



Missouri Children's Leadership Council

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE
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Kids Win as Statutory Prohibition on Quality Ratings for Early Learning Providers Ends

As of today, June 22, 2016, Missouri is no longer the only state in the nation with a statutory prohibition on quality ratings for early childhood education providers.

The Missouri Children's Leadership Council would like to express our thanks to Governor Nixon for signing SB638, and to Representative Donna Pfautch (R-33, Harrisonville), Senator David Pearce (R-21, Warrensburg), bill sponsors and Senate bill handler, Senator Jeannie Riddle (R-10, Fulton) for recognizing the need to provide Missouri parents with the information they need to make an informed decision on their child's early care and education.

"We pick school districts based on quality, we buy a car based on quality, there are quality ratings of appliances, the meat we buy is rated on quality. Practically every decision we make as consumers is based on quality. Yet, as a matter of state policy, we have told our young families that one of the most important decisions they will make, choosing a child care or early education provider, must be made without the benefit of a quality evaluation," Judy Dungan, Director of Policy and Advocacy for the Missouri Children's Leadership Council said.

SB638 creates a time-limited, voluntary pilot program that is open to center based, home based and exempt religious providers. During the next three years, the Missouri Head Start Collaboration Office and the Departments of Health & Senior Services, Mental Health, and Social Services will collaborate to establish an early learning quality assurance report.

"Today we take a small, incremental but important step toward giving Missouri families the knowledge they need to make this important decision. The Missouri Children's Leadership Council is all about kids and we believe this is one of the most important bills of the 98th General Assembly," Dungan concluded.