

**Position Statement on House Bill 1742, Printer's Number 4080**

*Issued October 2, 2018*

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**Position**

*The Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children (PennAEYC), Trying Together and First Up: Champions for Early Education support House Bill 1742, PN 4080. The legislation recognizes the importance of quality care and education as parents choose a provider for their children and we commend the bill sponsors, Rep. Mehaffie and Rep. Solomon, for their support of continuous quality improvement through the Keystone STARS system and for their willingness to amend the bill to address recommendations from our organizations.*

**Bill Summary**

HB 1742 requires child care providers to post their Keystone STAR rating (1-4) on their websites. The Department of Human Services (DHS) must issue placards that include the name of the provider, the name of and contact information for DHS, the date the placard was issued and the STAR rating of the provider. The provider must post the placard in any public-facing window on or adjacent to their entrance or at the entrance if there is no window. In addition, the provider must inform families of their STAR level in writing at the time of application and enrollment. Providers that fail to display their placard or alter their placard to misrepresent their STAR level will be cited for non-compliance and will be subject to a STAR 1 rating for two years. DHS must ensure the placard is posted and accurate on an annual basis. The act takes effect in 180 days.

**Background**

All certified (licensed) child care providers in Pennsylvania are required to post the certificate of compliance issued by DHS in a public place in the facility, according to regulation. They also must post written notice of any DHS action to revoke, refuse to renew or downgrade a provider's certificate of compliance.

Keystone STARS is Pennsylvania's quality rating and improvement system for early care and education providers. All certified child care providers are now included in Keystone STARS and the system has four STAR level ratings, STAR 1-4. Providers maintaining a certificate of compliance with no additional activities are designated as STAR 1 programs and STAR 3 and 4 providers represent programs that have achieved high-quality designations. Similar to the certification process, DHS issues a STARS designation certificate, which is intended to be prominently posted as well. This is part of DHS policy.

In addition to the posting of this information on-site, DHS also maintains the [www.findchildcarepa.gov](http://www.findchildcarepa.gov) which displays child care provider inspection history and STAR rating, along with other helpful information to aid families in the decision of choosing a program for their child.

**Recommendations and Rationale**

We believe requiring providers to post their STARS certificate on their website and at their physical location, along with sharing it in writing at application and enrollment, is an important tool in helping families understand the importance of quality in their decision-making. This is a timely requirement now that all certified providers are participating in Keystone STARS. We believe all of Pennsylvania's children deserve the opportunity to attend a child care program which has met high-quality standards. The more information which can be provided to families, so they understand the importance of quality early care and education in preparing their children for school and life success will ultimately increase demand

for STAR 3 and 4 providers. At the same time, our organizations recognize the unmet need in the child care system is significant. Further investments are needed at the state and federal levels to support programs that have reached STAR 3 and 4 to continue at that rating and for our programs that have not yet reached high-quality ratings to move up that ladder to build the supply of high-quality care.

We appreciate the bill sponsors including the following amendments, which we recommended, in the legislation:

- A prior version of the bill did not apply equitably to all certified child care providers. For-profit providers were excluded from the legislation and are now reflected in the current bill.
- The bill now includes the provision for providers to share their STAR level in writing at application and enrollment. This will ensure the parent is aware of the quality rating system and the provider's rating.
- The bill removes the word "day" from references to "child day care". Changing the terminology to remove the word "day" aligns language to current terminology that accurately reflects the work of early care and education programs and recognizes child care teachers as professionals who promote the emotional, cognitive, communicative, perceptual-motor, physical and social development of the child. We strongly supported the recent passage of HB 1677 which makes this change throughout the Humans Services Code and requires regulations to be updated.
- The bill addresses situations where a child care provider does not have a window at the entrance, regarding placement of the placard.
- The bill now requires DHS to monitor the posting of and accuracy of the placard.