Michigan had another exciting year in 2017 with the Early Learning Challenge. 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 made great strides toward the goal of improving access to high quality early learning and development programs statewide. Here are some of the year’s highlights:

- Through work led by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, 337 license exempt (unlicensed), subsidized providers participated in training cohorts designed to meet their specific needs. One hundred twelve providers completed Level 2 training, 59 completed Level 3 training, and four participants achieved licensure.
- Great Start to Quality provided $387,000 in Participation Bonuses to support 774 providers in Year 4, using all available funds for this activity. This means that more children with high needs, aged 0-5, will have access to high quality programs.
- Two hundred thirty-six programs received Great Start to Quality Improvement Grants, using all available funds for the activity. Great Start to Quality Improvement Grants give providers financial support to provide better services and learning environments to Michigan's early learners and their families.
- Provider participation in Great Start to Quality increased to 46 percent in 2017, up from 20.3 percent in Year 1, giving Michigan families greater access to high quality programs and giving providers access to more resources.
- Michigan made great progress with the Professional Development Registry, MiRegistry, in Year 4, with anticipated launch by summer 2018.
- Family engagement trainings for Pathways to Potential staff expanded in Year 4 to include additional Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) staff, including a training-of-trainers of 10 Michigan Department of Health and Human Services leaders on Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors.
- Michigan awarded $2.3 million in Trusted Advisor Grants to support family engagement activities in 46 communities.
✓ Contributing to more efficient monitoring, all child care licensing consultants were trained on key licensing indicators, developed in 2016 in partnership with the Department of Licensing and Regulatory affairs (LARA), with full implementation beginning January 1, 2018.

✓ Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MiAEYC) awarded $1.8 million in T.E.A.C.H. scholarships to 594 early childhood educators, and expanded the awards to cover Master’s degrees.

✓ RTT-ELC partner the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) successfully connected Unique Identification Codes (UIC) with children eligible for subsidy payments in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services data system (Bridges) to connect these data to other early childhood programs.

✓ The Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) created a fifth report, “Continuity of Service in Special Education,” now available on the MI School Data website.

✓ The partnering team at MDHHS fully launched social and emotional health consultation and child care health consultation, providing consultation to 172 providers.

✓ Cafés focused on Strengthening Families™ were held in the seven original Pathways to Potential communities, as well as areas in the Thumb region and the Upper Peninsula, equipping parents and providers to make the best of family opportunities.

...and there is more to come! Michigan will continue racing to the top in its fifth and final grant year to ensure that all 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 by liking us on Facebook.