



## Requesting an On-Site Observation

In order to achieve a Virginia Quality Level 4 or 5, an on-site observation of the facility's learning environment and teacher-child interactions is required. During this on-site observation, a trained, reliable Virginia Quality rater will use two assessment tools to measure the quality of the environment and interactions. The two tools used in Virginia Quality for this purpose are the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Environment Rating Scale (ERS).

- Information about CLASS – <http://teachstone.com/>
- Information about ERS - <http://www.ersi.info/>

Before requesting an on-site observation, the facility director/provider should already be familiar with the CLASS and ERS tools, and may want to review the information in the Level 2 and Level 3 online training modules and self-study with staff.

When facilities choose to request an on-site observation to be considered for Level 4 or 5 status, they will need to complete a classroom profile and request an on-site observation through their online Access VA Quality application. After the request is received, the Regional Quality Coordinator will be notified and will assign a trained, reliable Virginia Quality rater to conduct the observation.

For classroom-based facilities, the Virginia Quality rater will visit one out of every three classrooms in each of the following age groups: infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. For family childcare homes with only one group of children in care, the Virginia Quality rater will visit the home to observe that group, regardless of the age(s) of the children in care. Facilities will be contacted to set up a 3-week window during which the observation(s) will take place. Although facilities will not know the exact date that the Virginia Quality Rater will visit, they will know the 3-week window, and will have the opportunity to request three "blackout" dates, during which the rater would not visit.

During the visit(s), the Rater will spend several hours in a classroom and conduct observations using the age-appropriate CLASS and ERS tools. Only one classroom is observed each day, so the Rater may visit more than once during the 3-week window, if necessary, depending on the size of the facility.

After the rating, scores from the observation tools will be calculated to determine the facility's level status. (Please refer to the Virginia Quality Standards for thresholds needed to achieve Level 4 or Level 5 status). If the facility's scores do not yet meet the Level 4 thresholds, the facility will remain at Level 3 and will continue quality improvement in the area of Environments and Interactions. In this case, information from the observation visit will be used to inform specific improvements that will help the facility move up to Level 4. The facility may request another on-site observation after at least 1 year.



## Facility Summary Report

Along with the quality level award notification, facilities will receive a summary rating report. This report will include information about whether or not the facility met the Level 4 or 5 thresholds for interactions and environment. It will also provide the CLASS & ERS score ranges in narrative format. Teachers', providers', and children's names will not be used in the summary report. Classrooms will only be identified as "Classroom 1 or "Classroom 2", etc..

**The CLASS Narrative Section of the Report:** Raters will provide a score-range description statement for each dimension. For dimensions scoring in the low or mid range, the rater will also provide a short narrative explanation, commenting on the frequency of indicators observed. Examples or quotes from the observation may also be provided to help describe what was observed.

### Example of Summary Report Description for Language Modeling (mid range)

<i>PreK CLASS Dimension</i>	<i>Description Statement</i>	<i>Rater Comments</i>
<b>Language Modeling</b>	The teachers <b>sometimes</b> used language-stimulation and language-facilitation techniques with children.	<i>There were some back and forth conversations during center times and meal times. The teacher sometimes repeated what the children said. The teacher sometimes used advanced language, for example when she told the children "a stethoscope is used by the doctor to hear your heartbeat".</i>

**The ERS Section of the Summary Report:** The following subscales will be included in the ERS section of the summary report; Language & Reasoning/Listening and Talking; Activities; Interaction and Facility Structure. The following scoring phrases will be used for each subscale item:

- Score of 1-4 = Recommended area for improvement
- Score of 5-6 = Meets Good Requirements
- Score of 7 = Meets Excellent Requirements

For ERS items that are recommend areas for improvement, the rater will also provide information about the indicators that were not met.

**Overall Purpose of the Summary Report :** The facility summary report is provided to help facilities set specific quality improvement goals and to guide technical assistance efforts. (It should not be used for teacher evaluation or be included in teachers' personnel files).