



March 13, 2015

Dear Majority Leader Skelos and Speaker Heastie,

We are writing to urge you to include \$3M for QUALITYstarsNY, New York's quality rating and improvement system, in the final budget bill. Collectively, we represent nearly 400 child care programs serving approximately 26,000 children across New York. Our programs are located in persistently low achieving school areas and serve many low-income children receiving subsidies. **QUALITYstarsNY funding ends in June 2015. If QUALITYstarsNY does not receive state funding, our programs will lose access to the quality supports that we desperately need. Furthermore, New York will take a devastating step back, joining Missouri as one of two states in the country without a quality improvement & accountability framework for early education.**

Participating in QUALITYstarsNY helps us promote true excellence for the children and families we serve. It uses research-based program standards developed by experts in New York to evaluate and improve the quality of early childhood programs for young children from birth through kindergarten. Participating programs are given a 1-5 star rating based on standards and assessment tools across four categories: Learning Environment, Family Engagement, Qualifications & Experience and Management & Leadership. The QUALITYstarsNY team uses evaluation results to target professional development and other resources to help us improve program quality. At the program level, QUALITYstarsNY has helped us support better child outcome results through the implementation of developmentally appropriate curricula and other supports, increased teacher training and retention, and implementation of strong family engagement strategies to involve and support parents as their child's first teachers.

We urge you to include Governor Cuomo's proposed \$3M for QUALITYstarsNY in the final budget bill because quality matters – especially for our youngest learners! This investment will improve the quality of educational programming received by more than 26,000 children served by our programs.

Sincerely,

QUALITYstarsNY program participants (see attached)

CC: Assembly Member Farrell, Jr., Assembly Member Morelle, Assembly Member Hooper, Assembly Member Aubry, Assembly Member Kolb, Assembly Member Oaks, Senator Klein, Senator Libous, Senator DeFrancisco, Senator Seward, Senator Valesky, Senator Stewart-Cousins, Senator Krueger



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