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## Maine Roads To Quality Professional Development Network State FY 25 Q1 Summary Report

Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network (MRTQ PDN) is dedicated to advancing professionalism in the early childhood and out-of-school time (OST) domains through the implementation of a statewide professional development system. MRTQ PDN provides a range of services, including:

- The MRTQ Registry
- Core Knowledge, On-Demand, and Elective Training
- Credentialing and Apprenticeship
- Quality Initiatives
- Technical Assistance through
  - On-site consultation
  - Outreach
  - The Warm Line
  - Facilitated peer-to-peer networks including cohorts, communities of practice, and professional learning communities.

Additionally, MRTQ PDN provides support to programs of all settings regarding *Rising Stars for ME*; Maine's quality rating and improvement system, Child Care Choices, and meeting the health and safety requirements for compliance with the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

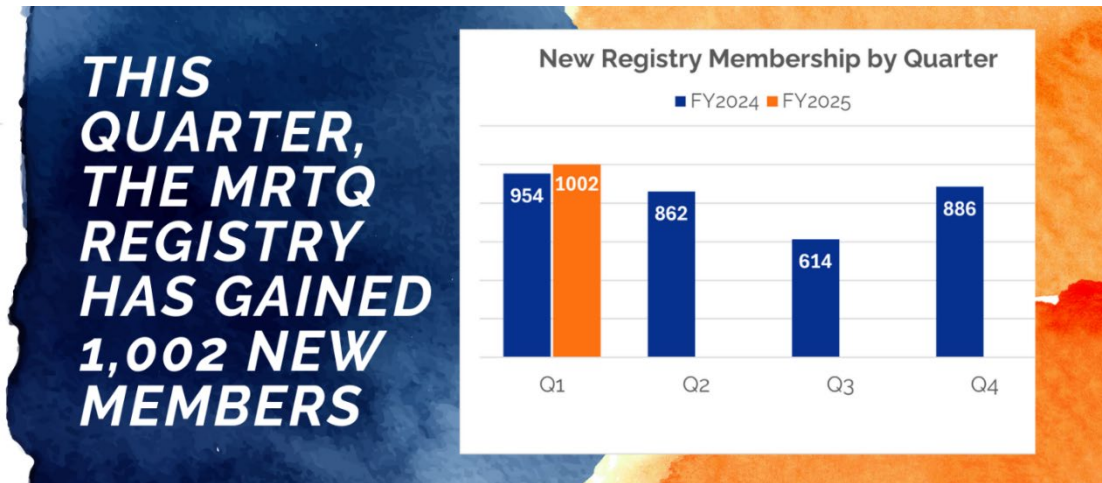
Along with the submitted Quarterly Report, which outlines the MRTQ PDN's advancement toward fulfilling our performance measures as per the contract, the following is a summary of notable contributions made during the first quarter to promote professionalism in our field, enhance the quality of care, and establish a statewide professional development system.

### *Attachments*

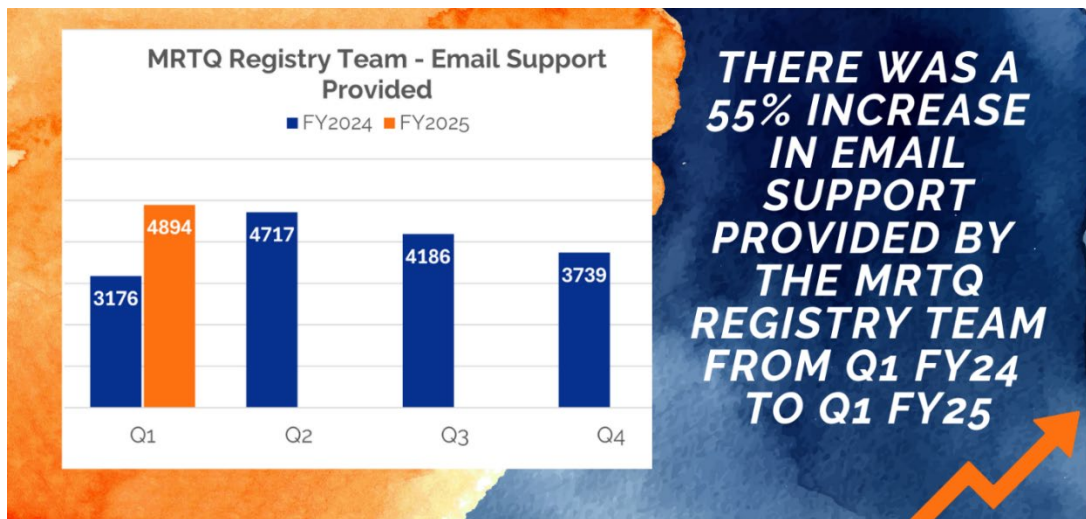
1. Q1 Complete Data Report: [2025 Q1 Appendix A & B USM PDN-PDG 01-01-2024 to 12-31-2025.xlsx](#)
2. [MRTQ PDN Strategic Plan](#) (Developed in 2022)

## MRTQ Registry

This quarter, the **MRTQ Registry** has **gained 1,002 new members**. The start of the school year in September tends to be a busy month for the Registry, 43% of those new members joined in September alone. This puts the overall active membership at **22,276, of which, 93% are direct care providers**.



A new school year also means an influx of education and training documents submitted to the Registry for verification towards the providers' professional development profiles. In this quarter, the Registry Team processed and verified 643 education documents, and **100% of those documents were processed within five business days**.



The Registry Team responded to **4,894 email requests** in the first quarter. Most of these are education and training documents that require processing by the team, and many others include requests for support with accessing the Registry, understanding the Career Lattice, or other technical support questions. A special mention to **Shane Plumer**, who was promoted into the role of Registry Coordinator in September and is responsible for the management of Registry communications.

## Training

**Jason D'Amico** was hired as the **Technical Assistance and Data Specialist** for MRTQ Training, a new position and with a different skillset in replacement of the former Project Assistant. Jason has already shown that he understands complex systems, and is able to think critically and independently to support our team and providers. We have expanded the responsibilities of this role to include more robust work with our training evaluations, training content review and provider support.

Q1 also marks the first three months of the Training Team having a dedicated manager. **Danielle Gismondi** stepped into this role in late June and has been working to hire a replacement for the Training Coordinator role that has been vacant. We are excited about what we can accomplish as a new and expanded team.

From July to September **we began 23 facilitated trainings**. 7 trainings were complete by the end of September with **a completion rate of 76%**. Out of the 23 trainings beginning in this quarter MRTQ had **an 87% enrollment rate**. We launched the updated Health and Safety Orientation, and **1,033** providers completed this on-demand training!

The on-demand training ***Preschool Maine Early Learning and Development Standards*** became available to everyone beginning in July. It provides an overview of the newly developed P-MELDS with a focus on each domain and ideas for integrating the content into a variety of settings. Each module introduces content and highlights specific practices and skills designed to foster the participant's abilities to use the P-MELDS independently once the training is complete. The training also has an intentional focus on principles for working with diverse populations and creating inclusive, developmentally appropriate learning environments. This quarter **604** participants have completed the training!

In collaboration with CCIDS we updated the training ***Creating Inclusive Preschool Settings*** to reflect the most up-to-date terminology and content.

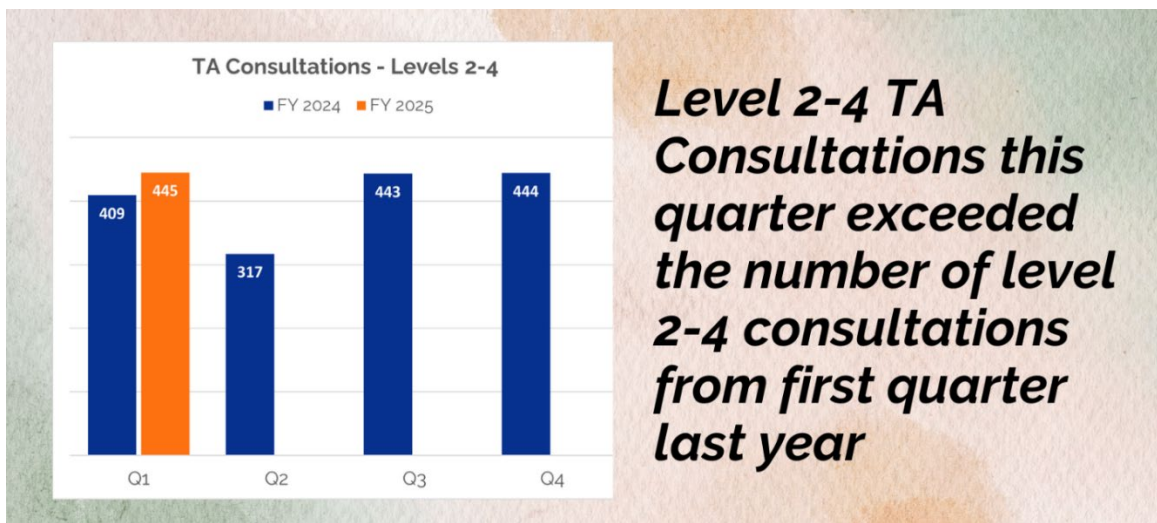
We are currently in the process of updating the on-demand training ***Caring for Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness*** and ***Your Professional Development Portfolio***.

## Technical Assistance

MRTQ PDN contains a statewide technical assistance (TA) system that caters to early childhood and out-of-school programs to enhance program quality. This initiative facilitates a reflective process for practitioners to apply their training and education effectively, promoting the implementation and maintenance of best practices.

### *Technical Assistance Q1 Highlights*

Level 3 and 4 consultations remain at record levels across program settings with the highest number related to professional development, followed by administrative policies and procedures. Rising Stars Quality Improvement Awards have contributed to awareness of the variety of services provided by the MRTQ PDN technical assistance team. Along with consultation, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are drawing record numbers of participants, for example “Power of Play: Going on a Bear Hunt” offered in Androscoggin County.



### *Collaborations and Partnerships*

- 1<sup>st</sup> 4ME sites
- Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL)
- Regional Conference teams in Aroostook, Washington, and York Counties
- Career Day event with OCFS staff
- MaineECO

## **PEER TO PEER NETWORKS**

**4**

NAFCC  
Accreditation  
Cohorts

**43**

CoP  
Meetings

**1**

NAEYC  
Accreditation  
Cohort

**3**

Professional  
Learning  
Communities

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**55**

OPEN CONSULTATIONS

**98**

CONSULTATION VISITS  
ACROSS SETTINGS

## TESTIMONIALS

*"I loved learning how to deal with different difficult behaviors and I can't wait to use this in my own classroom."*

*"It's always nice to have an opportunity to connect with other educators. I really appreciated Shilo Johnson's training, and the way she reinforced the idea that 'all kids belong here'."*

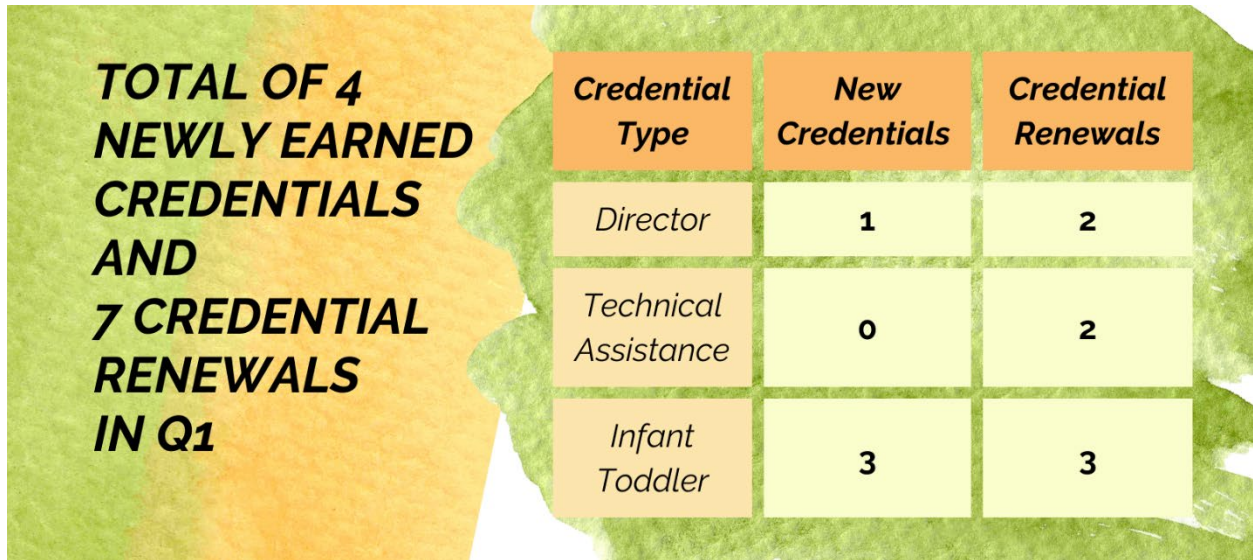
*"The most helpful part of this process has been Robin's continuous check-in to see if my staff and myself have been meeting our goals. I've also really appreciated every single resource that Robin has provided for us. They've all been amazingly useful."*

*"My District Coordinator helps me align my needs and focus on certain topics and growths as I need as a provider. She is absolutely accountable which makes her an amazing advisor for me to go to!"*

## Apprenticeship

**21 applications** were sent out for new Sponsoring Employers, Registered Apprentices and Mentors. We received back from **9 Sponsoring Employers** and **11 apprentices**. 3 apprentices dropped out before the program began.

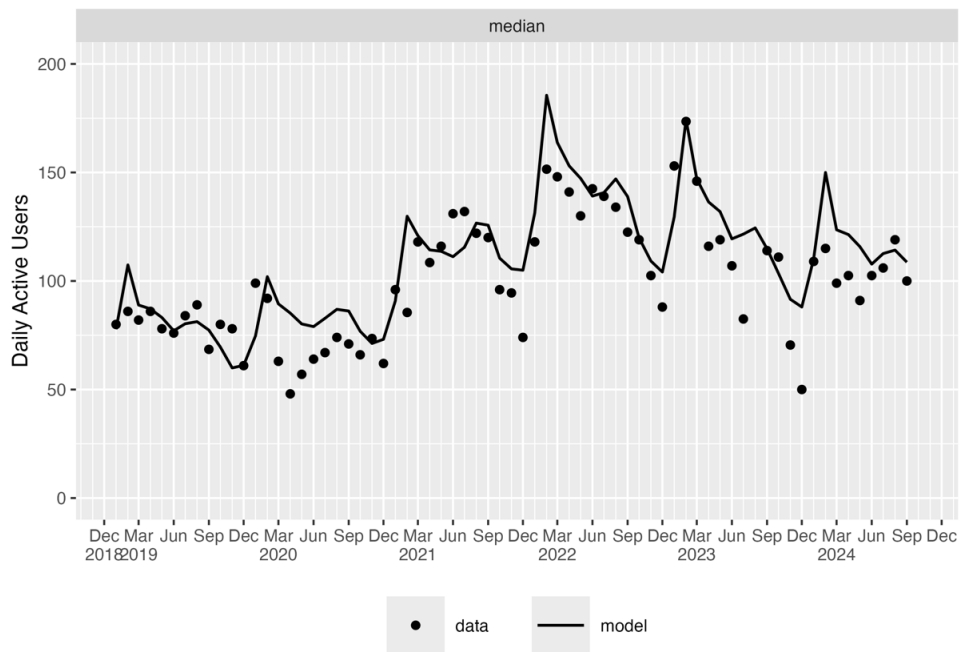
## Credentials



## Child Care Choices

### Traffic Report for Quarter Ending 9/30/24

**MEDIAN DAILY USERS (DOTS) AND STATISTICAL MODEL FOR SUMMARY AND PROJECTIONS (LINE) BY MONTH, STARTING JANUARY 1, 2019**



Traffic to the Child Care Choices website, based on median daily users and ignoring bot-driven activity, is roughly the same as Quarter 1 in FY 2024.

## Quality Improvement - *Rising Stars for ME*

This quarter, *Rising Stars for ME* data was used to identify “early adopters” – programs that completed a *Rising Stars for ME* application **AND** moved up their program’s rating during the initial rollout. The hope is that these early adopters will be eligible for Quality Initiative funding in late 2024 or early 2025 to recognize and reward their enthusiasm.

MRTQ PDN continues to work with OCFS and Help Me Grow to identify ways to improve the information available to families via the Child Care Choices search. Upcoming improvements will include indicating when a program last updated their openings (if ever).

The table below breaks down the monthly totals of email support requests specific to *Rising Stars for ME*.

Month	RSM Email Count
July	18
August	19
September	19

**NUMBER OF RSM SUPPORT REQUESTS RECEIVED VIA EMAIL**

**Q1 TOTAL: 56**

### *Rising Stars for ME Q1 Data:*

1. [All Programs & their Star Levels as of Sept 30, 2024](#)



## Quality Initiatives

MRTQ PDN is collaborating with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services (DHHS, OCFS) to offer Quality Improvement Initiative funding to early childhood and out-of-school time programs in Maine. Quality Initiative funding incentivizes and rewards individuals and programs for taking steps that will improve the quality of their child care program.

### *Q1 Highlights for Quality Initiatives*

**Quality Improvement Funding:** MRTQ PDN provides funding to incentivize and support programs as they increase their Star rating in *Rising Stars for ME*. Below is a breakdown of the Quality Improvement (QI) Plans that were submitted in Q1.



**Quality Improvement Training & Professional Development:** MRTQ PDN manages funds to provide Quality Improvement Awards to child care providers participating in professional development opportunities. *Designing Early Learning: Curriculum and Assessment in Preschool* and *Strengthening Business Practices for Child Care Programs* are the trainings specific to this offering.

**7 Quality Improvement Award Mini-Grants were awarded to participants of Designing Early Learning. Combined, the Q1 Mini-Grants totaled to \$10,350.**

**Quality Improvement Credential Awards:** Credential Quality Improvement Awards (QIA) are provided to recognize and reward individuals who earn a Maine Credential. The Maine Credentials include the Infant Toddler, Youth Development, Director, Inclusion, Technical Assistance, and Family Child Care.

**5 Credential Quality Improvement Awards were distributed in Q1, totaling \$3,375**

**3**

**Infant Toddler Credentials**

**2**

**Director Credentials**

**Go NAPSACC:** Go NAPSACC is a free online tool providing programs with a resource for making changes in their physical activity and nutrition practices and environment.

**17** programs registered with Go NAPSACC this quarter

**32** registered programs completed at least one Go NAPSACC activity

Maine Afterschool Network



*Positive Youth Development Institute (PYDI)*  
*National Afterschool Association, Afterschool Alliance, SEARCH Institute, and Mizzen Education headline 2024 PYDI: The Power of Intentionality September 12&13*




Fifty Maine DOE OST providers in Maine's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC project were among the programmers MASN supported at the Positive Youth Development Institute (PYDI). Certificates were issued for SEARCH Institute's Developmental Relationship Framework training and Mizzen Education showcased the OST Mizzen app. Mizzen is a free resource of curated learning resources that offers thousands of K-12 activities that spark curiosity, joy, and a love of learning. Other presenters included Maine Resilience Building Network (Now Maine Youth Thriving), Maine Roads to Quality, Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance, National AfterSchool Association top 25 presenter Brad Lademann, and Richard Irwin from our sister network in Missouri.

## ***What has inspired you at PYDI 2024?***



***"Connecting with others doing the work here in Maine and beyond. Inspired to keep the conversations going!"***



***"It can feel lonely when you are running these programs- working hard to be all things to parents and kids. And most of us that take this on do so because we care. Sharing with others who face the same joys, sorrows and challenges always re-inspires. THANK YOU"***

## *Maine Out of School Time (MOST) Career Exploration*

MASN supported the MDOE Career Exploration Department by providing technical assistance to a project developed called Maine Out of School Time Career Exploration, which funded new or expanded OST programs serving 4-6 graders to add a career exploration component to their summer program. These geographically diverse programs used local community assets to introduce youth to careers in their communities. We see, as a result of this program, changes in youth opinions of their future. MOST grantees appreciated funding from the MDOE and technical support from MASN.

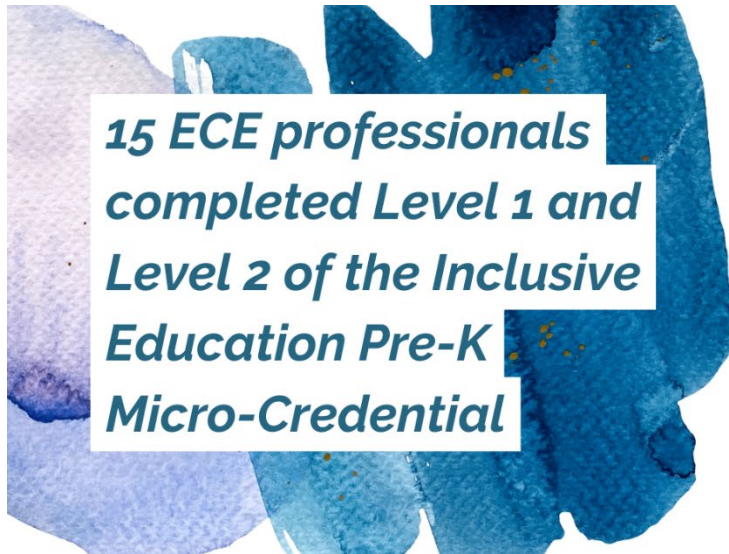
*"We found the support from the MASN substantive and professional. It was really lovely to know that we could receive guidance throughout, especially since this was the first year this program was conducted. Melissa Cilley conducted a site visit, and was a fabulous addition to our conversations. She was outstanding in her communications with all involved in this summer's programming."*

## Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Services



This quarter, CCIDS staff began facilitation of the **accelerated Inclusion Credential Cohort** offered through support from PDG funding with a total of **13 participants**.

With funding support through the PDG initiative **15** individuals completed **Level 1 and Level 2** of the [PreK - 12 Inclusion for Students with Disabilities micro credential](#).



Level 1  
Badge



Level 2  
Badge



13 ECE professionals participated in the Inclusion Book Club this quarter, an offering co-facilitated by CCIDS

**13** ECE providers participated in the **Inclusion Book Club** co-facilitated by CCIDS.

**14** OST professionals participated in a **level 3 technical assistance** focusing on high quality inclusive practices for school age children/out of school time childcare.

Two sessions focusing on supporting children with autism and their families in childcare settings were facilitated by CCIDS staff at the Washington County Conference. **50** ECE professionals were in attendance. *See provider comment in Technical Assistance section.*