

Submitting a Better Beginnings Application in the ELS Portal (OST)

Before you submit your application, ALL requirements including assessments must be completed and documented.

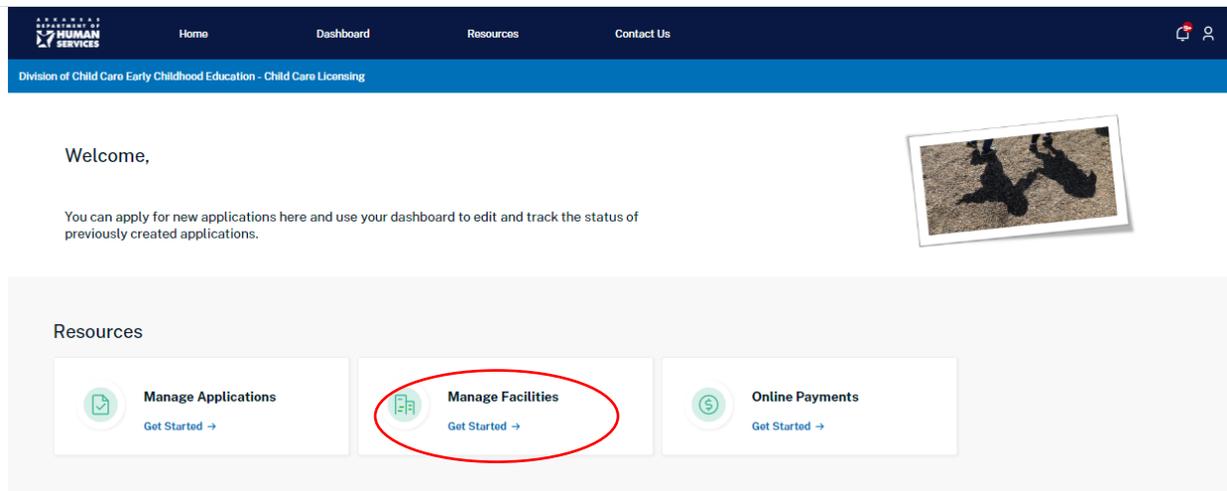
Know the level for which you qualify and have the required documentation ready to upload.

Completing the Application

Go to the ELS portal (<https://arkdhs.force.com/elicensing/s/login/>) and log in with your user name and password.

Welcome

Select **Manage Facilities, Get Started**.



The screenshot shows the ELS Portal dashboard. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Dashboard, Resources, and Contact Us. Below the navigation bar, the text reads "Welcome," followed by a brief instruction: "You can apply for new applications here and use your dashboard to edit and track the status of previously created applications." To the right of this text is a small photograph of two children playing on a grassy field. Below the text and photo is a "Resources" section containing three buttons: "Manage Applications", "Manage Facilities", and "Online Payments". The "Manage Facilities" button is circled in red, indicating the next step in the process.

Save a copy of all documents for your records. Submit the completed application with documentation online through the ELS portal. For more information: www.ARBetterBeginnings.com Phone: 501-320-6161 Email: OEC.BetterBeginnings@ade.arkansas.gov

List of Facilities

Find your facility. If you have more than one facility, you will see all of them listed. Select **view** next to the appropriate facility. This will open the facility page.

Arkansas DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Home Dashboard Resources Contact Us

Division of Child Care Early Childhood Education - Child Care Licensing

< Back to Dashboard

List of Facilities

Sort By
Select an Option

Facility No.	Facility Name	Facility Type	Facility Status	Action
12345	Pretty Good Preschool 1	Child Care Center	New Provisional	View
23456	Pretty Good Preschool 2	Child Care Center	Regular	View

Facility Information

Select **Better Beginnings**.

Arkansas DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Home Dashboard Resources Contact Us

Division of Child Care Early Childhood Education - Child Care Licensing

< Back to Facilities

Facility Number: 1234567

Facility Type: Child Care Center

Facility Status: Regular

Facility Information

Facility Name: Pretty Good Preschool 1

Facility Type: Child Care Center

Provider Type: Center Based

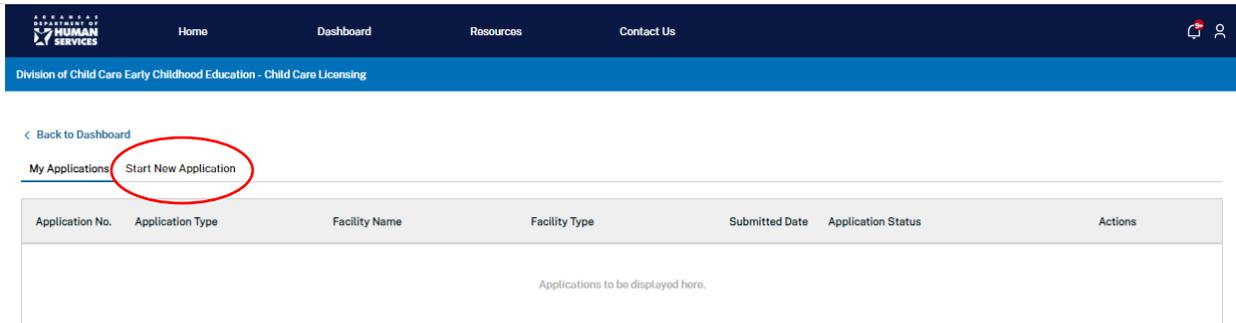
Proposed Open Date: 10/08/2021

- Facility Information
- Facility Physical Address & Contact Information
- Owner Information
- Director Information
- Facility Schedule
- Service Information
- Enrollment & Operations
- Certification & Inspections
- Documentation
- Daily Rate Information
- Facility Ages Served
- Better Beginnings**
- Related Links

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To start a new application, select **Start New Application**.

To continue working on a pending application, or to see submitted or withdrawn applications, select **My Applications**.



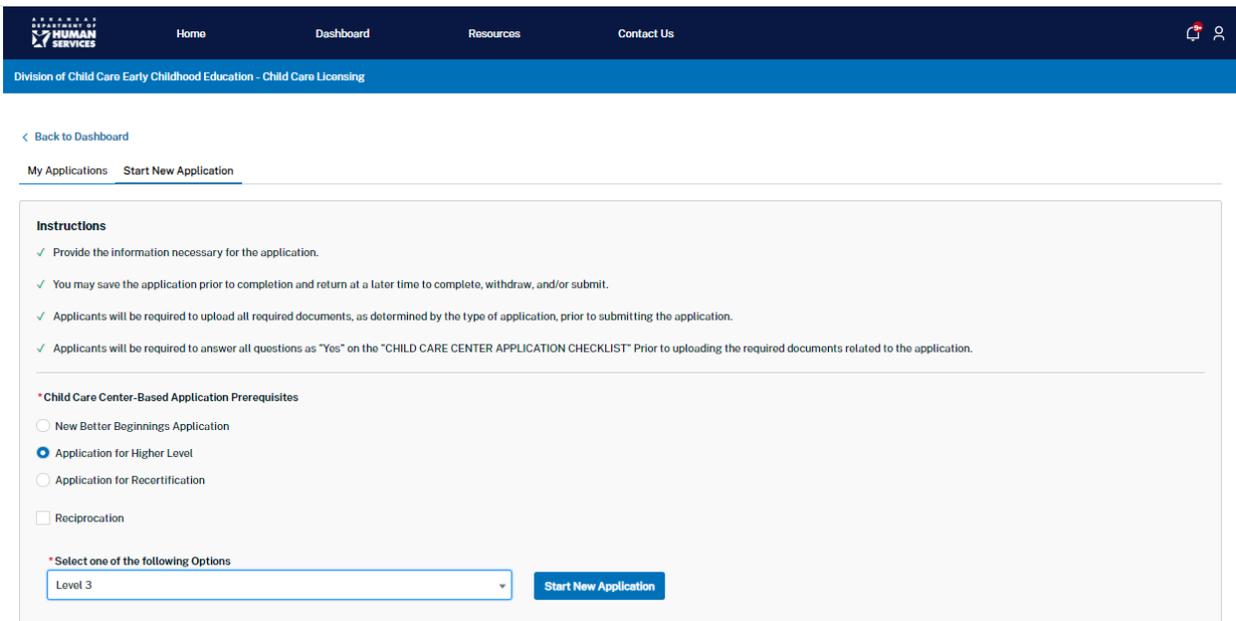
Instructions

Select the type of application you are completing (**new, higher level, or recerification**).

If your program qualifies for *reciprocatation*, select **Reciprocatation**, then click [here](#) to go to the section of this document for reciprocated programs.

If your program does not qualify for *reciprocatation*, skip that option. If you aren't sure, click [here](#) for more informatiion about reciprocation.

Select the Level for which you are applying from the drop down menu and then select **Start New Application**.



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Application Checklist

Select **yes** for all the requirements that you have met and can document. Select **continue**.

The screenshot shows the 'Application Checklist' page for a 'New Application: Better Beginnings'. The page title is 'Application Checklist' with a '*Mandatory field' note. The main content is the 'CENTER-BASED APPLICATION CHECKLIST' for Level 3, which states: 'Level 3 - ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR LEVELS 1 AND 2 MUST BE MET AT TIME OF APPLICATION (except PAS & ERS reviews). Schedules, Daily Plans, Self-Evaluation(s), Medical & Educational Care Plans & Strengthening Families information must be included with application.' There are nine requirements listed, each with a 'Yes' or 'No' radio button. All 'Yes' buttons are selected. At the bottom right, there are three buttons: 'Save', 'Previous', and 'Continue'. The 'Continue' button is circled in red.

If you select **no** for any of the requirements and then select **continue**, you will receive an error message that reads "All questions in the Checklist for Level # should be marked as 'yes'".

This screenshot shows the same 'Application Checklist' page, but with an error message displayed at the top: 'All Questions in the Checklist for Level 3 should be marked as 'Yes''. The error message is circled in red. In the checklist, requirement 3.D.3 is selected with the 'No' radio button, which is also circled in red. A red arrow points from the error message to the 'No' button. At the bottom right, the 'Continue' button is visible.

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Application Details

Most information on this page will auto-populate and **cannot** be changed from this page.

New Application: **Better Beginnings** Mandatory fee

- Application Checklist
- Application Details
- Operations
- Participation & Accreditation
- Documentation
- Review
- Sign & Submit

Application Details

Facility Name
Pretty Good Preschool 1

Facility Number
1234567

Address
123 PG Preschool Street

Address 2

City Pretty Good Town **County** Happiness

State AR **Zip Code** 72111 **Phone** 501.123.1234

Cell/Mobile 870.123.4567 **Fax**

Director Mrs. Frizzle **Director Email Address** Frizzle@PGPreschool.com

Owner Ms. Addie **Owner Email Address** PrettyGoodAD@PGPreschool.com

*** Facility Is Open**
 Year Round Open Partly Year From

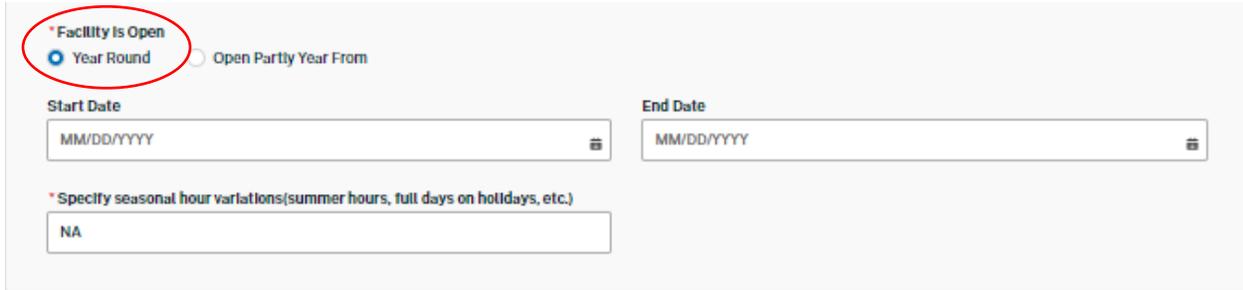
Start Date MM/DD/YYYY **End Date** MM/DD/YYYY

*** Specify seasonal hour variations (summer hours, full days on holidays, etc.)**
NA

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Respond to the prompts under **Facility is Open**.

- If your program is open all year long, select **Year-Round**. You do not need to enter start and end dates.

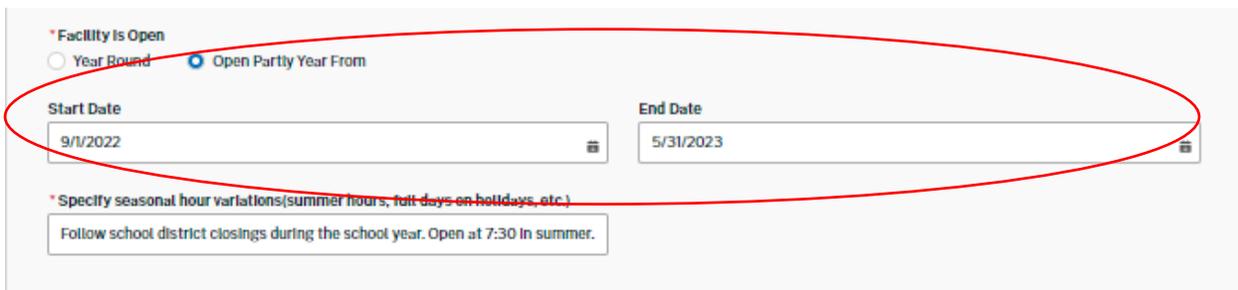


* Facility Is Open
 Year Round Open Partly Year From

Start Date: MM/DD/YYYY
End Date: MM/DD/YYYY

* Specify seasonal hour variations(summer hours, full days on holidays, etc.)
NA

- If your program closes for part of the year, select **Open Partial Year From** and then select the first day your program opened and the day your program will close this school year.



* Facility Is Open
 Year Round Open Partly Year From

Start Date: 9/1/2022
End Date: 5/31/2023

* Specify seasonal hour variations(summer hours, full days on holidays, etc.)
Follow school district closings during the school year. Open at 7:30 in summer.

Add information about any dates that your program hours vary during the year in the text box under **Specify seasonal hour variations (summer hours, full days on holidays, etc.)**. If your program hours do not vary during the year, type **NA** or **none**.



* Specify seasonal hour variations(summer hours, full days on holidays, etc.)
Follow school district closings during the school year. Open at 7:30 in summer.

or



* Specify seasonal hour variations(summer hours, full days on holidays, etc.)
NA

Select **Continue**.

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Operations

The number of classrooms on this page will auto-populate, but they **may** be updated. Type the correct number of classrooms, children, full-time staff, and part-time staff in the appropriate text box. Select **Continue**.

The screenshot shows the 'Operations' form within the 'Better Beginnings' application. The form is divided into three sections: 'Infant & Toddler (Birth to 36 Months)', 'Preschool (3-5 years old)', and 'School Age (K-12 years old)'. Each section has four input fields: 'No. of Classrooms', 'No. of Children served', 'No. of Full-Time Staff', and 'No. of Part-Time Staff'. The 'Total' section at the bottom has the same four fields. The 'No. of Classrooms' field in the 'Total' section contains the number '7'. A sidebar on the left shows the application progress, with 'Operations' selected. At the bottom right, there are three buttons: 'Save', 'Previous', and 'Continue'. The 'Continue' button is circled in red.

Accreditation and Participations

Accreditation. If your program is accredited, select the agency that accredited your program. For more information on accreditation, click [here](#).

Participations. This section will auto-populate and **cannot** be changed from this page. If this information is incorrect, contact your licensing specialist.

Select **Continue**.

The screenshot shows the 'Accreditation and Facility Participations' form. The 'Accreditation' section has two columns of checkboxes for agencies: NAEYC, ABC, CARF, MONTESSORI, NAFCC, and COA. The 'Facility Participations' section has two columns of checkboxes: Special Nutrition, CHMS, Early Head Start, Voucher (checked), Head Start, and DDTCs. A sidebar on the left shows the application progress, with 'Participation & Accreditation' selected. At the bottom right, there are three buttons: 'Save', 'Previous', and 'Continue'. The 'Continue' button is circled in red.

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Documentation

Upload all required documentation by selecting **+ Add Attachments**.

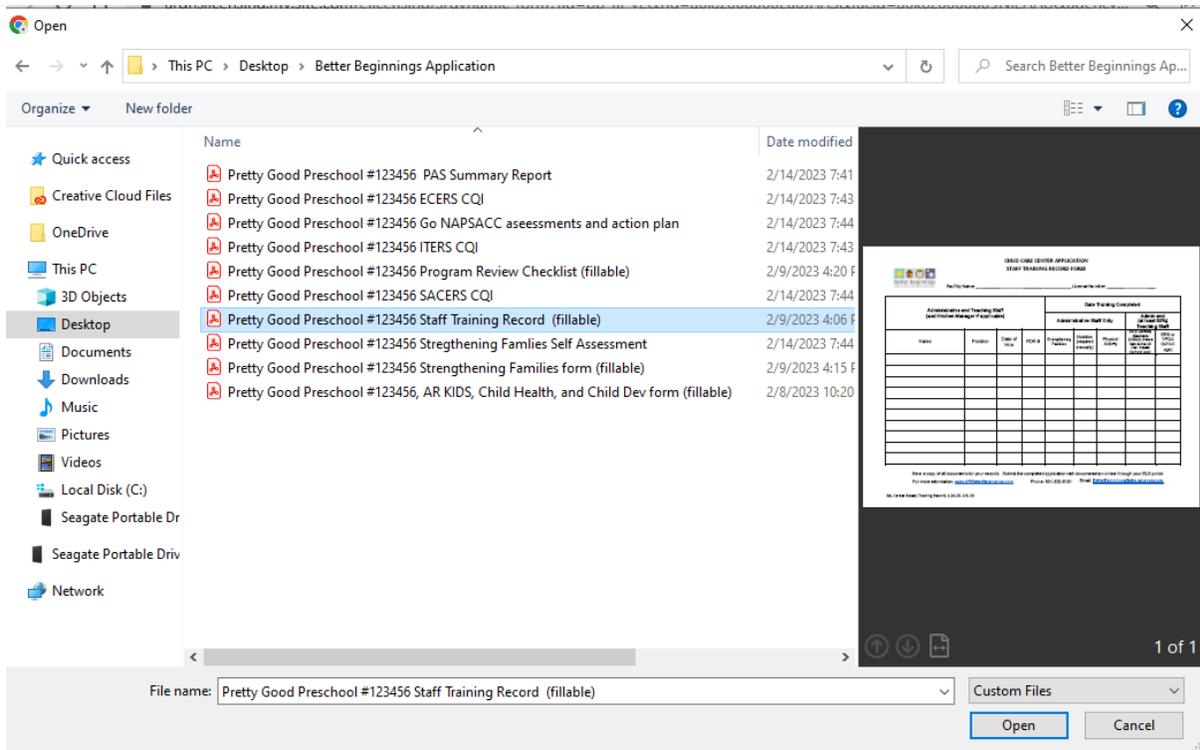
The screenshot shows the 'Documentation' step of the application process. On the left is a sidebar with navigation options: Application Checklist, Application Details, Operations, Participation & Accreditation, Documentation (selected), Review, and Sign & Submit. The main content area is titled 'Documentation' and includes instructions: 'The following documents are required for the application process. Please select document type and upload the relevant document below:' followed by a list: Annual Staff Record, ARKids First, Child Health and Child Development, and Strengthening Families (Required for Levels 2 thru 6). Below this is a warning: 'AN APPLICATION IS NOT COMPLETE UNTIL ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED.' and a note: 'To apply for Better Beginnings, submit the following information. All forms listed are provided in the application packet. Refer to the Better Beginnings Rules and Regulations Book(Section 7.00) or the Better Beginnings Guide for additional information.' A table titled 'Documents Uploaded:' is present, with a red circle around the '+ Add Attachments' button in the top right corner of the table area. At the bottom right are 'Save', 'Previous', and 'Continue' buttons.

Select **Upload File**.

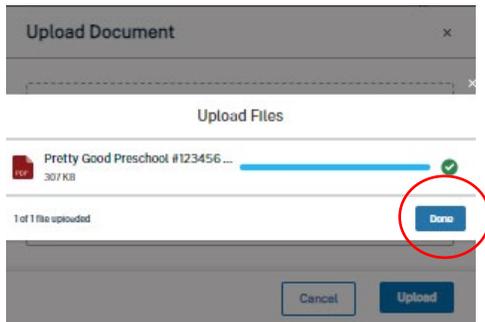
The screenshot shows the 'Upload Document' dialog box. It has a title bar with 'Upload Document' and a close button. Inside the dialog, there is a dashed box containing two buttons: 'Upload Files' (circled in red) and 'Or drop files'. Below this, it lists 'Accepted file Types (PDF, DOCX, PNG, JPEG, DOC, XLSX)'. There is a 'Document Type' dropdown menu with 'Select an Option' as the current selection. At the bottom are 'Cancel' and 'Upload' buttons.

Select each document on your computer that you are uploading and select **Open**.

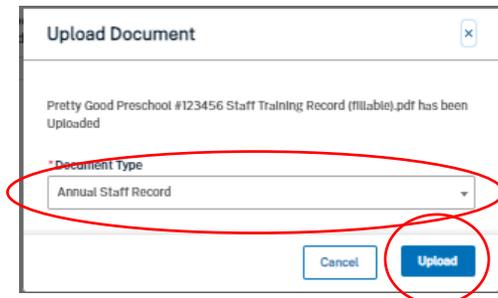
Save a copy of all documents for your records. Submit the completed application with documentation online through the ELS portal. For more information: www.ARBetterBeginnings.com Phone: 501-320-6161 Email: OEC.BetterBeginnings@ade.arkansas.gov



When prompted, select **Done**.



Select the document type you are uploading. Select **Upload**.



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Repeat this step until all required forms are uploaded.

Most Out-of-School Time programs are required to submit the documentation listed below.

Out-of-School Time programs participating in YPQI	Out-of-School Time programs not participating in YPQI
Staff training Record form AR KIDS, Child Health, and Child Dev form Strengthening Families form Strengthening Families self-assessment (level 3-6 only) Program Review Checklist YPQI assessment reports including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OQA Summary Report • School-Age Program Quality Assessment (SAPQA) • Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) • Summer Learning Quality Assessment (SLPQA) • Social Emotional Learning Program Quality Assessment (SELPQA) 	Staff training Record form AR KIDS, Child Health, and Child Dev form Strengthening Families form Strengthening Families self-assessment (level 3-6 only) Program Review Checklist PAS Summary Report SACERS CQI Report

If the document you are uploading is not an option in the **document type** drop-down list, use one of the available options or **other**. Your Better Beginnings Specialist will look at all the documents you provide to make sure that all requirements are met.

Once all required forms are uploaded, select **Continue**.

The screenshot shows the 'Documentation' step of an application process. On the left is a sidebar with navigation options: Application Checklist, Application Details, Operations, Participation & Accreditation, Documentation (selected), Review, and Sign & Submit. The main content area is titled 'Documentation' and includes instructions on required documents: Annual Staff Record, ARKids First, Child Health and Child Development, and Strengthening Families. A table lists 'Documents Uploaded' with columns for Document File Name and Document File Type. Three documents are listed, each with edit and delete icons. At the bottom right, there are 'Save', 'Previous', and 'Continue' buttons. The 'Continue' button is circled in red.

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Review

Select **edit details** to review each section of the application for accuracy.

Select **Continue**.

The screenshot shows the 'Review' step of the application process. On the left, a vertical sidebar lists the application sections: Application Checklist, Application Details, Operations, Participation & Accreditation, Documentation, Review (highlighted), and Sign & Submit. The main content area displays a checklist of these sections, each with an 'Edit Details' link. The 'Review' link is circled in red. At the bottom right, there are 'Previous' and 'Continue' buttons.

Sign and Submit

Type your name in the text box. Make sure the date is correct.

Select **Submit**.

The screenshot shows the 'Sign & Submit' step. The left sidebar is the same as in the previous step, but 'Sign & Submit' is now highlighted. The main content area contains a declaration and a list of terms. Below this, there are two input fields: 'Submitted By' (containing 'Pretty Good Preschool Director') and 'Submitted Date' (containing '2/14/2023'). Both fields are circled in red. At the bottom right, there are 'Previous' and 'Submit' buttons, with the 'Submit' button also circled in red.

Congratulations! You have submitted your application!

You can check on the status of your application by going to the Welcome page and selecting **Manage Applications**.

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Reciprocation

Eligible programs that are accredited through state or national accreditation systems or have standards set by an agency that may be equal or exceed Better Beginnings are eligible for full or partial reciprocation and given certification at levels that are determined by the Division. The following are some examples of approved accreditation systems. Click on the agency to go find more information on specific reciprocation details and documentation requirements.

- Arkansas Better Chance (ABC)
- American Camping Association (ACA)
- American Montessori Society (AMS)
- COGNIA
- The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities: Child and Youth Services Standards (CARF)
- Early Head Start
- Early Intervention Day Treatment (EIDT)
- Head Start
- National Afterschool Association (NAA)
- National Accreditation Commission (NAC)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
- [Non-ABC, HS, or EHS facilities owned by an Arkansas school district or Educational Cooperative](#)

Other accreditation systems may be considered upon review and approval by the Better Beginnings Program Administrator.

Reciprocity Requirements

Accrediting agency	Level of Reciprocity	Due at renewal date	Partial reciprocity also requires
NAA	Full reciprocity at Level 6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	NA
NAFCC	Full reciprocity at Level 6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	NA
NAEYC	Full reciprocity at Level 6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	NA
ABC*	Full reciprocity at the appropriate level for ERS score	Application Most recent ERS average	NA
Early Head Start*	Full reciprocity at the appropriate level for ITERS score	Application Most recent ITERS average	NA
Head Start*	Full reciprocity at Level 4 Full reciprocity at Level 5, and 6 with **required CLASS scores	Application Most recent CLASS report	NA
NAC	Full reciprocity at Level 4 Partial reciprocity at Level 5-6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	NA Ratios will be checked for Levels 5-6
COGNIA	Full reciprocity at Level 3 Partial reciprocity Levels 4-6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	NA Ratios will be checked for Levels 4-6
AMS	Full reciprocity at Level 3 Partial reciprocity at Level 4-6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	NA Ratios will be checked for Levels 4-6
ACA	Full reciprocity at Level 4 Partial Reciprocity at Levels 5-6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	ERS and ratios required at Levels 5-6 6
CARF	Full reciprocity at Level 3 Partial reciprocity at Levels 4-6	Application Proof of accreditation dates	All requirements (except PAS) for Levels 4-6
EIDT	Full Reciprocity at Level 2 Partial reciprocity at Levels 3-6	Application at Level 2	All requirements (except PAS) for Levels 3-6
AR school districts (non-ABC)	Partial reciprocity	Application	All requirements (except PAS) for Levels 2-6

*Classrooms under the same license that are not ABC, EHS, or HS are required to have ERS assessments. Submit an *Intent to Apply form* to request assessments.

**The following CLASS scores are required for Head Start Programs.

Level 5: Emotional Support 6, Classroom Organization 6, Instructional Support 3.

Level 6: Scores greater than those that are required for level 5.

Instructions for reciprocated programs

When prompted, select the type of approved accreditation your program has earned. THE ELS SYSTEM IS STILL BEING DEVELOPED. If the list does not include the approved accrediting agency, select a different one and upload the required documentation. Your Better Beginnings Specialist will look at all documentation.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for 'Better Beginnings'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Dashboard', 'Resources', and 'Contact Us'. Below this is a blue header with the text 'Division of Child Care Early Childhood Education - Child Care Licensing'. The main content area is titled 'New Application: Better Beginnings' and features a sidebar with steps: 'Application Details', 'Operations', 'Participation & Accreditation' (highlighted), 'Documentation', 'Review', and 'Sign & Submit'. The 'Participation & Accreditation' section is divided into two parts: 'Accreditation' and 'Facility Participations'. The 'Accreditation' section has a note: 'If any of the items in this section are checked, the proof of accreditation document is required to be uploaded in the Documentation tab.' It lists several accreditation types: NAEYC, ABC, CARF, MONTESSORI, NAFCC (checked), and COA. The 'Facility Participations' section lists: Special Nutrition, CHMS, Early Head Start, Voucher (checked), Head Start, and DDTCS. At the bottom right of the form are 'Save', 'Previous', and 'Continue' buttons.

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Arkansas School Districts

Non-ABC, HS, or EHS facilities owned by an Arkansas school district or Educational Cooperative receive full reciprocity based on the most recent ERS average.

- Upload most recent ERS CQI reports

National Afterschool Association (NAA)

Reciprocity at Level 6

- Submit application
- Upload proof of accreditation with dates

American Camping Association (ACA)

Full Reciprocity at Level 4

- Submit application
- Upload proof of accreditation (with dates)

Partial Reciprocity for Levels 5 and 6

- SACERS or YPQI assessments and ratios required
- Upload proof of accreditation (with dates)
- Upload SACERS or YPQI assessment reports

The screenshot shows the 'Documentation' section of the 'Better Beginnings' application portal. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home' and 'Dashboard' links, and a green success message: 'Success Document Uploaded Successfully'. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'New Application: Better Beginnings'. The left sidebar contains a menu with 'Application Details', 'Operations', 'Participation & Accreditation', 'Documentation' (selected), 'Review', and 'Sign & Submit'. The main content area is titled 'Documentation' and includes a note: 'All items checked in the Accreditation section require documentation for facilities applying for a Better Beginnings level 2-6 under reciprocity. Please select the document type and upload the relevant document below.' Below this note is a table of 'Documents Uploaded:' with columns for 'Document File Name' and 'Document File Type'. The table lists three documents: 'Pretty Good Preschool #123456 ITERS CQI.pdf' (Accreditation - ABC), 'Pretty Good Preschool #123456 SACERS CQI.pdf' (Accreditation - ABC), and 'Pretty Good Preschool #123456 ECERS CQI.pdf' (Other). At the bottom right, there are 'Save', 'Previous', and 'Continue' buttons.

Document File Name	Document File Type
Pretty Good Preschool #123456 ITERS CQI.pdf	Accreditation - ABC
Pretty Good Preschool #123456 SACERS CQI.pdf	Accreditation - ABC
Pretty Good Preschool #123456 ECERS CQI.pdf	Other

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