

Michigan is Already off to a Great Start 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 from January through June 2015:

- Unlicensed, subsidized providers have access to more tools and opportunities to improve their services thanks to Quality Improvement Consultants hired through Great Start to Quality (GSQ) Resource Centers.
- Sixty-nine unlicensed, subsidized providers have already committed to participating in training cohorts designed to meet their specific needs.
- Home based provider participation in GSQ increased by 3.5 percentage points, bringing the statewide home based provider participation rate to 12.5%.
- Licensing Consultants can now review staff and center data to better prepare prior to on-site licensing visits through the use of the Great Start to Quality STARS platform.
- The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) 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.
- The Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MiAEYC) has engaged 22 colleges interested in improving or adding early childhood programs by gaining accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- In 2015, 92 family and group home providers in winter semester, and 89 family and group home providers in summer semester received T.E.A.C.H. scholarships for professional development to ultimately improve the quality of early learning and development programs, including Great Start Readiness Programs statewide.
- 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. UIC requests will now be open to all Head Start grantees this fall, and Michigan will be 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.
- Development has continued on the Early Childhood Mi-School Data portal, and the first two data reports are expected to be implemented by the end of November 2015.
- Pathways to Potential staff trainings were held in three counties with the intention to improve access to high quality early learning and development programs in Pathways to Potential communities.

...and it does not stop here! 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](#).