



MICHIGAN'S RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE YEAR 2 HIGHLIGHTS

Michigan had an exciting year in 2015 on its “Race to the Top.” In the past year, the Michigan Department of Education’s Office of Great Start and its Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) partners have made great strides towards the goal of improving access to high quality early learning and development programs statewide. Here are some of the year’s highlights:

- ✓ Unlicensed, subsidized providers now have access to more tools and opportunities to improve their services thanks to Quality Improvement Consultants hired through Great Start to Quality Resource Centers.
- ✓ A cohort project was implemented to meet the specific needs of unlicensed, subsidized providers, empowering this important population of providers with resources to better serve Michigan’s early learners.
- ✓ The Great Start to Quality participation incentive pilot was completed, and feedback and experiences from the pilot are being used to inform full implementation of the participation incentive for 2016.
- ✓ In 2015, there was an overall increase in the number of early learning and development programs participating in Great Start to Quality.
- ✓ Licensing Consultants can now review staff and center data to better prepare prior to on-site licensing visits due to access to the Great Start to Quality STARS platform
- ✓ The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has established statewide partnerships with other organizations, including the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to collaborate on projects that will support the physical and emotional health needs of Michigan’s children within the early learning and development system.
- ✓ RTT-ELC partner the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MiAEYC) engaged Michigan colleges through two higher education summits focused on improving articulation agreements between community colleges and universities.

- ✓ MiAEYC awarded eight colleges with grants to pursue National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, while an additional college was awarded a grant to pursue NAEYC reaccreditation.
- ✓ Thanks to MiAEYC, eligible providers received a total of 263 T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, including 146 scholarships to home-based providers and 117 scholarships to providers seeking certification to teach in Great Start Readiness Programs.
- ✓ RTT-ELC partner the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) successfully conducted a Unique Identification Code (UIC) pilot with eight Head Start grantee volunteers, which resulted in simplification and streamlining of the UIC request process. As a result, in fall 2015, all Head Start grantees were able to start requesting UICs for their students.
- ✓ CEPI also created two Early Childhood reports, “Early Childhood Count of Children Receiving Early Childhood Programs and Services” and “Count of Kindergarten Students receiving Early Childhood Programs and Services in the Prior Year” which will be released on the MI School Data website in 1st Quarter 2016.
- ✓ A contractor has been identified to establish a Data Governance structure for Early Childhood Data, bringing Michigan one step closer to having access to the data necessary to make better decisions about early learning programs and to ensuring that children are reading proficiently by the end of third grade and developmentally ready to succeed in school.
- ✓ Pathways to Potential staff trainings were held in three counties with the intention to strengthen family engagement efforts in local communities.

...and there is more to come! Michigan will continue racing to the top to ensure that all of the state’s youngest learners have greater access to high quality early learning and development.

Learn more about the Michigan Department of Education’s Office of Great Start, its partners, and its mission to improve access to high quality early learning and development programs through the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant by visiting the [grant website](#) or [liking us on Facebook](#).