



GRANITE STEPS FOR QUALITY – ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER, EST. 2023

About this Document

This organizational charter serves to establish the purpose, objectives, and agreement of the GSQ Advisory Committee regarding membership, responsibilities, meetings, communications, and other related matters.

Context

In March 2022, NH began accepting applications for New Hampshire’s revised Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS), Granite Steps for Quality (GSQ). GSQ is the culmination of over ten years of task force meetings and collaborations between the child care and Head Start community, public and private entities, and the Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration. The purpose of this new system was to replace the previous two-tiered QRIS, Licensed Plus and NAEYC Accreditation, with an updated, more robust set of criteria for Early Childhood and Out-of-School Time (OST) programs to engage in beyond required Child Care Licensing health and safety standards. The purpose was also to share information regarding quality programming with New Hampshire families to inform their care selection process.

Committee Vision

The GSQ Advisory Committee serves to maintain and support the overall mission and guiding principles of NH’s QRIS. Our role is to review our process to be sure it is supporting programs to meet our defined standards and outcomes, as well as to unify and clarify the message of quality programming for all audiences (families, providers, policy makers, general public, etc.).

GSQ Mission: *Caring adults work to build a strong foundation for children’s healthy development through a system that recognizes program quality using defined standards and measurable outcomes to ensure future success.*

GSQ Guiding Principles:

Maintain a system that is accessible and sustainable.

Utilize valid monitoring tools.

Establish system-wide accountability measures.

Connect families and providers to community supports.

Include achievable, incremental steps.

Promote a culture of continuous quality improvement.

Support programs through meaningful and accessible professional development activities to help them achieve and sustain increasing GSQ Steps.

Support programs through the different GSQ Steps by offering financial incentives and other resources.

Promote access to high quality child care programming for all families and to Head Start for all eligible families.

Evolve and change as the Early Childhood and Out-of-School Time fields continue to advance.

Inspire eligible programs to participate, advance, and remain in the system.

GSQ Advisory Committee Charter

Committee's Purpose is to:

1. Provide the opportunity for transparent, shared bi-directional communication between the Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration, the Committee, and statewide partners so that all have the information they need to make decisions to help further develop and shape the system.
2. Provide guidance and input on direction of the implementation of GSQ.
3. Identify what data need to be collected. Share, review, analyze, and use data in order to apply changes as needed.

Primary Objectives/Actionable Outcomes (What are we going to achieve?)

- *Establish benchmarks for the system, measuring desired outcomes and impacts;*
- *Utilization of evaluation data to determine the success of the overall system including the current tools and measures*
- *Identify strategies that can be implemented statewide to increase full participation in GSQ over time*
- *Create a process for new committee membership based on area of representation and develop a succession plan for member replacement*
- *Support the build out of at least 4 new GSQ endorsements through the GSQ Capacity Contract*

Committee Membership

Members are selected to represent varied voices from the child care and OST communities, statewide regions, and business and community organizations. Standing core members represent Department of Health and Human Services, NH Education Department, the Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC), Regional Leads, Council for Thriving Children, and NH Charitable Foundation. Membership is voluntary and if an area of representation is absent, current members will determine process and approval for inviting new members. Criteria for active membership is defined below.

- One consistent member designated as a representative from an agency/business
- One consistent member attends at least 75% of meetings unless a substitute has been identified and Committee leads have been notified
- One consistent member participates actively and contributes positively to conversations
- If applicable*, one consistent member participates in consensus voting

Membership may change to ensure continued representation and diversity from the Early Childhood (child care, Head Start) and OST communities. Current membership is listed in Table 1 below. The Committee Chair will be a representative from the Department of Health and Human Services. The Co-Chair will be a current member of the Committee.

As outlined above, members are responsible for identifying the vision, purpose(s) and objectives of the Committee, developing and implementing activities that support Committee objectives, and disseminating any relative information as applicable.

*If conflict of interest is determined, the member will refrain from consensus voting

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Table 1

Area of Representation	Committee Member	Current Role
DHHS BCDHSC	Andrea Foster, Chair	BCDHSC Program Improvement Specialist
GSQ Capacity Building Contract	Sarah Henry	Contract Lead
DHHS BCDHSC	Jessie Davis	DHHS BCDHSC Bureau Chief
CCAC	Shannon Tremblay	Child Care Advisory Council
Philanthropic Community	Christina D’Allesandro	NH Charitable Foundation and Council for Thriving Children
Out-of-School Time Programs	Jaime Nadeau	ACROSS NH
Program Advocacy	Chris Casserly	Early Learning New Hampshire
Resource and Referral, Training and Technical Assistance	Dee Dee Thurber	Child Care Aware of New Hampshire
Center-based Child Care single site program director, Pyramid Model Implementation site	Suelaine Poling	Keene Day Care
Higher ed, NAEYC Accredited Center-based Child Care (single site) program	Lisa Ranfos	University of New Hampshire
Vendor contracted to support the Pyramid Model Pathway from readiness to program-wide implementation	Joan Izen	Preschool Technical Assistance Network
NAEYC	Jackie Firmin	
Parent of a child currently enrolled in a NH child care program	Heidi Karajcic	
Marketing, Strengthening Families	Liz Scruton	New Hampshire Children’s Trust
Family Child Care	vacant	
Head Start	vacant	

Committee Meetings

Meetings are held virtually and conducted once monthly throughout the evaluation process, and quarterly thereafter. Bi-annual, in-person meetings and ad hoc meetings scheduled as necessary. Business procedures and decisions may be conducted via e-mail. Agendas are tailored to reflect the interest and requirements of members regarding GSQ and support the objectives named herein.

Possible Recurring Agenda Topics

- GSQ award updates
- Incentive updates
- Notable achievements
- Evaluation criteria and conclusions
- Barriers or difficulties
- Actionable outcomes and items

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Decision-Making Process

All decisions and recommendations are accomplished in alignment with the Advisory Committee's vision, purpose, and objectives. Decisions are determined first by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, then the majority shall rule. For the purposes of this Committee, a quorum is considered a simple majority of members who are present, including the Chair. Members expecting to be absent make every effort to provide information to the Committee in advance of the meeting that may benefit decision-making. If a conflict of interest is determined by the Committee, then the Member will excuse themselves from consensus vote.

Documentation

Meeting agendas and any materials are finalized in advance of each meeting. The meeting minutes and documentation gathered are shared publicly on a designated page on NH Connections. Instructions for accessing the documentation is provided to members.

Members and interested parties may include a hyperlink on their own webpages to the NH Connections website.