

June 1, 2016

Cynthia Dungey, Director  
Ohio Department of Job & Family Services  
30 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Director Dungey:

We appreciate the opportunity through the Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC) to offer recommendations and assistance to the Office of Family Assistance on matters affecting the availability, affordability, and quality of early care and education.

In November of 2015, we sent a survey to 6,998 licensed type A, type B, and center-based child care programs. The survey was sent out electronically with a 24.8% response rate. We have attached a summary of the survey results to this letter for your convenience.

Our goal was to collect data on what was most costly, most challenging, and areas of least understanding within each of the domains of Step Up to Quality (SUTQ). We collected data on the SUTQ domains of learning and development, administrative and leadership practices, staff qualifications and professional development, and family and community partnerships.

Child Care Advisory Council reviewed the results and is making the following recommendations based on the data analysis:

**Learning and Development Domain**

- Develop specific training tailored for administrators on program standards for their provider type (type A, type B, and center based).
- Ensure that financial supports for 3, 4, and 5 star rated programs cover the actual cost of purchasing, implementing, and maintaining curriculum and child screening and assessment.
- Create additional supports for all program types for curriculum planning and child screening assessment. All program types reported these domains as being the most costly, most challenging, and needing more understanding.

**Administrative and Leadership Domain**

- Consolidate and reduce the SUTQ paperwork.
- Develop training and technical assistance on system support to manage and complete the documentation required for SUTQ relevant to the program type (type A and type B).

**Staff Qualification and Professional Development**

- Review the Career Pathways Levels (CPL) for changes to accommodate better the professional development hours taken and years of experience in the field.
- Explore financial supports for staff education and professional development. All program types reported this domain to be the most challenging and costly to implement. This data was before the loss of Quality Achievement Award (QAA) dollars which supported this domain.
- Ensure articulation agreements for Ohio approved training to college credits for associate degrees.

- Revise education requirements to the Ohio approval process to include credit for electronic based learning.

#### **Family and Community Partnerships**

- Identify and inform providers of other local, regional, and community-based organizations who are knowledgeable about family and community engagement work with the intent to create a provider network of evidence-based practices, and supports around community and family engagement.
- Coordinate with other state agencies that are working with star rated providers to help them build connections and develop systems to promote family engagement and community partnerships.
- Revisit family and community engagement to improve and broaden the variety of activities that would count for points in the system. Ensure that the activities are result/outcome driven and provide variety to different local needs, especially for 4 and 5 star programs.

#### **Staff-Child Ratio and Group Size**

- Identify and partner with other organizations knowledgeable in accreditation to build a TA model to provide support to programs seeking accreditation.
- Revisit the point system for accreditation to ensure that the points awarded adequately compensate the program for the business changes necessary to achieve and maintain the accreditation.

#### **Other Recommendations Based on Comments from the Survey**

- Revisit exemptions to SUTQ to include:
  - Pediatric Mental Health Facilities
  - Program that operate during traditional and non-traditional hours, provide an exemption for children that only attend non-traditional hours.
  - Programs having limited hours of operation
    - Some school age programs
    - Some summer programs
- Create and invest in a communication plan to support SUTQ by recipient type with targeted messages to:
  - Families
  - Center Directors
  - Owners
  - Non-Profit boards who control operation of programs
  - Family Child Care Providers
  - Local and Political Leaders

On behalf of the CCAC, I appreciate your consideration of these suggestions and would welcome an opportunity to discuss these recommendations further.

Sincerely,

  
Pamela M. Perrino, Chair  
Ohio Child Care Advisory Council