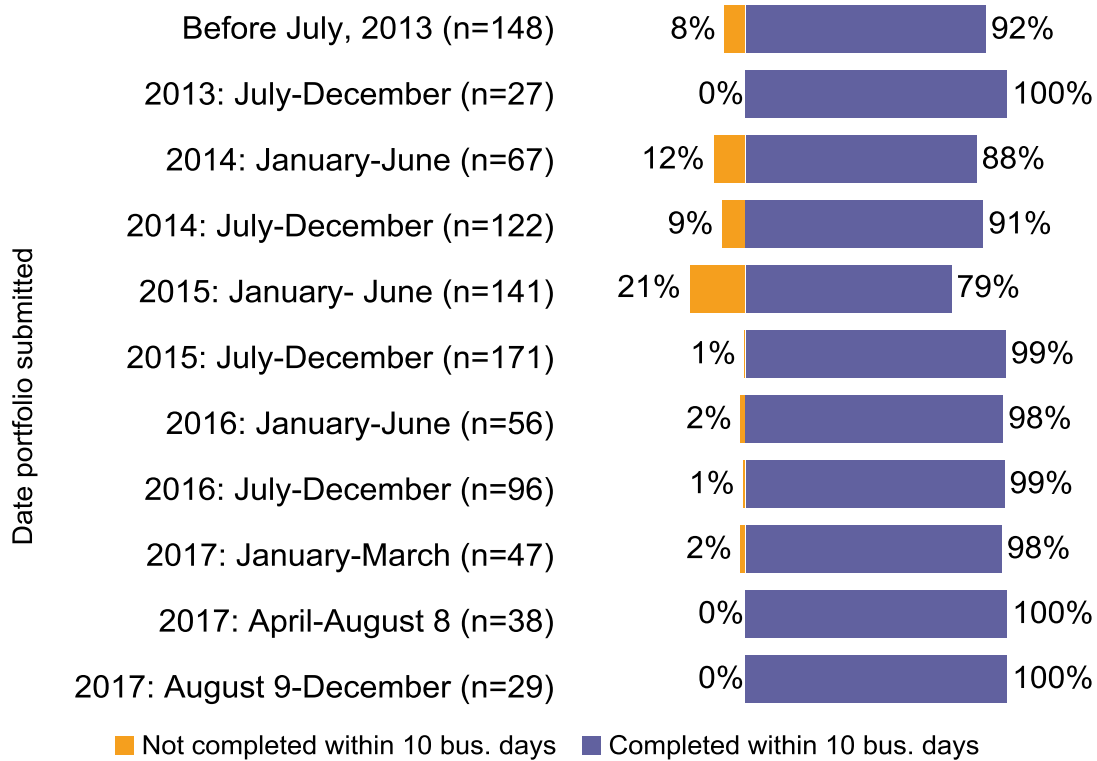Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

To learn more about the rate at which DECAL conducted multiple ERS observations at programs, we examined the percentage of programs that had multiple ERS observations conducted within the promised window of 10 business days over six-month intervals.[a] The percentage of programs that had their ERS observations (if they needed more than one) completed within 10 business days dropped to a low of 83 percent between July 1, 2015 and January 1, 2016 and has risen to 100 percent during the last two periods in 2017 (see Figure G2).

**Figure G2.** Percentage of programs that did and did not have all ERS observations completed within 10 business days, over time

*The percentage of programs that had their ERS observations completed within 10 business days has almost always been high.*



Note: Excludes programs that only required one ERS observation as part of the rating process, such as FCCLHs and some CCLCs and Others.
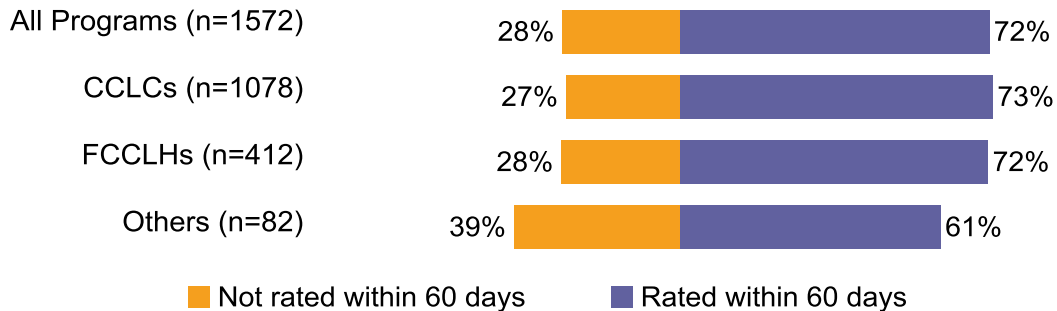Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

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[a] The two most recent intervals were divided at August 8, 2017 due to a change in the Quality Rated system.

# Appendix H: Percentage of programs that were rated within 60 days of their final ERS observation

The Quality Rated program manual specifies that programs will receive their rating within 60 calendar days of their final ERS observation. As seen in Figure H1, a large majority of programs (72 percent) met this criterion. Others were less likely to be rated within 60 days of the final ERS observation (61 percent) than FCCLHs (72 percent) and CCLCs (73 percent).

**Figure H1.** Percentage of programs that were and were not rated within 60 days of their final ERS observation

*Nearly three-quarters of programs were rated within 60 days of their final ERS.*

| | Not rated within 60 days | Rated within 60 days |
|---|---|---|
| All Programs (n=1572) | 28% | 72% |
| CCLCs (n=1078) | 27% | 73% |
| FCCLHs (n=412) | 28% | 72% |
| Others (n=82) | 39% | 61% |

Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

We explored the percentage of programs that did and did not receive their rating within 60 calendar days of their final ERS observation over six-month intervals.[a] As seen in Figure H2, at the end of 2014 and beginning of 2015, the percentage of programs for which this criterion was met was low. However, DECAL rated all (100 percent) programs within 60 calendar days of their final ERS observation during the entirety of 2017.

**Figure H2.** Percentage of programs that were and were not rated within 60 days of their final ERS observation, over time

*After the ERS observations are completed, the percentage of programs rated within 60 calendar days was low in 2014 and 2015 and has risen to 100 percent in 2017.*
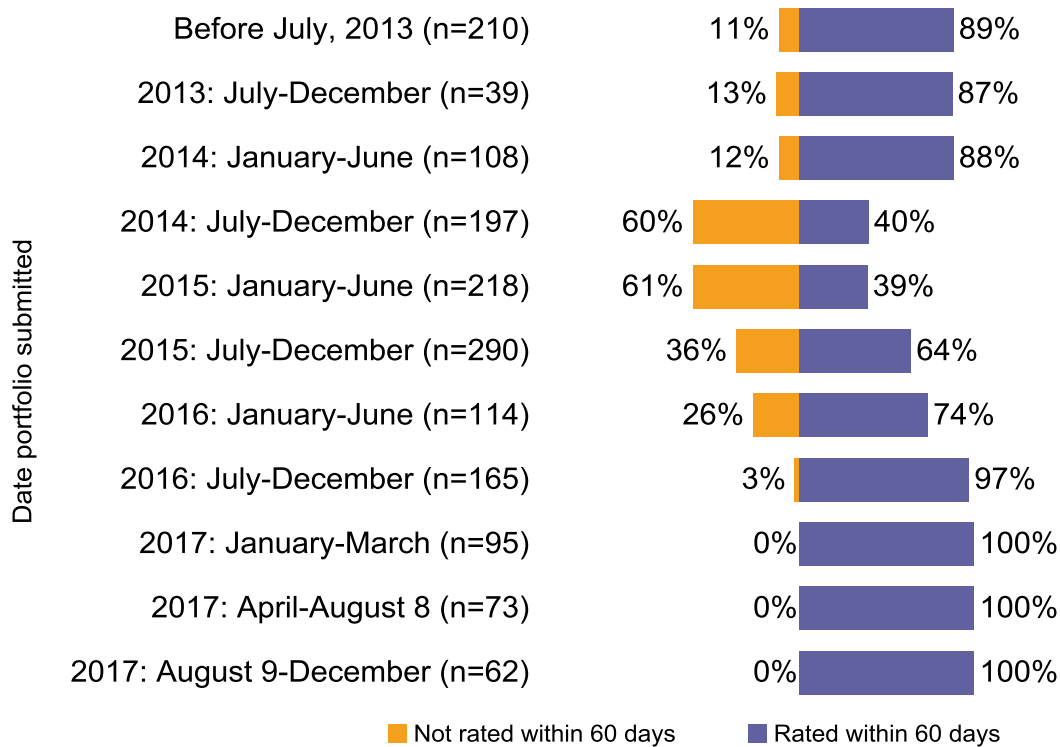


Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017

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[a] The two most recent intervals were divided at August 8, 2017 due to a change in the Quality Rated system.

# Appendix I: What star rating did programs receive when they were re-rated?

Table I1 shows the number of programs at each initial rating that earned a certain second rating. The diagonal of the table shows the programs that maintained their rating; beneath the diagonal shows programs that decreased in rating, and above shows programs that increased in rating.

**Table I1.** Number of programs that earned a certain second rating when re-rated by their first rating

*Programs rated 0- or 1-star tended to earn a higher rating when re-rated than 2-star programs.*

| | | Second Rating | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **0-star** | **1-star** | **2-star** | **3-star** |
| **Initial Rating** | **0-star** | 1 | 12 | 11 | 1 |
| | **1-star** | 7 | 43 | 56 | 17 |
| | **2-star** | 1 | 26 | 80 | 48 |
| | **3-star** | 1 | 3 | 27 | 41 |

Source: DECAL's administrative data as of December 31, 2017