



Newsletter

August 2011

Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge

Exciting news!

On Friday, July 15th, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that New York intends to compete in the federal Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC). New York is eligible to receive up to \$100 million to improve the quality and access of early learning programs that provide a solid foundation for all of New York's children.



**Fasten your seat belt...
Here we go!**

The first priority addressed in the RTT-ELC is for states to improve the outcomes for children through learning standards and assessments to promote school readiness. In the second priority, states applying for these resources must demonstrate the use of a quality rating and improvement system to promote school readiness. The specific application criteria should be released by the federal government this month with the deadline for submission probably in October.

What's Happening with the Field Test Sites?

Although the field test ended in 2010 we are still engaging with the field test programs. Some programs hosted QUALITYstarsNY launch parties co-hosted with Winning Beginning NY and Citizen Action of New York in conjunction with the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Week of the Young Child. A field test program, Victory Child Care, is also featured prominently in the WBNY/Citizen Action of New York "What is QUALITYstarsNY?" video. Approximately 100 field test programs and providers are currently working with 6 Quality Improvement Planning Specialists to move forward on their Quality Improvement Plans and are taking advantage of the QUALITY Scholars resources for professional development and training. For more information about the continuing involvement of the QUALITYstarsNY field test sites, contact Ola Friday (ola.Friday@mail.cuny.edu)

Buffalo Bridge to Implementation Program

QUALITYstarsNY is partnering with the Child Care Resource Network of Buffalo, NY to engage 8 new center-based programs in Erie County in a QUALITYstarsNY preparation project. The new programs will do a self-assessment using the draft QUALITYstarsNY standards, participate in independent Environment Rating Scale (ERS) observations and create a Quality Improvement Plan with the assistance of a Quality Improvement Planning Specialist. All participants will work with an on-site Technical Assistance Specialist to address issues noted in the Quality Improvement Plans.

The 8 new programs joined the 8 existing centers to form a leadership learning community with opportunities for group and individual support, guidance and growth. Participants will meet monthly and engage in an on-line community as well. The BRIDGE Program will run from June 2011 to June 2012. For more information about the Buffalo Bridge to Implementation Program, contact Ola Friday (ola.friday@mail.cuny.edu)

Early Learning Alignment



The Council on Children and Families has released a new document that shows the alignment of the different learning standards (expectations for what children should know and be able to do).

The purpose of aligning the state's developmental guidelines and standards is to help ensure that all children who attend any early care and education setting in the state will experience responsive and knowledgeable teachers in stimulating learning environments that support and build upon each child's development.

To read the Early Learning Alignment brief, visit www.qualitystarsny.org



Curious about the Early Childhood Advisory Council?

The New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) is pleased to unveil its Progress Report, which charts the course of the ECAC in providing direction and leadership on implementing the early childhood agenda for New York's young children and their families. The Progress Report demonstrates the ECAC's commitment to achieving its goals of Healthy Children, Strong Families, Quality Early Learning and Coordinated and Responsive Systems. To read the Progress Report and learn more about the ECAC's work in building a statewide system to ensure success for our youngest citizens visit www.qualitystarsny.org. The NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council has six work groups to accomplish the tasks outlined in its strategic plan. The work groups are: Data Development, Finance, Promoting Healthy Development, Quality Improvement (see below for more information on this work group), Strong Families and Workforce Development. Click here for more information about the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council: <http://www.ccf.state.ny.us/Initiatives/ECACHome.htm>



What is the Quality Improvement Work Group?

The Quality Improvement Work Group (QIWG) oversees the development of QUALITYstarsNY. Regardless of setting -- centers, schools, and family child care homes -- QUALITYstarsNY will provide a coherent, systematic way to support program improvement and ensure the best use of public dollars in all early childhood programs. It will establish standards of program excellence by providing a research-based tool for assessing the quality of early childhood programs and will create a comprehensive strategy for aligning the quality of programs with the investment of public resources. The QIWG is co-chaired by Janice Molnar, Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Child Care Services at the Office of Children and Family Services, and Anne Mitchell, President of Early Childhood Policy Research. Barbara Hogan (barbara.hogan@ccf.state.ny.us) provides staff support to the Quality Improvement Work Group.

Sincerely,
Barbara Hogan and Ola Friday

QUALITYstarsNY
a project of the NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council
www.qualitystarsny.org OR www.qsny.org

