



CT Early Childhood Investment Initiative

July 16, 2008

Dear Child Care Provider,

As Co-Chair of the Governor's Early Childhood Research & Policy Council, it is of the utmost importance to me that all of Connecticut's children have the opportunity to be engaged in high-quality early education programs. The goal of Connecticut's Early Childhood Investment Initiative is to ensure that all of the state's young children are born healthy, grow up healthy and safe, and are ready for school success. A critical component to achieving this goal is the design and implementation of a statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System, intended to promote quality in the delivery of early care and education in the state.

Seventeen states have already adopted public Quality Rating Scales, which are popular with parents, helping them learn about the rated quality of the child care and preschool settings they choose for their young children. In Connecticut, a 26-member QRIS work group is currently developing guidelines and preliminary recommendations for standards in early childhood care and education programs. The goal of the system is to:

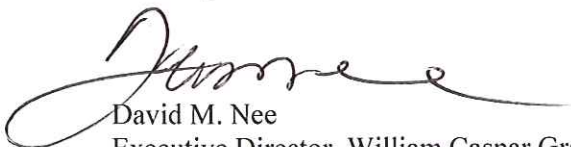
- Improve the well-being of children in Connecticut
- Achieve high quality across ALL early care and education programs in all areas of Connecticut by providing:
 - financial and other resources to programs to continually improve
 - information to parents so that they can make educated decisions
 - a common system of accountability for ALL public agencies and funders

This system will recognize the hard work and accomplishments of all providers and programs at each level of rating and will offer assistance and incentives to programs in order to support a move to higher levels of quality. There is a recognized need to minimize the amount of time providers spend on licensing and accreditation paperwork, as well as minimizing the duplication of efforts and materials submitted by programs and providers. The QRIS plan will look to streamline these processes and create a more efficient and comprehensive procedure for applying for and maintaining quality ratings. It is not the intent of those charged with this work to create an additional burden on programs; instead the plan will look to simplify reporting systems and increase support and incentives available to programs.

The QRIS plan will be reviewed by a host of different members of the early childhood community prior to its submission to Governor Rell in December.

All of us at the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council want to thank you for all of your hard work and effort in providing education and care for young children and families in Connecticut. Please feel free to contact us with questions or comments, and we look forward to providing you with more information as the QRIS plan develops.

Sincerely,



David M. Nee

Executive Director, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund
Co-Chair, Governor's Early Childhood Research & Policy Council