



Department of Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor

Cynthia C. Dungey, Director

August 1, 2016

Pamela Perrino
262 Youngs Run Drive NW
Warren, Ohio 44483

Dear Ms. Perrino:

On behalf of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, I would like to thank the members of the Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC) for the dedication and expertise you bring to the field of child care. The Department has reviewed the council's recommendations submitted under two separate letters dated June 1, 2016 and would like to provide some information in response to your recommendations.

Step Up To Quality Survey

The Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) survey provided details on specific areas for improvement to the current SUTQ policy and procedures, as well as recommendations for funding and workforce development. The Department has begun a validation study to inform of areas of success and areas for improvement specific to SUTQ. The results from the validation study and the SUTQ survey will allow the Department to make informed decisions when amending current policy and procedures. The SUTQ survey results will allow the Department to assess the current policy, training and communication to improve the overall process for Ohio's early childhood professionals.

Curriculum

The ODJFS is currently in the process of procuring two curriculums in an effort to assist with defraying the cost of implementing SUTQ. Programs have identified the cost of a curriculum as an expense for their programs. These two specific curriculums will not be required to be used by programs, but will be available to programs serving at least one child in publicly funded child care at no expense if they should choose to use them.

On-Line Training

Effective July 1, 2016, two additional on-line Ohio Approved courses are now allowable. Ohio Approved on-line courses will continue to be made available on a case-by-case basis (depending on the topic) to assist early childhood professionals in meeting the 20 hour professional development training requirement.

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Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is implemented by our partnering agency, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE); the ODE is responsible for the data from the KRA. Working with the ODE and within the next several years, Ohio expects to have data to support the premise that children benefit from attending high quality programming, as reflected in the KRA scores for children who have participated in these programs. The ODJFS has sent the request for KRA scores by county to the ODE for their review.

Ohio's commitment, pursuant to 5104.29 of the Ohio Revised Code, is to serve all publicly funded children in high quality child care by 2025. As the Department continues to develop plans to meet the 2025 goal of all publicly funded child care programs being highly rated, the council's recommendations for changes to the SUTQ process, local initiatives and funding will be considered.

I appreciate your recommendations presented to the Department and look forward to a continued partnership to promote affordable, available quality child care for Ohio's children.

Sincerely,


Cynthia C. Dungey, Director

cc: Kara Bertke-Wente, Deputy Director