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## **DECCD INTENT:**

DECCD intends to utilize the expertise of a national expert in the evaluation of quality rating and improvement systems to evaluate the policies, processes and implementation of the Mississippi Quality Stars Program.

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## **EVALUATION PROCESS:**

Through a competitive Request for Proposal process, MDHS DECCD awarded a contract for evaluation of the MS Quality Stars Program to the Frank Porter Graham Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Frank Porter Graham Institute is nationally recognized for their thorough work and research surrounding effective quality rating and improvement systems. In addition, the Frank Porter Graham Institute has a long and successful history in evaluating quality rating and improvement systems. More information about their work can be located at: <http://fpg.unc.edu>. DECCD is excited to welcome such a prestigious research and evaluation team to conduct this work. The work will begin August 1, 2014 and will be conducted over a 12 month period.

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## **COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS:**

In order to ensure that the evaluation process is thorough and comprehensive, the evaluators will:

- Conduct focus groups with participating and non-participating providers as well as parents with children enrolled in participating and non-participating programs across the state to gain insights into the quality rating process.
- Review policies and procedures to report on alignment with program goals and best practices for providing quality child care.
- Report on the overall effectiveness of MS Quality Stars quality criteria in reaching program goals.
- Provide recommendations for strengthening the MS Quality Stars program in reaching its goal of quality assessment.
- Provide a comparison of the Mississippi Quality Stars program criteria and implementation methods with quality rating and improvement systems in other states.

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## **AFTER THE EVALUATION:**

DECCD believes that utilizing the evaluation information is the most important step in the evaluation process. Incorporating changes to the MS Quality Stars program will be accomplished through a formal revision process. This process will be conducted through a Revision Taskforce comprised of parents, providers, quality rating administration and staff, representatives from colleges and universities with early childhood education programs, child and family advocacy groups, DECCD staff, and more. This taskforce will work to identify how to best implement the recommendations presented by the Frank Porter Graham Institute. The result of the work of this taskforce will be a redesign and re-launch of the Mississippi Quality Stars program.

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## **HOW TO STAY INFORMED:**

Throughout the evaluation process, the DECCD website [www.childcareinfo.ms](http://www.childcareinfo.ms) will contain information about times/dates for focus groups, taskforce meetings, and how to become involved in the evaluation and/or revision process.

DECCD looks forward to the evaluation and evolution of our state's quality rating and improvement system. Please feel free to contact Laura Dickson at [Laura.Dickson@mdhs.ms.gov](mailto:Laura.Dickson@mdhs.ms.gov) with any questions about this information.