

How to Conduct an Internal Assessment Using the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP)

NOTES: Although the ICP can be used for the purpose of internal assessment, it can also be conducted as an external assessment by an ICP trained and reliable Pennsylvania Key (PA Key) Program Quality Assessor (hereinafter referred to as “Assessor”).

When using the ICP for an internal assessment to meet the expectations for one of the Keystone STARS Standards, please consult the [Keystone STARS Performance Standards](#) and the [Keystone STARS Program Manual](#) for additional information.

How to conduct an objective, authentic classroom assessment

The Keystone Stars Standards expect programs to conduct internal assessments annually and, once every three years, engage their internal assessment team in discussion of their internal assessment results with an Assessor from the PA Key.

- The internal assessment should be an **observation**; therefore, someone who has knowledge of the selected Program Observation Instrument (POI) and its expectations should plan to observe for the recommended amount of time (for the specific POI), in the classroom. Keep in mind, the internal assessment is not something to be given to the classroom teacher to complete as a checklist of things that the teacher feels occurs in the classroom. Teachers cannot observe themselves in action and may not provide an objective picture of their classroom. The observer should be able to commit to observing and taking notes and should not have any classroom responsibilities during the observation.
- The observation should occur when most of the children are present and actively engaged in the classroom so interactions with peers, teachers, and materials can be observed; therefore, no part of the observation should occur during naptime unless naptime is a required component of the POI.
- The internal assessment should be viewed as an integral part of a program’s commitment to continuous quality improvement rather than just another piece of paperwork to be completed to meet an expectation. Information from an objective internal assessment can yield much information about the program’s practices, providing a foundation for the program to celebrate their successes and build upon existing practices.

ICP assessment at-a-glance

- Approximately 2 ½ - 3 hours to complete
- Used in a preschool classroom where the enrolled children enrolled are ages 2-5 (majority are preschool-aged)
- At least one child with an IEP must be enrolled in the classroom
- Teacher interview (approximately 20 minutes)
- Some program documents needed for scoring

Required materials

- Inclusive Classroom Profile, research edition form (ICP); also referred to as ICP protocol/scale book ISBN 978-1-59857-990-1

Supplemental materials:

- Inclusive Classroom Profile, research edition Manual (recommended) ISBN 978-1-59857-991-8

Purchase the POI:

- There may be multiple sources where the required and supplemental materials can be purchased. An online search by resource name or ISBN number may result in several options from which to choose.
- Be sure to allow adequate time for ordering and delivery of the materials.
- One ICP form (scale book) is needed to conduct the assessment each time assessment occurs; order a copy for each classroom that will be using the ICP. The form is typically sold in sets of five.

Conduct the Internal Assessment

1. Learn about the ICP

- The more you learn about the quality practices described in the ICP, the more accurate your own internal assessment will be.
- It is recommended that the teaching team from each classroom being assessed, and the internal assessment team becomes familiar with the expectations of the ICP, especially the “12 key practices.”
- Register for the online self-paced Foundations of the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) on the [Professional Development \(PD\) Registry](#) (available sometime in 2024/2025).
- Request a [Facilitated Program Observation Instrument Orientation \(FPO\)](#). This one-hour session with an Assessor provides an opportunity to learn some of the basic information about the ICP and ask specific questions. The FPO is structured to meet each individual’s or program’s specific needs and each person attending receives one hour of PQAS (Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System) credit. **Please note the FPO is not a substitute for the online self-paced ICP course, but rather provides a basic overview.**
- Access additional information on the ICP:
 - [Introduction to the Inclusive Classroom Profile](#) (This is a 40-minute webinar by the ICP author, Elena Soukakou. It provides a basic overview of the ICP.)
 - [Utilizing the Inclusive Classroom Profile to Determine Quality](#) (ICP specific information is found at the time stamp of 7:00 through 30:00 minutes. Videos of the ICP practices in action are found between 49:48 and 58:30 minutes.)
- Read the ICP book cover to cover, including the “Criteria on Rating Indicators.”
- Reflect on the expectations for each item and indicator.
- If the information in the “Indicator” differs from the “Criteria for Rating Indicators” follow the information from the “Criteria for Rating Indicators.”
- **Term Clarifications:**
 - **Some:** Any
 - **Severall:** Two or more
 - **Many:** More than two
 - **Majority:** Most, 75%, always round up (see chart)

Children Being Observed	Needed to Equal Majority
1	1
2	2
3	2
4	3

2. Prepare to conduct the internal assessment

- If time has elapsed since your purchase and review of the ICP, re-familiarize yourself with the scale expectations.
- Gather all materials needed: something to capture your notes whether a laptop or paper/pencil, ICP form and manual (manual is optional).
- Gather the following documents needed for documentation review for scoring.
 - Policy on inclusion, if any (often found in the parent handbook)
 - Communication policies/procedures with families (often found in the parent handbook)
 - Child progress monitoring information/reports shared with families
 - Forms or questionnaires used to identify family concerns, priorities, and resources
 - Screening tools/checklists or other methods of identifying a child who might be at risk for a disability/developmental delay
 - Examples of progress monitoring documents (e.g., tally sheets, observation notes, data collection sheets, behavior assessment checklists)
 - Individual intervention plans (e.g., interventions/instructional supports that are embedded into classroom activities and routines)
- Set aside 2 ½ - 3 hours of time for the assessment.
- Plan to complete the assessment in one sitting.

3. When to conduct the internal assessment

- The assessment should be conducted during regular classroom routine times when all children, including those with disabilities, are present. The child(ren) with the identified disability(ies) needs to be observed across multiple learning contexts, such as free choice time, adult directed large and/or small group, and transitions between activities and routines.
- It may be helpful to tell the children that a guest will be visiting their classroom for a special project. They will watch them play and do their work but will not be able to play with them while doing their work.

4. Conduct the internal assessment

- Approach the observation as an objective observer. Make scoring decisions based on current observation of the classroom, not on information you know from your past experiences with the classroom.
- Take detailed notes on materials and classroom arrangement as they support the needs of children with disabilities (i.e., can the child with the wheelchair access materials independently). Take notes of interactions that occur with each child with an identified disability (This detail is important when determining several, many, majority). Taking notes is extremely helpful for several reasons. First, note taking will help you score accurately. If you are reviewing the assessment to check your scores, looking back at notes will help you. Second, note taking will help you/your teachers create goals based on observed data that was written down. Finally, your notes will assist the Assessor in understanding your program's practices and will support deeper internal assessment consultation conversations. Remember, providing numerical scores is not enough to support your program's growth and development.
- Do not observe a child when they are separated from the group, such as when they are receiving individual support from a therapist.
- Conduct the teacher interview and documentation review at any point during the observation that is convenient for the teacher and does not interfere with the observation (i.e., before the observation begins, after completing the observation, or a time when the child(ren) are working with other staff outside of the

group).

- Do not try to score while observing; complete the scoring immediately after the assessment based on your notes.

5. Score the assessment

- Score the assessment using the scoring information found on page 1 and 30.
- Each item is scored on a seven-point scale: 1 (Inadequate), 3 (Minimal), 5 (Good), 7 (Excellent).
- When scoring an item, always start with the very first indicator, 1.1 and progress upward.
- Ask yourself the following:
 - Is it True? All indicators under 1 (Inadequate) must be scored “No” (False) to continue, if any are “YES” (True), score is 1. All indicators under 3, 5, 7 must be scored “YES” (True) to continue, if any are “No” (False), finish only that column.
- When finished scoring the indicators, determine the score for the item. Looking at the last column scored and ask yourself, “Am I halfway there?”
 - If HALF or MORE are YES (True), go back one point (halfway score) (example: If half or more, but not all, of the indicators in the 5 columns are scored “Yes,” the score is a 4)
 - If LESS than HALF are YES (True), go back two points to the last quality level achieved.
- Complete the score for each item on its individual page.
- Transfer each item score to pages 30-32. (You may transfer the indicator scores also, but it is not required).
- Next total the “Individual Item Ratings” and the number of items scored.
- Divide the total individual item ratings by the total number of items scored to see your overall classroom score.

6. Review findings

- Conducting an ICP assessment is only the first step of the process toward growth. Review your observation with those people responsible for implementing changes.
- Review your assessment findings with your Internal Assessment Team, Quality Coach and Assessor. They can celebrate your strengths with you.
- Identify goals to achieve growth and include them in your Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQI).

Next steps

- Assure everyone has contributed ideas and ensure everyone knows the next steps to take toward improvement.
- When planning for CQI goals, look toward implementing the next level’s indicators.
- Start small. Focus on one indicator at a time.
- Be patient. Do not be discouraged if your initial score is lower than you anticipated. Growth takes time.
- Change what you can and accept those things that are outside of your program’s ability to improve.
- Share your plan for growth (Principles for Improvement) with everyone involved on your team.