

The Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network Needs Your Help!

Dear Michigan Montessorian,

The State of Michigan has instituted a QRIS (Quality Rating and Improvement System) for licensed child care centers and child care homes, through which each institution will receive a rating of one through five stars. This "star rating system" has two components: (1) An online self-assessment, and (2) for those centers and homes that score well on the self-assessment, an on-site validation using the HighScope Program Quality Assessment (PQA) rating scale.

Although well-intended, the new system is contrary to Montessori philosophy in many ways, and authentic Montessori programs will not be able to achieve the highest rating. Most states are now establishing QRIS programs similar to Michigan's. It is a trend that is not going away. The "Star Rating" results are published and available to all parents who are seeking programs for their children. The ramifications for your school's reputation, enrollment, and staffing could be significant.

Representatives from Michigan Montessori Society and a number of other concerned Montessorians have formed an advocacy coalition in an attempt to work with the State of Michigan. Information about our efforts thus far can be found on the Advocacy page of the Michigan Montessori Society website: www.mmsoc.org/advocacy. The coalition is resolved to:

1. Define Montessori in the State of Michigan.
2. Develop a Montessori-appropriate rating system.
3. Work with Montessorians throughout the country to formally give authentic Montessori facilities the recognition they deserve. Visit <http://www.montessoriforward.org> and <http://amiusa.org/montessori-advocacy> for more information about new national initiatives.

In order to demonstrate to Michigan legislators and regulators that Montessori programs have a strong presence, the Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network will be conducting a survey. This survey is an impact study whereby MMEAN hopes to determine:

1. The number of Montessori schools in the State of Michigan.
2. The number of students being served by those Montessori schools.
3. The number of staff members employed in Montessori facilities in Michigan.
4. The number of certified Montessori teachers in our state.

This basic information is critical to our efforts to advocate for quality Montessori programs at both the state and national levels. There is power in numbers. Our collective voices will be a much stronger force as we work to educate and influence legislative and regulatory agencies. Our future is at stake.

Please help us support Montessori education in Michigan by accessing and completing our online survey at <http://mmsoc.org/survey/>, or asking your school's administrator to do so. As an alternative, you may fill out and return the attached form. Please complete all surveys by **NOVEMBER 15, 2013**.

Thank you!



Montessori Program Survey

In order to advocate effectively for Montessori programs in our state, we must speak with a unified, collective voice. It is important that lawmakers and regulators understand the scope of Montessori programs in Michigan—how many thousands of children and families we serve, and how many people we employ. Please help us assemble a database of basic demographic information by filling out the survey below. Return this survey to the address above, or complete the online version at http://mmsoc.org/survey/ by NOVEMBER 15, 2013. Thank you!

CONTACT INFORMATION

School name _____

School address _____

City _____ MI Zip _____

School website _____

Administrative contact and title _____

Contact's email _____

School phone _____ Contact phone _____

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- Public school Charter academy Private non-profit center Private for-profit center Family or group child care home Other

STUDENT AND STAFF COUNTS

Total number of enrolled children _____ Age range _____ (youngest → oldest)

Total number of employees _____

Total number of trained Montessori teachers _____