



# PROJECT

# S T A R S

CONNECTICUT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

State of Connecticut  
Department of Education  
September 15, 2003

## **PROJECT STARS**

### **ABSTRACT**

Over the past two years, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC), Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC), Special Education Resource Center (SERC), and the Center for Community and School Action Research (CCSAR) have implemented our 2001 Early Childhood Educator Professional Development grant, Project STARS. We have delivered high-quality, research-based, credit-bearing literacy professional development to early childhood educators, provided enhanced entry-level literacy training for CDA candidates, and engaged higher education faculty members in early literacy research institutes. Our ultimate goal for our proposed continuation of STARS is to promote the school readiness of at-risk children in six exceptionally high-need communities, expanding our research-based professional development with the enhancement of content-focused mentoring. To respond to the expressed needs of our target communities, we will offer three credit-bearing programs—Literacy Environment Enrichment Program (LEEP), Supporting Children with Language Differences, and Children’s Challenging Behavior—to a total of 400 early childhood educators. For entry-level staff, we will provide our revised language and literacy modules to 450 CDA candidates—for a total of 850 participants who serve approximately 8,000 low-income children. By furthering our work with Connecticut’s two- and four-year institutions of higher education, we will create a model that leads to professionalization of the field’s workforce. We have already made strides toward sustainability with our 2001 grant. In the coming years, we will establish new higher education initiatives that will lead to articulation agreements, research-based criteria for course development, a growing consensus about the content and pedagogy that

characterizes high-quality professional development, and a shared understanding of the connection between children's social-emotional development and literacy learning.

For more information about this initiative, please contact:

Gerri Rowell, Program Manager, **Project STARS**

State Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457

(Tel) 860/807-2031

e-mail: [gerri.rowell@po.state.ct.us](mailto:gerri.rowell@po.state.ct.us)