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STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT

November 21, 2012

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and  
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Susan Broman, Deputy Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Great Start to Quality Tiered Quality Rating System

It's been just over a year since Michigan launched *Great Start to Quality* state-wide. This Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System was designed to help parents make informed decisions about their child's early learning and care while supporting provider program improvement. Private, public, Head Start and preschool programs/providers have all been participating in a process of self-assessment, validation, Program Quality Assessment® and Quality Improvement Plans with their Great Start to Quality Resource Centers.

On **Monday, December 17, 2012** provider quality level ratings will be published for the first time on [greatstartCONNECT.org](http://greatstartCONNECT.org) as parents search for child care and preschool that meets their needs.

**What will be published?**

Each program will receive a quality level rating:

-  Program meets state licensing requirements.
-  Program meets state licensing requirements and is participating in Great Start to Quality.
-  Program demonstrates quality across some standards.
-  Program demonstrates quality across several standards.
-  Program demonstrates quality across almost all standards.
-  Program demonstrates highest quality.

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The stars will be “clickable” in greatstartCONNECT.org if parents would like to see the specific standards a provider had to meet in order to receive the rating.

**How are ratings determined?**

- All programs/providers who have submitted their self-assessment survey (SAS) in the Great Start to Quality STARS system by November 30 will have their SAS reviewed by a member of the Quality Assessment Team. Once reviewed, the SAS score will be the published quality level rating of 1, 2 or 3 blue stars. If the submitted SAS score is 4 or 5, the rating will only be published after a validation visit and a Program Quality Assessment® (PQA®).
- Programs/providers that have not submitted a SAS in Great Start to Quality STARS by November 30 will be given an empty star. When/if the program/provider submits a SAS in Great Start to Quality STARS and moves through the process of validation, program quality assessment and quality improvement planning, they will receive a quality level rating with blue star(s).

**How long will the rating be valid for?**

- Quality level ratings published in December 2012 will be valid until December 2014. There will be criteria for being re-assessed/re-rated and programs will have that option during the two years. Re-assessment data will be reviewed quarterly and the process and criteria modified as necessary.
- Beginning immediately, there’s no longer an option to re-open or edit a submitted SAS for 90 days. Once a program/provider submits a SAS, it will be locked for further editing until their rating expires or the program/provider is approved for re-assessment/re-rating.
- Programs that submit a SAS after November 30 will receive a quality level rating valid for two years from the date it’s published. Each of these programs will have a different two-year anniversary date for their quality level rating.

Please direct any questions you have about the process or your rating to your Great Start to Quality Resource Center. For those programs working on an SAS, please complete and submit it by November 30 so your rating can be published and we can all celebrate your success!

cc: Michigan Education Alliance