ARC 0702D

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT[441]

Notice of Intended Action

Proposing rulemaking related to child care quality rating system and providing an opportunity for public comment

The Department of Health and Human Services hereby proposes to rescind Chapter 118, "Child Care Quality Rating System," Iowa Administrative Code, and to adopt a new Chapter 118 with the same title.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code chapter 237A and section 234.6.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code section 237A.30.

Purpose and Summary

This proposed chapter was reviewed as part of the Red Tape Review process laid out by Executive Order 10. As a result of this review, restrictive terms were removed, areas that were duplicative were combined or eliminated, and editorial updates were made to processes and procedures to ensure they reflect current policies and procedures. This proposed rulemaking implements 2026 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2488, section 27, by establishing rules for a voluntary child care quality rating system, which is designed for child care programs that primarily serve children between birth and the age of 12.

The reference to Iowa Code section 237A.30 is to that section as amended by 2026 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2488, section 27.

Regulatory Analysis

A Regulatory Analysis for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on September 16, 2026. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- October 6, 2026

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Department for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 441—Chapter 2504.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this proposed rulemaking, which must be received by the Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 1, 2026. Comments should be directed to:

Victoria L. Daniels
Department of Health and Human Services
Lucas State Office Building

321 East 12th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Phone: 515.829.6021
Email: compliancerules@hhs.iowa.gov

Public Hearing

Public hearings at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

December 1, 2026 10 to 10:30 a.m.	Microsoft Teams Meeting ID: 225 217 179 078 528 Passcode: Rw3KT9yE
December 1, 2026 2 to 2:30 p.m.	Microsoft Teams Meeting ID: 263 899 623 991 883 Passcode: qy9g7WW7

Persons who wish to make oral comments at a public hearing may be asked to state their names for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of this proposed rulemaking.

Any persons who intend to attend a public hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact the Department and advise of specific needs.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its regular monthly meeting or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rulemaking action is proposed:

ITEM 1. Rescind 441—Chapter 118 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 118
CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM

441—118.1(237A) Definitions.

"All staff" means program administrator or director, assistant program administrator or assistant director, on-site supervisor, lead teacher, and staff counted as part of the staff-to-child ratio.

"Assessment tool" means a tool approved by the department used to gather and provide critical information about a child's educational growth and development to educators, parents, guardians, and caretakers.

"Assistant program administrator" or *"assistant director"* means the staff member working directly under the administrator or director and assisting with program planning and managing, marketing, and directing the child care facility.

"Child and Adult Care Food Program" or *"CACFP"* means a federal United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program that provides a subsidy for serving nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled at participating child care centers, homes, and adult day care centers. CACFP also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in after-school care programs, children residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in adult day care facilities.

"Child care experience" means knowledge and skills learned through employment in a licensed child care center, a school-aged only program, a preschool, a registered child development home or as a child care home provider.

"Child care facility" means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 237A.1.

"Child care resource and referral" or *"CCR&R"* means the statewide agency focused on supporting quality child care throughout the state of Iowa. CCR&R serves as the starting point for all IQ4K applications and provides free technical assistance and consultation to providers throughout the IQ4K application process.

"Child development associate credential" or *"CDA"* means a nationally recognized credential earned by individuals working in the early child care and education field.

"Child development home" means the same as defined in Iowa Code section 237A.1.

"ChildNet certification" means verified completion of the ChildNet training series.

"ChildNet training" means the training series offered through CCR&R focused on areas specifically designed for child development home providers.

"Child nutrition programs" or *"CNPs"* means federally funded programs administered by the federal Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA).

"Classroom assessment scoring system" or *"CLASS"* means an observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based classrooms.

"Co-provider" means a second approved provider in a Category C registered child development home as described in Iowa Code section 237A.3A(3)*"a."*

"Curriculum" means a written plan that outlines how students shall be taught. The curriculum consists of the plans for the learning experiences through which children acquire knowledge, skills, abilities, and understanding. The curriculum may include lessons, instructional materials, teaching techniques, or activities.

"Developmental screening tool" means a research-based questionnaire or checklist that asks questions about a child's development, including, at a minimum, movement, thinking, behavior and emotions.

"Early childhood-positive behavioral interventions and supports" or *"EC-PBIS"* means a framework of evidence-based practices that adults can use to build strong relationships with children and families, improve the predictability within the adults' classrooms and respond appropriately and effectively to challenging behaviors.

"EC-PBIS leadership team" means a team of facility staff, including, at minimum, the program administrator, teacher(s) and a coach, that is responsible for guiding the programwide process and making decisions on how to support implementation of the EC-PBIS practices.

"EC-PBIS module training" means a department-approved training series for staff working directly with young children on universal practices, targeted strategies and individualized interventions to reduce challenging behavior.

"Environment rating scale" or *"ERS"* means a set of early childhood tools or scales developed through the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"ERS assessment" means an evaluation conducted through an on-site observation of an early childhood care and education classroom or program using one of the environmental rating scales. The assessment is completed by a trained assessor and administered by entities approved by the department.

"ERS improvement plan" or *"improvement plan"* means the approved action plan created by a program or classroom to lay out ideas for improving program quality.

"ERS scoresheet" means the form used to evaluate and score a program or classroom based on the ERS items and indicators.

"Facility" means a licensed child care center, a preschool, a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school, or a registered child development home.

"Full-time child care experience" means knowledge and skills learned through employment or volunteer work, at least 30 hours per week or 130 hours per month, in a licensed child care center, a school-aged only program, a preschool, or a registered child development home or as a child care home provider.

"Health and safety checklist for early care and education programs" or *"ECE"* means the nationally recognized quality assessment tool, conducted by a child care nurse consultant or another designee as approved by the department.

"Iowa early care and education program administrator roles career pathway" means the statewide professional development tool available on the department's website that assists early childhood center administrators or other early childhood leaders develop a personal professional development plan as an early childhood educator.

"Iowa early learning standards" or *"IELS"* means a comprehensive resource tool developed to support and enhance children's learning and development.

"i-PoWeR" means Iowa's early childhood and school age care professional workforce registry. It is a web-based workforce registry that houses information including completed professional development.

"IQ4K" or *"Iowa Quality for Kids"* or *"IQ4K QRIS"* means Iowa's voluntary quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for licensed child care centers and preschools, registered child development homes and programs operating under an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

"IQ4K application" means the online application for IQ4K found on the department website.

"IQ4K teaching staff qualifications worksheet" means the tool used to calculate an average score in the area of teaching staff qualification using a combination of the educational background and related work experience of identified teaching staff members.

"Lead teacher" means the staff member responsible for providing a safe and developmentally appropriate classroom that complies with legislation, policies, and procedures.

"Meals" means any breakfasts, lunches, snacks and suppers the child care program serves to children while in care.

"National administrator credential" or *"NAC"* means the 40-hour comprehensive training for child care and education administrators and successful completion of the certification process offered through the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) Commission.

"National School Lunch Program" or *"NSLP"* means a federal CNP operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions.

"On-site supervisor" means the individual responsible for the daily supervision of the program who must be on site daily, either during the hours of operation that children are present or at a minimum of eight hours of the program's hours of operation.

"Practitioner coach" means the staff member, identified by the program administrator, responsible for coaching classroom teachers on implementation of the EC-PBIS policies and practices.

"Professional development" means continuing education and career training offered by a department-approved training organization to child care and education providers to help the child care and education providers develop new skills, stay up to date on current trends, and advance the child care and education providers' careers.

"Professional development plan" means the individualized plan used to improve knowledge and skills.

"Program" refers to the complete operation of an eligible facility applying for an IQ4K rating.

"Program administrator or director" means a department-approved staff member responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a child care program.

"Programwide PBIS training" or *"PW PBIS training"* means the training for leadership teams of classroom-based early childhood programs.

"Provider" means the person or program that applies for registration to provide child care and is approved as a child development home.

"School-aged only program" means an eligible facility providing care to children aged 5 through 12 when school is not in session, including before school, after school, out-of-school days during the school year, and summer break.

"Self-assessment" means an evaluation of current program policies, practices, and procedures in comparison to best-practice standards based on the most up-to-date research.

"Specialized track" means a modified IQ4K application for eligible applicants who have successfully provided adequate documentation of current verification and certification in one of the department's preapproved specialized track areas.

"Staff" means any individual employed by and working at the facility.

"Teacher" means any staff member working under the supervision of a lead teacher or other licensed personnel who has the ultimate responsibility for the design and implementation of education and related service programs. Other terms used may include paraprofessional, educational aide, associate, or instructional aide.

"Teaching staff" means all staff members who are considered persons counted as a part of the minimum ratio of staff to children as outlined in 441—subrule 109.8(2).

441—118.2(237A) IQ4K rating. Applicants shall apply for an IQ4K rating by completing the appropriate application and submitting all required supporting documentation.

118.2(1) *Eligibility.* All programs must meet and maintain all regulatory requirements in order to be eligible to apply for IQ4K. All programs must have, at minimum, one child regularly and actively enrolled in order to be eligible to apply for IQ4K.

118.2(2) *Application for IQ4K.* All applications must be accessed, completed, and submitted to the applicant's designated CCR&R representative through the IQ4K application located on the department's website.

441—118.3(237A) Application effective date. The effective date of an approved IQ4K application will be determined as listed in these subrules.

118.3(1) *New or nonrated applicant, levels 1 through 4.* The application effective date will be the day the department certifies the application is complete and makes the appropriate award determination.

118.3(2) *New or nonrated applicant, level 5.* The application effective date will be the day the department confirms the program's scores on the ERS and subsequently makes the appropriate award determination.

118.3(3) *Currently rated applicant, levels 1 through 4.* If the program's new application is submitted and approved prior to the IQ4K expiration date, the new application's effective date will be the first day of the month following the program's current expiration date.

118.3(4) *Currently rated applicant, level 5.* If the program's new application is submitted and approved 30 calendar days prior to the IQ4K expiration date, the new application's effective date will be the first day of the month following the program's current expiration date.

a. If the program's new application is not submitted 30 calendar days prior to the IQ4K expiration date, the new application effective date will be the day the department confirms the program's scores on the ERS and subsequently makes the appropriate award determination.

b. If the ERS process is not complete by the time of the program's IQ4K expiration date, the program's IQ4K rating will expire and the program will not have an IQ4K rating until the ERS process is complete and the program applies for a new IQ4K rating.

118.3(5) *Currently rated applicant, mid-rating increase to levels 2 through 4.* The application effective date will be the day the department certifies the application is complete and makes the appropriate award determination.

118.3(6) *Currently rated applicant, mid-rating increase to level 5.* The application effective date will be the day the department confirms the program's scores on the ERS and subsequently makes the appropriate award determination.

118.3(7) *Forfeited applications.* The effective date of a program whose assessment opportunity has been forfeited will be the date the department determined the assessment opportunity was forfeited.

441—118.4(237A) Approved program's expiration date. An approved program's IQ4K expiration date will be the last day of the month, two years from the application's effective date.

441—118.5(237A) Renewal application submission, levels 1 through 4. Eligible applicants may submit an application for IQ4K renewal up to 45 calendar days in advance of the current IQ4K expiration date.

441—118.6(237A) Renewal application submission, level 5. Eligible applicants may submit an application for IQ4K renewal up to 60 calendar days in advance of the current IQ4K expiration date.

441—118.7(237A) Increased rating. Currently rated IQ4K programs may submit an application for a higher quality rating no sooner than 12 months after the effective date of the current IQ4K certificate.

441—118.8(237A) Change in location of facility. If the location of a rated program changes, the program must notify the department. The program's current IQ4K rating will be invalid, and the program must submit a new application. The department will make a new determination of the appropriate rating for the new location.

441—118.9(237A) Ongoing eligibility. All applicants awarded an IQ4K certification level must continue to meet all eligibility requirements of the awarded level throughout the entire certification period. Noncompliance with regulatory requirements or with IQ4K criteria can result in revocation of rating and not being eligible to apply for or renew the program's rating. Provisionally licensed programs are not eligible to apply for IQ4K participation.

441—118.10(237A) Monitoring. Programs awarded an IQ4K rating shall agree to scheduled on-site and virtual program monitoring by the department or the department's designee to confirm and review compliance with criteria of awarded IQ4K rating.

441—118.11(237A) Professional development training. Only training taken from a department-approved training organization will be accepted toward professional training requirements. Secondary education credits will count as one secondary education credit equaling 15 training hours based on ages of the children served in the program. Approved training must be verified in i-PoWeR to count toward professional development training requirements.

441—118.12(237A) Rating standards for a child care center, a preschool, or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To participate in IQ4K QRIS, a child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school shall certify that the accredited school district's or nonpublic school's facility meets the applicable criteria as defined in these rules.

118.12(1) An eligible applicant providing adequate documentation of current verification or certification in one of the preapproved specialized track areas shall only be required to satisfy the criteria outlined in the application consistent with the eligible applicant's specialized track.

118.12(2) A program with more than one classroom shall not be eligible to apply using a specialized track application unless over 50 percent of the program's eligible classrooms meet the specialized track requirements.

118.12(3) An eligible applicant shall be able to earn credit for participation in more than one of the specialized track areas.

441—118.13(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 1 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a level 1, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in level 1 or complete all of the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks.

118.13(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. All staff members who prepare meals shall complete one of the department-approved food safety trainings.

b. A department-approved self-assessment and action plan in the area of nutrition shall be completed for an eligible facility.

c. A department-approved self-assessment and action plan in the area of physical activity shall be completed for an eligible facility.

118.13(2) *Professional development.*

a. All staff shall complete a professional development plan within six months of each person's hiring date and shall update the plan annually.

b. All staff shall complete one of the department-identified new staff orientation courses and must provide a valid certificate of completion. Newly hired staff shall have nine months from date of hire to complete this requirement.

118.13(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall provide an orientation meeting for new families that meets department criteria.

b. The program shall complete one annual activity that promotes partnerships from the department's approved list.

118.13(4) *Teaching staff qualifications.* All lead teachers shall show participation in the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway tier 1 within six months of starting employment.

118.13(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program administrator and at least one lead teacher shall complete two hours of department-approved training on the Iowa early learning standards.

b. The program shall develop and implement a comprehensive discipline and behavior policy that promotes positive relationships that meet department criteria.

118.13(6) *Environment.*

a. The program shall develop and implement, as applicable to ages served, policies that meet department criteria for the following areas:

(1) Supervision.

(2) Safe sleep.

(3) Playground equipment stability and fall surfacing and inspection.

(4) Missing child.

(5) Sign in and out tracking system for children and visitors.

b. The program shall submit to the department one of the following annually:

(1) IQ4K Interaction and Relationship Self-Assessment form, which shall be completed by teaching staff.

(2) CLASS assessment form prescribed by the department for the age level being served, which shall be completed for each classroom by a trained observer.

(3) Teaching pyramid observation tool form prescribed by the department or teacher pyramid infant toddler observation scale assessment tools for infants and toddlers, which shall be completed for each classroom by a trained observer.

118.13(7) *Leadership and administration.*

a. All staff shall complete the IQ4K staff self-assessment annually.

b. The program administrator shall complete the IQ4K program assessment annually.

441—118.14(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 2 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a level 2, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in levels 1 and 2 or complete all of the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1 and 2.

118.14(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP.

(2) The program shall complete all of the following as applicable to ages served:

1. Program staff and their supervisor planning the menu shall complete the CACFP Steps to Success module 2 lessons as identified by the department that cover the CACFP meal pattern.

2. Infant lead teachers and their supervisor shall review the video "CACFP Child Care Center Infant Staff Training" or "Iowa CACFP Infant Training—Steps to Success module 15" as provided by the department.

3. All lead teachers and their supervisors responsible for mealtime supervision shall complete the CACFP child care center staff training or the Iowa CACFP wellness module—meaningful mealtimes.

b. The program shall identify and implement one physical activity goal from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.14(2) *Professional development.*

a. All staff who administer medication shall complete the medication administration skills competency course or other training as approved by the department and hold a valid certification of completion.

b. All staff who administer medication shall also successfully complete a competency skills evaluation assessment checklist or department-approved equivalent and hold a valid certification of completion. There shall be one person who meets these criteria present on site in the program at all times.

c. All teaching staff shall complete ten annual training hours of professional development.

118.14(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall offer one conference with each family per year to discuss each child's progress, strengths, and needs in all developmental areas and to share child assessment information with the child's family.

b. The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes partnerships.

118.14(4) *Teaching staff qualifications.* All lead teachers shall complete approved trainings toward a CDA or shall meet a higher tier qualification on the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway.

118.14(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall use a curriculum that is aligned with the Iowa early learning standards, addresses the multiple domain areas, and is specific to the ages of the children the program serves.

b. The program shall develop and implement a department-approved policy that eliminates or severely limits expulsion, suspension, and punitive or other exclusionary discipline.

c. The program shall develop and implement policies meeting department criteria regarding the use of an approved developmental screening tool for all children within 60 days of enrollment and at least annually to identify children who may need additional evaluation and intervention strategies.

118.14(6) *Environment.*

a. The program administrator shall complete one ERS training and provide a certificate of completion, choosing among:

(1) Compass—a guide to quality infant/toddler environments;

(2) Compass—a guide to quality preschool environments; or

(3) Compass—a guide to quality school age environments.

b. The program shall provide a welcoming environment to all children and families.

c. The program shall develop and implement a tobacco-free and nicotine-free policy that meets department criteria.

118.14(7) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall complete and annually update the IQ4K quality improvement action plan.

b. All staff shall receive a written evaluation at least once a year.

c. The program administrator shall have at least two years of full-time experience working in the field.

441—118.15(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 3 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a level 3, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in levels 1, 2 and 3 or complete all of the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2 and 3.

118.15(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed department-approved action plan in level 1.

1. Programs providing adequate documentation that the programs provide care for four hours a day or less are exempt from the CACFP or NSLP participation requirement.

2. Nonprofit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if the programs provide adequate documentation that meets one of the following criteria:

- The percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is 5 percent or less.
- The program's licensed capacity is 30 or less.
- The program serves two or fewer meals or snacks per day.
- The program is open and operating three days a week or less.

3. For-profit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if the for-profit programs are able to provide adequate documentation that the percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is 25 percent or less.

b. The program shall identify and implement two physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.15(2) *Professional development.*

a. All teaching staff shall complete ten annual training hours of professional development.

b. Sixty percent or more of all lead teachers shall complete the universal practices EC-PBIS module trainings based on the age groups served.

118.15(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall promote culturally sensitive practices and procedures.

b. The program shall complete one additional activity annually that promotes partnerships from the approved department list.

118.15(4) *Teaching staff qualifications.* The average score for all lead teachers shall be three points or more on the IQ4K teaching staff qualifications worksheet.

118.15(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall utilize an appropriate department-approved assessment tool throughout the year that aligns with the curriculum to gather information on each child's strengths, progress, and needs.

b. The program shall share community resources with families as needed based on the information gathered from the child's assessment.

c. The program shall develop and implement policies and procedures meeting department criteria for inclusive practices for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.15(6) *Environment.*

a. Thirty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete an appropriate ERS training as applicable to ages served and provide a certificate of completion, choosing among:

(1) Compass—a guide to quality infant/toddler environments;

(2) Compass—a guide to quality preschool environments; or

(3) Compass—a guide to quality school age environments.

b. The program shall participate in the completion of the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

c. The program shall develop and implement a departmentally approved policy regarding oral health.

118.15(7) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall complete one of the following:

(1) NAC or another department-approved credential.

(2) A minimum of 30 training hours in early childhood and 10 training hours or more in leadership, administration, or management.

b. The program administrator shall have one of the following:

(1) Three years or more of full-time experience working in the field; or

(2) One year or more of full-time experience as a program administrator.

441—118.16(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 4 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a level 4,

an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 or complete all of the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

118.16(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement one nutrition goal from the completed action plan in level 1.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement three nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

b. The program shall identify and implement three physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.16(2) *Professional development.*

a. All teaching staff shall complete 12 annual hours or more of professional development.

b. Sixty percent or more of all lead teachers shall complete the targeted strategies and individualized interventions EC-PBIS training modules based on the age groups served.

118.16(3) *Family and community partnerships.* The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes partnerships.

118.16(4) *Teaching staff qualifications.* The average score for all teaching staff shall be four points or more on the IQ4K teaching staff qualification worksheet.

118.16(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The teaching staff shall use assessment data and information gathered about children and families to make changes to further support the children's learning environment and activities.

b. The teaching staff shall participate in planning with families and outside experts, as needed, for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, and specialized health needs.

118.16(6) *Environment.*

a. Sixty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete an appropriate ERS training as applicable to ages served and provide a certificate of completion, choosing among:

(1) Compass—a guide to quality infant/toddler environments;

(2) Compass—a guide to quality preschool environments; or

(3) Compass—a guide to quality school age environments.

b. One-third of all classrooms shall complete the ERS scoresheet with self-assessment and improvement plan using a minimum of one classroom per scale, if applicable.

c. The program shall score an average of 2.5 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.16(7) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall meet the Iowa early care and education program administrator roles career pathway tier 1 or higher.

b. The program administrator shall have two or more years of full-time experience as a program administrator.

441—118.17(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 5 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

118.17(1) *Criteria for each category.* To be rated at level 5, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. To be rated at a level 5, an eligible facility must also meet the following criteria:

a. Minimum score. The facility must earn a minimum score of 5.0 in each assessed classroom on the appropriate ERS.

b. Approved assessor. An assessor approved by the department must perform an environment rating assessment.

c. Number of classrooms assessed. At least one-third of the facility's classrooms must be assessed, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility.

d. Time frame for assessment. Programs eligible for ERS assessment must undergo their assessment within 90 days of department approval unless an extension is requested and approved by the department.

e. Assessments not done timely. Programs that do not undergo their assessment within 90 days of approval by the department or do not receive an approved extension from the department will forfeit their opportunity for an assessment.

118.17(2) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement four nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

b. The program shall identify and implement four physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.17(3) *Professional development.* All teaching staff shall complete 12 annual hours or more of professional development.

118.17(4) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes partnerships.

b. The program shall offer one additional conference with each family of preschool age children in care, per year, to discuss each child's progress, strengths, and needs in all developmental areas. Assessment information shall be shared with the family.

118.17(5) *Teaching staff qualifications.* The average score for all teaching staff shall be eight points or more on the IQ4K teaching staff qualification worksheet.

118.17(6) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The teaching staff shall work with families and other experts to implement instructional and environmental adaptations that support learning for each child, including those with diverse needs, identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral health needs and specialized health needs.

b. The leadership team shall complete PW PBIS training. A leadership team must include an administrator, practitioner, coach, and teacher.

118.17(7) *Environment.*

a. Eighty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete an appropriate ERS training, as applicable to ages served, and provide a certificate of completion to the department, by choosing among:

(1) Compass—a guide to quality infant/toddler environments;

(2) Compass—a guide to quality preschool environments; or

(3) Compass—a guide to quality school age environments.

b. One-third of all classrooms shall receive an overall score of five or higher on each classroom's ERS assessment when using a minimum of one classroom per scale, if applicable.

c. The program shall score an average of 2.75 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.17(8) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall meet the Iowa early care and education program administrator roles career pathway tier 2 or higher.

b. The program administrator shall have three or more years of full-time experience as a program administrator.

441—118.18(237A) Rating standards for school-aged only programs.

118.18(1) To participate in IQ4K QRIS, a school-aged only program shall certify that its facility meets the applicable criteria as defined in these rules.

118.18(2) The following program requirements apply:

a. Eligible applicants providing adequate documentation of current verification or certification in one of the preapproved specialized track areas shall only be required to satisfy the criteria outlined in the application consistent with the eligible applicants' specialized track.

b. Programs with more than one classroom shall not be eligible to apply using a specialized track application unless over 50 percent of their eligible classrooms meet the specialized track requirements.

c. Eligible applicants are able to earn credit for participation in more than one of the specialized track areas.

441—118.19(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 1 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a level 1, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in level 1 or complete all of the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks.

118.19(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program administrator and any staff members who prepare meals shall complete one of the department-approved food safety trainings.

b. A department-approved self-assessment and action plan in the area of nutrition shall be completed for an eligible facility.

c. A department-approved self-assessment and action plan in the area of physical activity shall be completed for an eligible facility.

118.19(2) *Professional development.*

a. All staff shall complete a professional development plan within six months of each person's hiring date and update the plan annually.

b. All staff shall complete one of the department-identified new staff orientation courses and must provide a valid certificate of completion. Newly hired staff shall have nine months from date of hire to complete this requirement.

118.19(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall provide an orientation for new families meeting department criteria.

b. The program shall complete one annual activity that promotes partnerships from the department-approved list.

118.19(4) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall provide assistance or access to tutors to support homework or students' learning needs.

b. The program shall develop and implement a comprehensive discipline and behavior policy that meets department criteria for promoting positive relationships.

c. The program shall develop and implement a comprehensive and age-appropriate schedule of activities.

118.19(5) *Environment.*

a. The program shall develop and implement policies that meet department criteria for the following areas:

(1) Supervision.

(2) Bullying prevention.

(3) Playground equipment stability and fall surfacing and inspection.

(4) Missing child.

(5) Sign in and out tracking system for children and visitors.

(6) Technology.

b. The program shall submit to the department one of the following annually:

(1) The IQ4K interaction and relationship self-assessment that shall be completed by teaching staff.

(2) CLASS assessment for the age level being served that shall be completed for each classroom by a trained observer.

118.19(6) *Leadership and administration.*

a. All staff shall complete the IQ4K staff self-assessment annually.

b. The program administrator shall complete the IQ4K program assessment annually.

c. Meetings for all staff shall be conducted two or more times per year.

441—118.20(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 2 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a level 2, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1 and 2 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1 and 2.

118.20(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP.

(2) The program shall complete all of the following as applicable to ages served:

1. Program staff planning the meals and the program staff's supervisor shall complete the CACFP steps to success lessons as identified by the department that cover the CACFP meal pattern.

2. All lead staff and their supervisors responsible for mealtime supervision shall complete the CACFP school-age program staff training.

b. The program shall identify and implement one physical activity goal from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.20(2) *Professional development.*

a. All staff who administer medication shall complete the medication administration skills competency course or other training as approved by the department and hold a valid certification of completion.

b. All staff who administer medication shall also successfully complete a competency skills evaluation assessment checklist or department-approved equivalent and hold a valid certification of completion. There shall be one person who meets these criteria present on site in the program at all times.

c. All staff shall complete ten annual training hours of professional development.

118.20(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall offer one conference with each family per year to discuss each child's progress, strengths, and needs in all developmental areas.

b. The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes partnerships.

118.20(4) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall develop and implement a curriculum that includes all of the following opportunities each day:

(1) Physical activity.

(2) Creative expression.

(3) Cooperative games.

(4) Free choice with a variety of materials.

(5) Academic support.

b. The program shall develop and implement a department-approved policy that eliminates or severely limits expulsion, suspension, and punitive or other exclusionary discipline.

118.20(5) *Environment.*

a. The program administrator or assistant administrator shall complete the compass—a guide to quality school age environments training and provide a certificate of completion.

b. The program shall provide a welcoming environment to all children and families.

c. The program shall develop and implement a tobacco-free and nicotine-free policy meeting department criteria.

118.20(6) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall complete and annually update the IQ4K quality improvement action plan.

b. All staff shall receive a written evaluation at least once a year.

c. The program administrator shall have two or more years of full-time experience working in the field.

441—118.21(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 3 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a level 3, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in

each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1, 2 and 3 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2 and 3.

118.21(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

1. Programs providing adequate documentation that the programs provide care for four hours a day or less are exempt from the CACFP or NSLP participation requirement.

2. Nonprofit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if the nonprofit programs provide adequate documentation that meets one of the following criteria:

- The percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is 5 percent or less.
- The program's licensed capacity is 30 children or fewer.
- The program serves two or fewer meals or snacks per day.
- The program is open and operating three days a week or less.

3. For-profit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if the for-profit programs are able to provide adequate documentation that the percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is 25 percent or less.

b. The program shall identify and implement two department-approved physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.21(2) *Professional development.* All staff shall complete ten or more annual training hours of professional development.

118.21(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall promote culturally sensitive practices and procedures.

b. The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes partnerships.

118.21(4) *Teaching and learning.*

a. Program staff shall utilize an appropriate tool throughout the year to gather information about children's strengths, progress, and needs.

b. The program shall share community resources with families as needed based on the information gathered.

c. The program shall develop and implement department-approved policies and procedures for inclusive practices for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.21(5) *Environment.*

a. The on-site supervisor shall complete the compass—a guide to quality school age environments training series and provide a certificate of completion.

b. The program shall participate in the completion of the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

118.21(6) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall complete:

(1) NAC or another department-approved credential; or

(2) Thirty training hours or more in a related field and ten training hours or more in leadership.

b. The program administrator shall have three years or more of full-time experience working in the field or one year or more of full-time experience as a program administrator.

c. The on-site supervisor shall have 30 training hours or more in a related field and two years or more of full-time experience working in the field.

441—118.22(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 4 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a level 4, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

118.22(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement one nutrition goal from the completed action plan in level 1.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement three nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

b. The program shall identify and implement three physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.22(2) *Professional development.*

a. All staff shall complete 12 or more annual training hours of professional development.

b. Thirty percent or more of all staff shall complete six or more hours of department or IQ4K-approved training in the areas of social, emotional, behavior and mental health.

118.22(3) *Family and community partnerships.* The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes family and community partnerships.

118.22(4) *Teaching and learning.*

a. Staff shall use information gathered about children and families to enhance the children's and family's learning environment and activities.

b. Staff shall participate in planning with families and outside experts as needed for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.22(5) *Environment.*

a. One additional staff member or more, not including the on-site supervisor, shall complete the compass—a guide to quality school age environments training series and provide a certificate of completion.

b. One-third of classrooms shall complete the scoresheet with self-assessment and an improvement plan with a minimum of one classroom per scale if applicable.

c. The program shall score an average of 2.5 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.22(6) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall have 120 training hours or more in a related field and 10 training hours or more in leadership, administration, or management.

b. The program administrator shall have two years or more of full-time experience as a program administrator.

c. The on-site supervisor shall have 90 training hours or more in a related field and one year or more of full-time experience as an on-site supervisor.

441—118.23(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 5 school-aged only programs.

118.23(1) *Criteria for each category.* To be rated at a level 5, an eligible facility must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible facility's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. To be rated at a level 5, an eligible facility must also meet the following criteria:

a. Minimum score. The facility must earn a minimum score of 5.0 in each assessed classroom on the assessment.

b. Approved assessor. An assessor approved by the department must perform the ERS assessment.

c. Number of classrooms assessed. At least one-third of the facility's classrooms must be assessed, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility.

d. Time frame for assessment. Programs eligible for an ERS assessment must undergo their assessment within 90 days of department approval unless an extension is requested and approved by the department.

e. Assessments not done timely. Programs that do not undergo their assessment within 90 days of approval by the department or do not receive an approved extension from the department will forfeit their opportunity for an assessment.

118.23(2) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement four nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

b. The program shall identify and implement four physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.23(3) *Professional development.*

a. All staff shall complete 12 or more annual training hours of professional development.

b. Sixty percent or more of all staff shall complete six or more hours of department-approved or IQ4K-approved training in the areas of social, emotional, behavior, and mental health.

118.23(4) *Family and community partnerships.* The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes family and community partnerships.

118.23(5) *Teaching and learning.* The teaching staff shall work with families and other experts to implement instructional and environmental adaptations that support the learning for each child, including those with diverse needs, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.23(6) *Environment.*

a. Eighty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete the compass—a guide to quality school age environments training series and provide a certificate of completion.

b. One-third of classrooms shall receive an overall score of 5.0 or higher on the assessment with a minimum of one classroom per scale if applicable.

c. The program shall score an average of 2.75 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.23(7) *Leadership and administration.*

a. The program administrator shall have nine or more credit hours in a related field and 12 or more training hours in leadership, administration or management.

b. The program administrator shall have three or more years of full-time experience as a program administrator.

c. The on-site supervisor shall have six or more credit hours in a related field and two or more years of full-time experience as an on-site supervisor.

441—118.24(237A) Rating standards for registered child development homes. To participate in IQ4K QRIS, a registered child development home shall be in full compliance with department regulations and certify that the registered child development home meets the applicable criteria. In addition, the following program requirements apply:

1. For category C homes operating with an approved co-provider, both providers must satisfy the applicable criteria where designated.

2. Eligible applicants shall be able to earn credit for participation in more than one of the specialized track areas.

441—118.25(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 1 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at level 1, an eligible registered child development home must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in level 1 or complete all of the criteria designated in the eligible registered child development home's respective specialized tracks for levels 1 and 2.

118.25(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall each complete one of the department-approved food safety trainings.

b. The program shall complete a department-approved self-assessment and create an action plan in the area of nutrition.

c. The program shall complete a department-approved self-assessment and create an action plan in the area of physical activity.

118.25(2) *Professional development.* The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete a professional development plan annually.

118.25(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall provide an orientation for new families meeting department criteria.

b. The program shall complete one annual activity that promotes partnerships from the department's approved list.

118.25(4) *Provider qualifications.* The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall have one year or more of full-time child care experience.

118.25(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete two hours of department-approved training on the Iowa early learning standards.

b. The program shall develop and implement a department-approved comprehensive discipline and behavior policy that promotes positive relationships.

118.25(6) *Environment.*

a. The program shall develop and implement, as applicable to ages served, policies for the following areas that meet department criteria:

(1) Supervision.

(2) Safe sleep.

(3) Missing child.

(4) Sign in and out tracking system for children and visitors.

b. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete the IQ4K Interaction and Relationship Self-Assessment form.

c. The program shall annually complete the IQ4K Program Assessment form.

441—118.26(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 2 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at a level 2, an eligible registered child development home must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1 and 2 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible registered child development home's respective specialized tracks.

118.26(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP; or

(2) The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete all of the following as applicable to ages served:

1. Iowa CACFP steps to success lessons as identified by the department that cover the CACFP meal pattern.

2. Iowa CACFP infant training—steps to success.

3. Iowa CACFP wellness module—meaningful mealtimes.

b. The program shall identify and implement one physical activity goal from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.26(2) *Professional development.* There shall be one person who meets the following criteria present on site in the program at all times.

a. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete ChildNet training.

b. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete 15 hours or more of annual training hours of professional development.

c. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete the medication administration skills competency course or other department-approved training and hold a valid certification of completion.

d. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall also successfully complete a competency skills evaluation assessment checklist or department-approved equivalent and hold a valid certification of completion.

118.26(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall offer one conference with each family annually to discuss each child's progress, strengths and needs in all developmental areas. Programs shall share child assessment information with the child's family.

b. The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes family and community partnerships.

118.26(4) *Provider qualifications.* The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall meet one of the following:

a. Two years or more of full-time experience in child care; or

b. Six college credit hours or more in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

118.26(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall develop and implement a daily schedule with predictable routines that are developmentally appropriate for all ages served.

b. The program shall develop and implement a department-approved policy that eliminates or severely limits expulsion, suspension, and punitive or other exclusionary discipline.

c. The program shall develop and implement department-approved policies regarding the use of an approved developmental screening tool for all children in care within 60 days of enrollment and at least annually to identify children who may need additional evaluation and intervention strategies.

118.26(6) *Environment.*

a. The program shall provide a welcoming environment to all children and families.

b. The program shall develop and implement a department-approved policy for playground equipment stability and fall surfacing and inspection.

c. The program shall develop and implement a department-approved tobacco-free and nicotine-free policy.

d. The program shall annually complete and update the IQ4K quality improvement action plan.

441—118.27(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 3 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at a level 3, an eligible registered child development home must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1, 2 and 3 or complete all of the criteria designated in the eligible registered child development home's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2 and 3.

118.27(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall actively participate in CACFP.

b. The program shall identify and implement two physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.27(2) *Professional development.*

a. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete ChildNet certification.

b. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall choose one of the following trainings to complete their initial IQ4K rating:

(1) Complete one module of the program for infant and toddler care.

(2) Complete the universal practices EC-PBIS for family child care modules.

(3) Complete school age matters training.

c. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall choose one of the other trainings listed above for the provider's and co-provider's, where applicable, subsequent IQ4K ratings until all the trainings applicable per ages served have been completed.

d. Once the provider and co-provider, where applicable, have completed all the age-applicable trainings, the provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete 18 annual hours of approved professional development training on all subsequent IQ4K applications.

118.27(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall promote culturally sensitive practices and procedures.

b. The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes family and community partnerships.

118.27(4) *Provider qualifications.* The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall meet one of the following:

a. Three years or more of child care experience; or

b. Nine or more college credit hours in education, specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

118.27(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall utilize a department-approved assessment tool throughout the year that aligns with the curriculum to gather information on each child's strengths, progress, and needs.

b. The program shall share community resources with families as needed, based on the information gathered from the child's assessment.

c. The program shall develop and implement department-approved policies and procedures for inclusive practices for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, and specialized health needs.

118.27(6) *Environment.* The provider shall complete the compass—a guide to quality family child care environments training and provide a certificate of completion.

441—118.28(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 4 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at level 4, an eligible registered child development home must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible registered child development home's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

118.28(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall actively participate in CACFP.

b. The program shall implement one nutrition goal from the completed action plan in level 1.

c. The program shall identify and implement three physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.28(2) *Professional development.*

a. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall choose one of the following trainings to complete for the provider's and co-provider's, where applicable, initial IQ4K rating:

(1) Complete two additional modules of the program for infant and toddler care.

(2) Complete the targeted strategies and individualized interventions EC-PBIS for family child care modules.

b. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall choose one of the other department-approved trainings for the provider's and co-provider's, where applicable, subsequent IQ4K ratings until all the trainings applicable per ages served have been completed.

c. Once the provider and co-provider, where applicable, have completed all the age-applicable trainings, the provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete 20 annual hours of approved professional development training on all subsequent IQ4K applications.

118.28(3) *Family and community partnerships.* The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes family and community partnerships.

118.28(4) *Provider qualifications.* The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall meet one of the following:

a. The provider shall meet the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway tier 2 or higher.

b. The provider shall have three or more years of full-time child care experience.

118.28(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall use information gathered about children and families to make changes in the children's learning environment and activities.

b. The program shall participate in planning with families and other experts, as needed, for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral health needs, and specialized health needs.

118.28(6) *Environment.*

a. The program shall complete the scoresheet with self-assessment and improvement plan.

b. The program shall score an average of 2.5 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

441—118.29(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—level 5 rating standards for registered child development homes.

118.29(1) *Criteria for each category.* To be rated at a level 5, an eligible registered child development home must be in full compliance with department regulations and satisfy all the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or complete all the criteria designated in the eligible registered child development home's respective specialized tracks for levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. To be rated at a level 5, the following criteria must also be met:

a. Minimum score. The program must earn a minimum score of 5.0 on the assessment.

b. Approved assessor. An assessor approved by the department must perform the ERS assessment.

c. Time frame for assessment. Programs eligible for an ERS assessment must undergo their assessment within 90 days of department approval unless an extension is requested and approved by the department.

d. Assessments not done timely. Programs that do not undergo their assessment within 90 days of approval by the department or that do not receive an approved extension from the department will forfeit their opportunity for an assessment.

118.29(2) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall actively participate in CACFP.

b. The program shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

c. The program shall identify and implement four physical activity goals from the completed action plan in level 1.

118.29(3) *Professional development.*

a. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete one additional module of the program for infant and toddler care.

b. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall choose one of the department-approved trainings for the subsequent IQ4K ratings until all the trainings applicable per ages served have been completed.

c. Once the provider and co-provider, where applicable, have completed all the age-applicable trainings, the provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall complete 22 annual hours of approved professional development training on all subsequent IQ4K applications.

118.29(4) *Family and community partnerships.* The program shall complete one additional department-approved activity annually that promotes family and community partnerships.

118.29(5) *Provider qualifications.*

a. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall meet the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway tier 2 or higher.

b. The provider and co-provider, where applicable, shall have four or more years of full-time child care experience.

118.29(6) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall work with families and other experts to implement instructional and environmental adaptations that support the learning for each child, including those with diverse needs, identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral health needs, and specialized health needs.

b. The provider shall complete programwide EC-PBIS training.

118.29(7) *Environment.*

a. The program shall achieve a score of 5.0 or higher on the assessment.

b. The program shall score an average of 2.75 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

441—118.30(237A) Award of quality rating.

118.30(1) The facility shall display the IQ4K QRIS rating certificate in a conspicuous place within the facility.

118.30(2) Achievement bonuses may be awarded as funds are available at the discretion of the department.

441—118.31(237A) Adverse actions.

118.31(1) An eligible applicant will be notified of the right to appeal the rating decision in accordance with 441—Chapter 2506.

118.31(2) A participant's quality rating will be revoked if the facility no longer meets the definition of eligible applicant.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 237A.30.