Preschool Expulsions and Racial Disparities

A study conducted in 2005 by Yale University discovered preschool students are expelled from early childhood facilities at alarming rates. The study revealed that preschoolers were expelled at three times the rate of children expelled from Kindergarten thru twelfth grades combined In Colorado, it was found that ten out of every 1,000 preschoolers were expelled. The study also found that African American children were expelled twice as much as whites and up to ten times as much as Asian children(Gilliam, 2005). A similar study, conducted by the Office of Civil Rights in 2013 found that twenty-five per cent of African American students were suspended from middle school in 2010, compared to seven percent of white students who were suspended the same year. In Colorado, out-of-school suspension rates in 2009-2010 for Black students that are more than three times those for White students (Losen & Martinez, 2010).

The Pyramid Model

"As the everyday stressors of life increase and lead to increasing challenging behaviors, Pyramid Plus has provided additional skills necessary to work with [children's] behaviors. ECE professionals, in our Center, are experiencing less burn out and more joy"[and have] the confidence to share strategies with children and parents."

Survey respondent affiliated with a Pyramid Plus Demonstration Site

Culturally Responsive Practices

"Culturally responsive classroom managers filter their decision making about the environment through the lens of cultural diversity. They think about ways the environment can be used to communicate respect for diversity, to reaffirm connectedness and community, and to avoid marginalizing and disparaging students".

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Series, Metropolitan Center for Urban Education 2008, P.4

WHY?

Speculative reasons for expulsions and racial disparities associated with expulsions include (a) lack of teacher preparedness, (b) practices that are not culturally responsive, c) inadequate mental health resources and (d) teacher and administrative bias (Bradshaw, et al, 2010). "Children who are identified as hard to manage at ages 3 and 4 have a high probability (50:50) of continuing to have difficulties into adolescence" (Campbell & Ewing, 1990). As the number of young children suspended from school increases, so does the number of those entering the Juvenile Justice system. "The number of child delinquents (juveniles between the ages of 7 and 12) handled in the nation's juvenile courts has increased 33 percent over the last decade" (Snyder, 2001). Racial disparities in preschool suspension rates directly correlate to the racial disparities of those

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Require licensed child care facilities to report the number of students expelled, by race/ethnicity, gender, English learner status, and disability status.
- Require CDE and CDHS to include expulsion data collection in the accountability system for Race to The Top.
- Create a system to provide access to mental health resources, that are culturally responsive to providers
- Add additional funding to the Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion to train early childhood providers in promoting social-emotional development of children.
- Provide funding for training and coaching in culturally responsive practices to the Cultural Responsive Urban Education Center for mental health practitioners and early childhood personnel to decrease racial disparities.
- Provide funding for prevention and early identification in home visitation models: HIPPY and PAT for young children prior to entry into preschool.

IMPLICATIONS

In 2011, U. S. Attorney General Holder, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced efforts to respond to School-to-Prison Pipeline by supporting good discipline practices. At that time, Attorney General Holder stated, "Ensuring that our educational system is a doorway to opportunity – and not a point of entry to our criminal justice system – is a critical, and achievable, goal" (Department of Justice, 2013). In 2012, the State of Colorado passed the "Fair Discipline in Schools Act," to decrease expulsions by eliminating zero tolerance policies, allowing school districts to use discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary action. The law also encourages approaches such as use of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (Colorado Fair Discipline Act, 2012) to prevent challenging behaviors from escalating. No such protections are in place for Colorado's youngest students.

CONCLUSION

In a report to the legislature in 2007, a legislative task group, studying the impact of challenging behaviors on children and early childhood providers made several recommendations, some of which are included in this brief, promising that if implemented;

"By 2012, through effective statute and regulation and with adequate funding, all children under age 8 will benefit from best practice strategies that promote positive social and emotional development; all "at risk" children under age 8 will have best practice prevention strategies available to them; all 0-8 year old children evidencing "challenging behavior" will have access to environments, caregivers and interventionists utilizing best practice strategies" (Hoover & Waldbaum, 2007 p. 2).

It is now 2013 and although it was reported that "K-12 suspension rates have at least doubled since the early '70s for all non-Whites (Losen & Skiba, 2010 p.2), in Colorado, there has been a marked decrease in preschool expulsions, attributed to the efforts of Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion and Mental Health Consultation by intentional teaching of appropriate behaviors. Enhanced support and funding of these efforts, coupled with culturally responsive practices and prevention efforts, will further reduce overall expulsions and will close the gap in the number of children disproportionately expelled by race.

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Preschool Expansion Grant

Summary of Activities

September 1, 2014

1. **What is the Preschool Expansion Grant?**

   Under the Preschool Development Grant initiative, there are "Development Grants" for states that are just starting out or have a small state preschool program and "Expansion Grants" intended for states that already have a robust preschool program and are ELCF recipients. Colorado is eligible to apply for Expansion Grant funds to help expand and improve the quality of state sponsored preschool. The grant must support high needs communities and preschool children whose families are impacted by poverty.

2. **Is this a competitive grant?**

   Yes. There is a potential for 36 states to compete for $160 million. Colorado may apply for up to $15 million per year for each of four years subject to continued USDOE approval and funding from Congress. Applications are due on October 14, 2014. Applicants will be notified in December and funding will start in January. Children benefitting from expansion slots must be served beginning in 2015.

3. **Who is involved in Colorado's grant development?**

   CDE will be the lead agency working closely with CDHS, school districts, community programs and other stakeholders. A grant writer has been engaged and CDE has narrowed the search for a grant development project manager to two possibilities. An advisory group has been invited to a meeting on September 2nd to help CDE identify grant priorities and next steps including the identification of key stakeholder groups.

   CDE wishes to thank the Buell Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, Piton Foundation and Rose Community Foundation for their quick response and generosity in funding the grant writer and project manager for this grant. We so appreciate their support to help make Colorado's application as strong as possible.

4. **How can I follow development of the grant and opportunities to get involved?**

   CDE has created a website where Colorado grant development and engagement opportunities will be posted. Links to USDOE resources are also available at this site.
   http://www.cde.state.co.us/cpp/preschooldevelopmentgrant

5. **Who can I contact for more information?**

   Email vendegna_n@cde.state.co.us or call 303.866.6602.

Preschool Development Grants

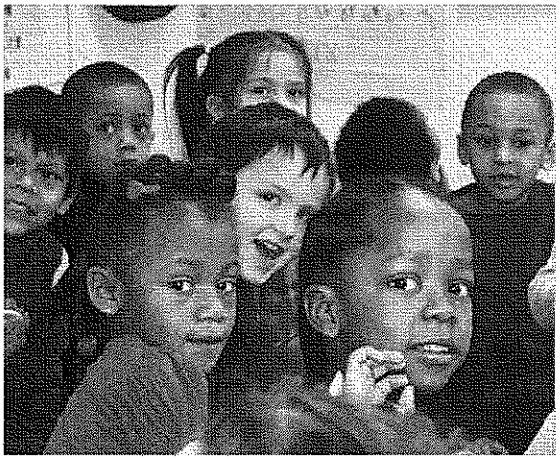
What are Preschool Development Grants?

Preschool Development Grants will support states to build, develop, and expand voluntary, high-quality preschool programs for children from low- and moderate-income families.

There are two types of grants.

Development: for states with small or no state-funded preschool programs

Expansion: for states with larger state-funded preschool programs and/or a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant



How was the program developed?

In response to President Obama's call to expand access to high-quality preschool to every child in America, Congress appropriated $250 million for the program in fiscal year 2014. Together, the U.S. departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) solicited public comment about the design of the program. Through three website postings, ED and HHS received more than 600 comments. The agencies also hosted a public testimony session to garner additional feedback.

Fast Facts: Development and Expansion Grants

Development Grants

Total Funding Available: $80 million

Type of Grant: Competitive

Award Range: $5 million–$20 million per year (for four years)

Eligibility: States that both currently serve less than 10 percent of four-year-olds and have not received an RTT-ELC grant

Number of States Eligible: 16

Expansion Grants

Total Funding Available: $160 million

Type of Grant: Competitive

Award Range: $10 million–$35 million per year (for four years)

Eligibility: States that currently serve 10 percent or more of four-year-olds or have received an RTT-ELC grant

Number of States Eligible: 36

For more information on Development and Expansion grants, see the reverse side.

How can states qualify for a Development grant?

- Prospective grantees will demonstrate an ambitious and achievable plan to implement and sustain high-quality preschool programs that can reach and serve additional eligible children in one or more high-need communities.
- Up to 35 percent of the grant award may be used for state-level infrastructure and quality improvements.

How can states qualify for an Expansion grant?

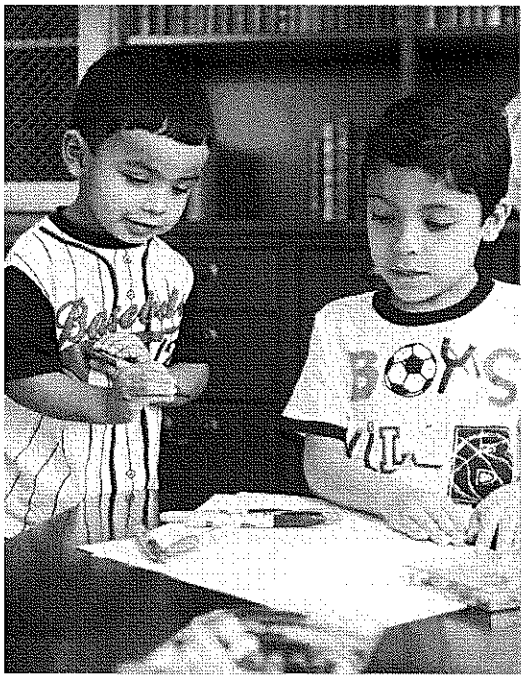
- Prospective grantees will demonstrate an ambitious and achievable plan to implement and sustain high-quality preschool programs that can reach and serve additional eligible children in two or more high-need communities.
- Up to 5 percent of the grant award may be used for state-level infrastructure and quality improvements.

How will applicants be selected?

Applicants will be selected based on the quality of their plans to

- Commit to implement high-quality preschool programs;
- Implement state-level infrastructure and quality improvements;
- Collaborate with sub-grantees and ensure strong partnerships between school districts and other early learning providers;
- Align preschool programs within a birth-through-third-grade continuum of services; and
- Create sustainable programs by coordinating existing early learning funds, and projecting costs and number of children served.

Applications are due on Tuesday, Oct. 14, 2014.



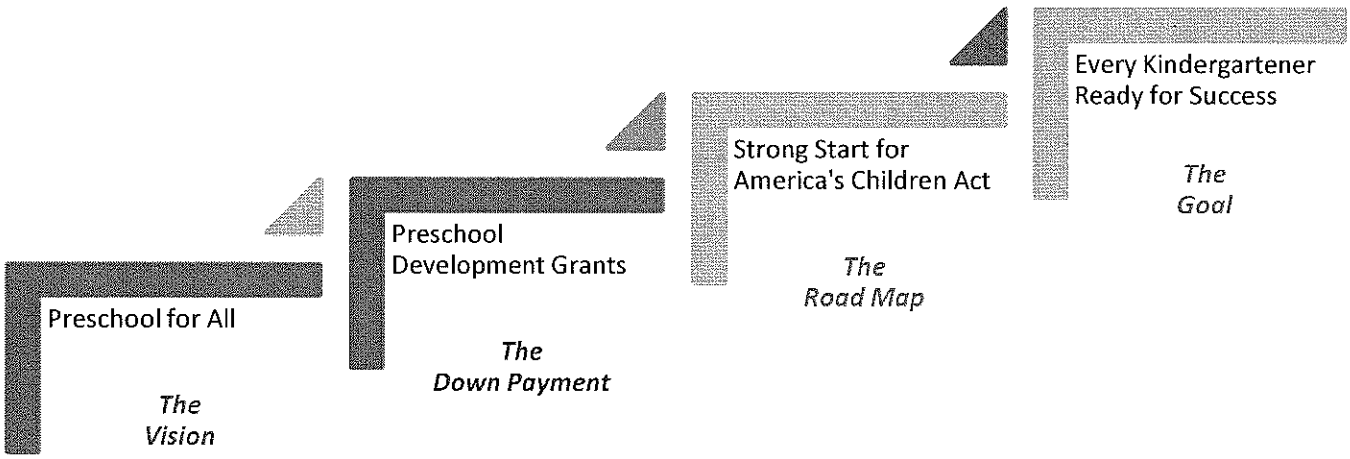
What are the competitive priorities for this grant?

Applicants can receive additional points under the following competitive priorities:

- Contributing matching funds,
- Supporting a birth-through-third-grade continuum, and
- Using at least 50 percent of their funding to create new state preschool program slots.

For more information, please visit http://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/index.html

National Initiatives for Preschool Expansion



Preschool for All

- Part of President Obama's Comprehensive Early Learning Agenda
- Partnership with states to provide all low- and moderate-income four-year-olds with high-quality preschool
- Promotes access to full-day kindergarten
- Funds would be distributed to local school districts and other partner providers

Preschool Development Grants

- Supports states to build or enhance a preschool program infrastructure to provide high-quality preschool services
- Subgrants to targeted communities that would serve as models for expanding preschool to all 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families
- Lays the groundwork to ensure that more States are ready to participate in the Preschool for All formula grant initiative proposed by the Administration.

Strong Start for America's Children Act

- Comprehensive plan for investing in early learning that operationalizes the Administration's early learning agenda
- Creates preschool formula grants to states for the purpose of providing universal, voluntary preschool
- States will distribute funds to local entities – which may include districts, schools, Head Start programs or licensed child care providers – that meet high-quality standards

Nan Vendegna for ECLC Executive Committee/June 2014

2014 PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

EXPANSION GRANTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

U.S. Department of Education

U.S Department of Health and Human Services

Washington, D.C.

August 2014

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"I propose working with states to make high-quality preschool available to every child in America. ... Let's do what works, and make sure none of our children start the race of life already behind. Let's give our kids that chance."

-- President Barack Obama

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

The purpose of the Preschool Development Grants program, which is jointly administered by the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services (Departments), is to support State and local efforts to build, develop, and expand High-Quality Preschool Programs[1] so that more children from low- and moderate-income families enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life. All States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are eligible to apply for either a Preschool Development Grants--Development Grant or a Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grant.

Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grants will support states that have robust state preschool programs or that have been awarded a race to the top—early learning challenge grant. These grants will be awarded to states to implement and sustain high-quality preschool programs that reach and serve additional eligible children in two or more high-need communities. States will also be able to use a portion of their funds to make preschool program infrastructure and quality improvements needed to deliver high-quality preschool programs. The states eligible to apply for a Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grant are Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District Of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.[1]

BACKGROUND

Strong and consistent evidence demonstrates that participation in high-quality early learning programs can lead to both short- and long-term positive outcomes for all children, but especially children from low-income families.[2] Research has shown the multiple benefits of attending preschool programs that are of high-quality, including increased school readiness, lower rates of grade retention and special education placements, improved high school graduation rates, reduced interaction with law enforcement, and higher rates of college attendance and completion.[3]

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[1] Defined terms are used throughout the notice and are indicated by capitalization.

[2] Yoshikawa, H., Weiland, C., Brooks-Gunn, J., Burchinal, M., Espinosa, L., Gormley, W., Ludwig, J.O., Magnuson, K.A., Phillips, D.A., & Zaslow, M.J. (2013). Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education. New York: Foundation for Child Development and Ann Arbor, MI: Society for Research in Child Development. Available at: http://fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/Evidence%20Base%20on%20Preschool%20Education%20FINAL.pdf.

[3] Barnett, W. S. (2008). Preschool Education and Its Lasting Effects: Research and Policy Implications. Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit. Available at: http://nieer.org/resources/research/PreschoolLastingEffects.pdf.

We also know that children from low-income families, on average, start kindergarten 12 to 14 months behind their peers in pre-reading and language skills.[4] Results from the "Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–11," indicate that children's performance in reading and math were lowest for kindergartners in households with incomes below the Federal Poverty Line and highest for those in households with incomes at or above 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line.[5] Increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs, particularly for at-risk children from low-income families, can help close, or even prevent, these achievement gaps prior to kindergarten entry.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Pub. L. 113-76) provided $250 million for competitive grants to States for improving early childhood care and education, and help States develop, enhance, and expand preschool programs that are of high-quality. Of this amount, the Departments expect to dedicate approximately $80 million to Preschool Development Grants--Development Grants and $160 million to Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grants. As explained more fully elsewhere in the notice, we are waiving notice-and-comment rulemaking for these competitions to ensure timely awards. However, the Departments welcomed comments from the public on the priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for this funding opportunity through a dedicated Web site and a public hearing. In all, the Departments received over 600 individual comments to consider as we drafted this notice to be consistent with the language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, and accompanying report.[6]

The Departments will make Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grants on a competitive basis to States to (1) implement and sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs that reach and serve additional Eligible Children in two or more High-Need Communities; and (2) enhance preschool program infrastructure and capacity to deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs. For Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grants, States may allocate up to five percent of the total Federal funds over the grant period for State-level infrastructure. The remainder of the Federal funds must be subgranted to Early Learning Providers in two or more High-Need Communities.

We intend High-Quality Preschool Programs to be delivered through a mixed-delivery system of providers that includes schools, licensed child care centers, Head Start programs, and community-based organizations. Preschool programs funded by the Preschool Development Grants program must meet program quality standards, including, at a minimum, the elements outlined in the definition of a "High-Quality Preschool Program," such as high staff qualifications, low child-staff ratios and small class sizes, a Full-Day program, and

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[4] Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development (2000). From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development. Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, eds. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

[5] Mulligan, G.M., Hastedt, S., and McCarroll, J.C. (July, 2012). First-Time Kindergartners in 2010-11: First Findings From the Kindergarten Rounds of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011) (NCES 2012-049). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Available at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/.

[6] http://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/resources.html.

Comprehensive Services for children. Though encouraged, other preschool programs within the State will not be required to meet these same criteria.

A State's application must include an ambitious and achievable plan covering a project period of up to four years. Depending on the availability of funds, the Departments will make continuation awards for years two, three, and four of the project period. The State's ambitious and achievable plan must describe, among other things, how the State will expand access to High-Quality Preschool Programs to children at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line; the applicant's strategy for ensuring the creation of new State Preschool Program slots and, as appropriate, the improvement of existing State Preschool Program slots as described in Selection Criterion (D)(4)(b); the reasons for selecting each High-Need Community; a system for monitoring programs for continuous improvement; how Local Educational Agencies and other Early Learning Providers will establish and maintain strong partnerships; how High-Quality Preschool Programs supported under this grant will be aligned with programs and systems that serve children from birth through third grade; and how the State will maintain High-Quality Preschool Programs for children after the grant period.

KEY TIMING

Notice Publication:	August 13, 2014
Technical Assistance:	
Introduction to the Application:	August 20, 2014
Development Grants Technical Assistance:	August 25, 2014
Expansion Grants Technical Assistance:	August 26, 2014
Applications Due:	October 14, 2014
Awards Announced:	December 2014

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND POINTS

Priorities

Absolute Priority 1: Increasing Access to High-Quality Preschool Programs in High-Need Communities.
Absolute Priority 2: Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge States.
Absolute Priority 3: Non-Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge States with More Robust State Preschool Programs.

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Contributing Matching Funds *(up to 10 points).*
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting a Continuum of Early Learning and Development *(up to 10 points).*
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Creating New High-Quality State Preschool Program Slots *(0 or 10 points).*

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for this program are set forth in sections (A)-(G). The maximum score for all the selection criteria and competitive preference priorities is 230 points.

A. Executive Summary *(10 points).*
B. Commitment to State Preschool Programs *(20 points).*
C. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs *(30 points).*
D. Expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs in Each High-Need Community *(60 points).*
E. Collaborating with Each Subgrantee and Ensuring Strong Partnerships *(50 points).*
F. Alignment within a Birth through Third Grade Continuum *(20 points).*
G. Budget and Sustainability *(10 points).*

Estimated Available Funds: $160 million.
Project Period: Up to 48 months.
Budget Requirements: To support States in planning their budgets, the Departments have developed the following annual budget caps for each State eligible for a Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grant:
Category 1--up to $35M—California;
Category 2--up to $30M—Texas;
Category 3--up to $25M—Florida, New York;
Category 4--up to $20M—Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, and Pennsylvania;
Category 5--up to $17.5M—New Jersey, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington;
Category 6--up to $15M—Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Wisconsin;
Category 7--up to $12.5M—Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Nebraska, New Mexico, and West Virginia;
Category 8--up to $10M—Delaware, District of Columbia, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

SELECTED APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Selected Background Information

Before you begin work on your Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grant application, it may be helpful to understand the parts of the application. Each of these is described below.

- **Priorities:**
  - An *absolute priority* is a priority that all applicants must address fully in order to win; these will be assessed by peer reviewers as either "yes" or "no." If an applicant does not meet the competition's absolute priority, it will not be awarded a grant.
  - A *competitive preference priority* is one that earns the applicant extra, or "competitive preference," points.
- ***Selection criteria*** are the focal point of the application and the peer review. Applicants write narrative responses to these criteria, and reviewers judge their responses. Selection criteria in this competition may be supplemented by—
  - *Evidence*, including data tables and additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.
- ***Definitions*** set forth the meaning of critical terms in the notice; defined terms are indicated by initial capitalization.
- **Requirements:**
  - *Eligibility requirements* specify what applicants must have in place in order to compete for a grant. Staff from the Education Department ("ED") and the Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS") will make the eligibility determination.
  - *Application requirements* list the elements that must be included in a complete application.
  - *Program requirements* specify what applicants must do if they win a grant (*e.g.*, reporting, participating in technical assistance activities, publishing findings).

PRIORITIES

There are two types of priorities in the Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grant competition: absolute and competitive.

Absolute Priority

We consider only applications that meet Absolute Priority 1 and either Absolute Priority 2 or Absolute Priority 3.

Absolute Priority 1: Increasing Access to High-Quality Preschool Programs in High-Need Communities.

To meet this priority, the State must demonstrate in its application how it will increase access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children by having an ambitious and achievable plan to--

(1) Begin serving Eligible Children no later than in year one of the grant period;
(2) Subgrant at least 95 percent of its Federal grant funds received over the grant period to one or more Subgrantees to implement and sustain voluntary, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children in two or more High-Need Communities in the State; and
(3) Use no more than five percent of its Federal grant funds received during the grant period for State-level infrastructure and quality improvements, such as those described in selection criterion (C)(1).

Absolute Priority 2: Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge States.

To meet this priority, an applicant must have received an award under a Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge competition.

Note: These States are California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Absolute Priority 3: Non-Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge States with More Robust State Preschool Programs.

To meet this priority, the applicant must not have received an award under a Race to the Top--Early Learning Challenge competition and serve 10 percent or more of four-year-old children in a State Preschool Program.

Note: These States are Arkansas, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Competitive Preference Priorities

Applicants may choose whether to address the competitive preference priorities. Additional points will be awarded to an application to the extent that reviewers determine it has met a

competitive preference priority. Applicants earn points under the competitive preference priorities in a manner similar to how they earn points under the selection criteria.

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Contributing Matching Funds *(up to 10 points).*

Background: An applicant is not required to contribute non-Federal matching funds to support its ambitious and achievable plan. However, we will give competitive preference to applicants who address this priority and will award more points to applicants that commit to a larger matching contribution. Successful applicants that do not obtain or expend the matching funds they committed to in their applications may be subject to enforcement proceedings, including withholding of funds or denial of a continuation award.

Priority: To receive a competitive preference under this priority, the State must describe and submit appropriate evidence of a credible plan for obtaining and using non-Federal matching funds to support the implementation of its ambitious and achievable plan during the grant period. Matching funds may be comprised of State, local, and philanthropic funds and may also include increased State funding appropriated beginning in the State fiscal year prior to the first year of the grant period. Points will be awarded based on the following scale if the plan is determined to be credible:

Percentage non-Federal match of the State's four-year total award	Competitive preference points
50% or more	10
40-49%	8
30-39%	6
20-29%	4
10-19%	2
0-9%	0

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting a Continuum of Early Learning and Development *(up to 10 points).*

Background: The integration of High-Quality Preschool Programs within a broader continuum of comprehensive high-quality supports and services helps to create smooth transitions for children and families to ensure continuous and consistent high-quality early learning opportunities critical to children's success. Transition services play a vital role, particularly in the transitions from infant and toddler services to preschool services, and services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) to services under section 619 of part B of IDEA. States can support children and families through cross-sector partnerships and by leveraging resources from existing State and local agencies that provide early childhood services, including part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA, Early Head Start and Head Start, home visiting, child care, preschool programs, family supports (e.g., those that strengthen and stabilize families) and engagement resources, adult education, and housing, health, and mental health services.

Priority: To receive a competitive preference under this priority, the State must describe an ambitious and achievable plan that addresses the creation of a more seamless progression of supports and interventions from birth through third grade, such as high-quality infant and toddler

care, home visitation, Full-Day kindergarten, and before- and after-care services for, at a minimum, a defined cohort of Eligible Children and their families within each High-Need Community served by each Subgrantee.

Competitive Preference Priority 3: Creating New High-Quality State Preschool Program Slots *(0 or 10 points).*

Background: Many States have taken note of the short- and long-term benefits of early education and have launched efforts to expand the availability of State Preschool Programs. As of 2013, 40 States and the District of Columbia have at least one State Preschool Program in place.[7] Nevertheless, only about 28 percent of America's four-year-olds were enrolled in a State Preschool Program in the 2012-2013 school year.[8] The high costs of private preschool programs and the lack of State Preschool Programs narrow options for families, and especially so for low-income families. In 2011, four-year-olds under 200 percent of poverty were 16 percentage-points less likely than their higher-income peers (above 200 percent) to attend any preschool program, whether public or private.[9]

Priority: To receive a competitive preference under this priority, the State must demonstrate how it will use at least 50 percent of its Federal grant award to create new State Preschool Program slots that will increase the overall number of new slots in State Preschool Programs that meet the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs.

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[7] Based on current data from: Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M.E, Squires, J.H., and Clarke-Brown, K. (May 2014). State of Preschool 2013: First Look (NCES 2014-078). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Available at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

[8] Ibid.

[9] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ASPE tabulations from the Current Population Survey, available at: http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/EarlyCareEducation/rb_ece.cfm#_Toc373832432

SELECTION CRITERIA

A. Executive Summary (10 points).

The extent to which the State includes an ambitious and achievable plan for expanding access to High-Quality Preschool Programs that clearly articulates how the plans proposed under each criterion in this section, when taken together, will--

(1) Build on the State's progress to date as demonstrated in selection criterion (B);
(2) Provide voluntary, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children through subgrants to each Subgrantee in two or more High-Need Communities;
(3) Increase the number and percentage of Eligible Children served in High-Quality Preschool Programs during each year of the grant period through the creation of new, and the improvement of existing State Preschool Program slots, as applicable;
(4) Have all the characteristics specified in the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs;
(5) Set expectations for the school readiness of children upon kindergarten entry;
(6) Be supported by a broad group of stakeholders, including Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and, if applicable, State and local early learning councils; and
(7) Allocate funds between--
    (a) Activities to build or enhance State Preschool Program infrastructure using no more than five percent of its Federal grant funds received over the grant period on State-level infrastructure including, but not limited to, monitoring and evaluation and other quality-enhancing activities that improve the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children; and
    (b) Subgrants to Early Learning Providers to implement voluntary, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children in one or more High-Need Communities, including how it will--
        (i) Provide High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children no later than the end of year one of the grant period;
        (ii) Subgrant at least 95 percent of its Federal grant funds to its Subgrantee or Subgrantees over the grant period; and
        (iii)Support each Subgrantee in culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach and communication efforts in order to ensure that all families, including those who are isolated or otherwise hard to reach, are informed of the opportunity and encouraged to enroll their children in available programs.

B. Commitment to State Preschool Programs (20 points).

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to develop or enhance the State Preschool Program infrastructure and its capacity to both deliver and increase access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children, as evidenced by--

(1) State Early Learning and Development Standards (2 points);
(2) The State's financial investment, if any, and the estimated number and percentage of children, including, if known, the estimated number and percentage of Eligible Children, served in State Preschool Programs over the last four years (6 points);

(3) Enacted and pending legislation, policies, or practices that demonstrate the State's current and future commitment to increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children (4 points);
(4) The quality of existing State Preschool Programs, as evidenced by policies and program data that demonstrate the State's commitment to the components of a High-Quality Preschool Program; compliance with Program Standards; and support for program monitoring and improvement, which may be accomplished through the use of a TQRIS (4 points);
(5) The State's coordination of preschool programs and services, in partnership with its Early Learning Advisory Council, with other State and Federal resources that may be used to serve preschool-aged children, including, if applicable, programs and services supported by title I of the ESEA, part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) (2 points); and
(6) The State's role in promoting coordination of preschool programs and services at the State and local levels with other sectors that support the early learning and development of children, including child health, mental health, family support, nutrition, child welfare, and adult education and training sectors (2 points).

C. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs (30 points).

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to ensure program quality, including a description of how the State will (8 points)--

(1) Use no more than five percent of the funds received over the grant period for State Preschool Program infrastructure and quality improvements at the State level through activities such as--
    (a) Enhancing or expanding Early Learning and Development Standards;
    (b) Implementing Program Standards consistent with a High-Quality Preschool Program;
    (c) Supporting programs in meeting the needs of children with disabilities and English learners, including in workforce development;
    (d) Conducting a needs assessment to determine the current availability of High-Quality Preschool Programs, including private and faith-based providers and Head Start programs;
    (e) Establishing or upgrading preschool teacher education and licensure requirements;
    (f) Improving teacher and administrator early education training programs and professional development;
    (g) Implementing a Statewide Longitudinal Data System to link preschool and elementary and secondary school data;
    (h) Implementing a Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment System;
    (i) Building preschool programs' capacity to engage parents in decisions about their children's education and development, help families build protective factors, and help parents support their children's learning at home;
    (j) Building State- and community-level support for High-Quality Preschool Programs through systemic linkages to other early learning programs and

resources to support families, such as child health, mental health, family support, nutrition, child welfare, and adult education and training sectors; and

(k) Other activities that would support the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children.

(2) Implement a system for monitoring and supporting continuous improvement for each Subgrantee to ensure that each Subgrantee is providing High-Quality Preschool Programs (which may be accomplished through the use of leveraging a TQRIS and other existing monitoring systems), including the extent to which the State (10 points)--

(a) Has the capacity to measure preschool quality, including parent satisfaction measures, and provide performance feedback to inform and drive State and local continuous program improvement efforts;

(b) Is using a Statewide Longitudinal Data System that is able to track student progress from preschool through third grade; and

(c) Clearly specifies the measureable outcomes, including school readiness, to be achieved by the program.

(3) Measure the outcomes of participating children across the five Essential Domains of School Readiness during the first few months of their admission into kindergarten using an assessment or assessments, such as a Kindergarten Entry Assessment, to achieve the purposes for which the assessment was developed and that conform with the recommendations of the National Research Council report on early childhood assessments (12 points).[10]

D. Expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs in Each High-Need Community (60 points).

The extent to which the State articulates an ambitious and achievable plan for expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs in two or more High-Need Communities, including a description of how--

(1) The State has selected each Subgrantee and each High-Need Community that will be served, including a description of each High-Need Community and its geographic diversity, such as whether the community is located in a rural or tribal area, and whether it is located in a federally designated Promise Zone[11] (8 or 6 points).

Note: Applicants that have federally designated Promise Zones in their States as of July 31, 2014 must propose to serve and coordinate with a High-Need Community located in that Promise Zone in order to be eligible for up to the full 8 points under sub-criterion (D)(1). If they do not propose to serve and coordinate with a High-Need Community in that Promise Zone, they are eligible for up to 6 points under this sub-criterion.

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[10] One example of these reports is referenced here. National Research Council (2008). Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. Available at: www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446.

[11] The first five Promise Zones are located in San Antonio, Texas (Eastside Neighborhood); Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (West Philadelphia); Los Angeles, California (Neighborhoods of Pico Union, Westlake, Koreatown, Hollywood, and East Hollywood); Southeastern Kentucky (Kentucky Highlands); and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. For additional information on Promise Zones, see www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/08/fact-sheet-president-obama-s-promise-zones-initiative.

Applicants that do not have federally designated Promise Zones in their State are eligible for up to the full 8 points under this sub-criterion.

(2) Each High-Need Community is currently underserved, including the number and percentage of four-year-olds in State Preschool Programs and other publically funded preschool programs (8 points).

(3) The State conducted outreach, including consultation with tribes, if applicable, to potential Subgrantees and the process used in selecting each Subgrantee (4 points).

(4) The State will subgrant at least 95 percent of its Federal grant award over the grant period to its Subgrantee or Subgrantees to implement and sustain voluntary, High-Quality Preschool Programs in two or more High-Need Communities, and--

(a) Set ambitious and achievable annual targets for the number and percentage of additional Eligible Children to be served during each year of the grant period (16 points); and

(b) Incorporate in its plan (12 points):

(i) Ambitious expansion of the number of new slots in State Preschool Programs that meet the definition of High-Quality Preschool Program; and

(ii) Ambitious improvement of existing State Preschool Program slots to bring them to the level of a High-Quality Preschool Program by extending programs from half-day to Full-Day; limiting class size and decreasing child to staff ratios; employing and compensating a teacher with a bachelor's degree; providing in-service, evidence-based professional development such as coaching; or providing Comprehensive Services.

Note: Applicants may receive up to the full 12 points if they address only (D)(4)(b)(i) or (b)(ii) or if they address both (D)(4)(b)(i) and (b)(ii).

(5) The State, in coordination with each Subgrantee, intends to sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs after the grant period, including any non-Federal support that the State or each Subgrantee commits to contribute (12 points).

E. Collaborating with Each Subgrantee and Ensuring Strong Partnerships (50 points).

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to ensure that each Subgrantee is effectively implementing High-Quality Preschool Programs, including a description of--

(1) The roles and responsibilities of the State and Subgrantee in implementing the project plan (2 points).

(2) How the State plans to implement High-Quality Preschool Programs, including the organizational capacity and existing infrastructure of the Subgrantee to provide High-Quality Preschool Programs, either directly or indirectly through an Early Learning Provider or Providers, and coordinate the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs (6 points).

(3) How the State will ensure that each Subgrantee minimizes local administrative costs (2 points).

(4) How the State and Subgrantee will monitor the Early Learning Providers to ensure they are delivering High-Quality Preschool Programs (4 points).

(5) How the State and the Subgrantee will coordinate plans related to assessments, data sharing, instructional tools, family engagement, cross-sector and comprehensive

services efforts, professional development, and workforce and leadership development (4 points).

(6) How the State and Subgrantee will coordinate, but not supplant, the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs funded under this grant with existing services for preschool-aged children including, if applicable, State Preschool Programs and programs and services supported through title I of the ESEA, part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (6 points).

(7) How the Subgrantee will integrate, to the extent practicable, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children within economically diverse, inclusive settings, including those that serve children from families with incomes above 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line (6 points).

(8) How the Subgrantee will deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children, including Eligible Children who may be in need of additional supports, such as those who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English learners; who reside on "Indian lands" as that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the ESEA; who are migrant; who are "homeless," as defined in subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act; who are in the child welfare system; who reside in rural or tribal areas; who are from military families; and other children as identified by the State (6 points).

(9) How the State will ensure the Subgrantee implements culturally and linguistically responsive outreach and communication efforts to enroll children from families with Eligible Children, including isolated or hard-to-reach families; helps families build protective factors; and engages parents and families (e.g., builds capacity to support children's learning and development) as decision-makers in their children's education (4 points).

(10) How the State will ensure strong partnerships between each Subgrantee and LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, including a description of how the State will ensure that each Subgrantee (10 points) --

  (a) Partners with LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, to carry out activities that provide children and their families with successful transitions from preschool into kindergarten; and

  (b) Coordinates and collaborates with LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, in--

    (i) Providing opportunities for early educators to participate in professional development on early learning and kindergarten standards, assessments, curricula, and culturally and linguistically responsive strategies to help families build protective factors, build parents' capacity to support their children's learning and development, and engage parents as decision-makers in their children's education;

    (ii) Providing family engagement, support, nutrition, and other Comprehensive Services and coordinating with other community partners to ensure families' access to needed supports;

    (iii) Supporting full inclusion of Eligible Children with disabilities and developmental delays to ensure access to and full participation in the High-Quality Preschool Program;

(iv) Supporting the inclusion of children who may be in need of additional supports, such as children who are English learners; who reside on "Indian lands" as that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the ESEA; who are migrant; who are "homeless," as defined in subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act; who are in the child welfare system; who reside in rural areas; who are from military families; and other children as identified by the State;

(v) Ensuring that High-Quality Preschool Programs have age-appropriate facilities to meet the needs of Eligible Children;

(vi) Developing and implementing a systematic procedure for sharing data and other records consistent with Federal and State law; and

(vii) Utilizing community-based learning resources, such as libraries, arts and arts education programs, and family literacy programs.

F. Alignment within a Birth through Third Grade Continuum (20 points).

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to align High-Quality Preschool Programs supported by this grant with programs and systems that serve children from birth through third grade to, among other things, improve transitions for children across this continuum.

(1) For birth through age-five programs, these activities include--

(a) Coordinating with other early education and care programs and child care family service providers supported through Federal, State, and local resources to build a strong continuum of learning for children from birth through age five and their families that expands families' choices, facilitates or improves their access to programs and supports in their own communities, and engages all families with Eligible Children, including isolated or hard-to-reach families that might not otherwise participate; and

(b) Ensuring that the provision of High-Quality Preschool Programs will not lead to a diminution of other services or increased cost to families for programs serving children from birth through age five; and

(2) For kindergarten through third grade, these activities may include—

(a) Ensuring that Eligible Children are well-prepared for kindergarten;

(b) Sustaining the educational and developmental gains of Eligible Children by—

(i) Promoting collaboration between preschool and kindergarten teachers;

(ii) Expanding access to Full-Day kindergarten; and

(iii) Increasing the percentage of children who are able to read and do math at grade level by the end of third grade; and

(c) Sustaining a high level of parent and family engagement as children move from High-Quality Preschool Programs into the early elementary school years;

(d) Taking steps, or building upon the steps it has taken, to align, at a minimum--

(i) Child learning standards and expectations;

(ii) Teacher preparation, credentials, and workforce competencies;

(iii) Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment Systems;

(iv) Data systems; and

(v) Family engagement strategies.

G. Budget and Sustainability (10 points).

The extent to which the budget narrative and budget tables demonstrate that the State will--

(1) Use the funds from this grant and any matching contributions to serve the number of children described in its ambitious and achievable plan for each year, including using the funds for the projected per child costs for new and improved State Preschool Program slots that are reasonable and sufficient, and that the projected per child costs for new and improved State Preschool Program slots are reasonable and sufficient to ensure High-Quality Preschool Programs;

(2) Coordinate the use of existing funds from Federal sources that support early learning and development, such as title I of the ESEA, part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and State, private, local, foundation, or other private funding sources for activities and services that help expand High-Quality Preschool Programs; and

(3) Sustain the High-Quality Preschool Programs supported by this grant after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Eligible Children with access to High-Quality Preschool Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded, including to additional High-Need Communities.

PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment System means a coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments, each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used, that organizes information about the process and context of young children's learning and development in order to help teachers make informed instructional and programmatic decisions and that conforms with the recommendations of the National Research Council report on early childhood assessments[12] by including, at a minimum:

(a) Screening Measures;
(b) Formative Assessments;
(c) Measures of Environmental Quality;
(d) Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions; and
(e) A Kindergarten Entry Assessment.

Comprehensive Services means services that include:

(a) Screenings for hearing, vision, dental, health (including mental health), and development, as well as referrals and assistance obtaining services, when appropriate;
(b) Culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement opportunities (taking into account home language), such as parent conferences (including parent input about their child's development) and support services, such as parent education, and leadership opportunities, such as a Parent Advisory Committee;
(c) Nutrition services, including nutritious meals and snack options aligned with requirements set by the most recent Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines promulgated by the Department of Agriculture, as well as regular, age-appropriate, nutrition education for children and their families;
(d) Services coordinated with LEAs and early intervention service providers and other entities providing services under part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA;
(e) Physical activity services aligned with evidence-based guidelines, such as those recommended by the Institute of Medicine,[13] and which take into account and accommodate children with disabilities;
(f) Partnerships with and linkages to community services to enhance family well-being, such as income supports, food pantries, housing, social services, and other services relating to health/mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse, adult literacy, education and training, and financial asset building;
(g) On-site coordination of services, to the maximum extent feasible; and
(h) Additional support services, determined by the State, as appropriate.

Early Learning and Development Standards means a set of expectations, guidelines, or developmental milestones that--

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[12] One example of these reports is referenced here.National Research Council (2008). Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. Available at: www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446.

[13] www.iom.edu/Reports/2011/Early-Childhood-Obesity-Prevention-Policies/Recommendations.aspx.

(a) Describes what all children from birth to kindergarten entry should know and be able to do and their disposition toward learning;
(b) Is appropriate for each age group (e.g., infants, toddlers, and preschoolers); for English learners; and for children with disabilities or developmental delays;
(c) Covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness; and
(d) Is universally designed and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate.

Early Learning Intermediary Organization means a national, statewide, regional, or community-based organization that represents one or more networks of early learning and development programs in the State and that has influence or authority over them. Such Early Learning Intermediary Organizations include, but are not limited to, child care resource and referral agencies; State Head Start associations; family child care associations; State affiliates of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; State affiliates of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Early Childhood; statewide or regional union affiliates that represent early childhood educators; affiliates of the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association; the National Tribal, American Indian, and Alaskan Native Head Start Association; the National Indian Child Care Association; and the National Indian Education Association.

Early Learning Provider means an entity that carries out an early childhood education program, including an LEA, charter school, educational service agency, Head Start program, licensed child care provider, municipality or other local government agency, tribe or Indian organization, institution of higher education, library, museum, or other eligible licensed provider as defined by the State, or a consortium thereof.

Eligible Children means four-year-old children from families whose income is at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line.

Eligible Children with Disabilities means Eligible Children who have been determined by the local educational agency to be eligible for special education and related services under section 619 of the IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.)

Essential Data Elements means the critical child, program, and workforce data elements of a coordinated early learning data system, including--
(a) A unique statewide child identifier or another highly accurate, proven method to link data on that child, including Kindergarten Entry Assessment data, to and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the coordinated early learning data system (if applicable);
(b) A unique statewide early childhood educator identifier;
(c) A unique program site identifier;
(d) Child and family demographic information;
(e) Early childhood educator demographic information, including data on educational attainment and State credentials or licenses held, as well as professional development information;
(f) Program-level data on the program's structure, quality, child suspension and expulsion rates, staff retention, staff compensation, work environment, and all

applicable data reported as part of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(g) Child-level program participation and attendance data.

Essential Domains of School Readiness means the domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), approaches toward learning (including the utilization of the arts), physical well-being and motor development (including adaptive skills), and social and emotional development.

Federal Poverty Line means a measure of income level issued annually by the Department of Health and Human Services and used to determine eligibility for certain programs and benefits. [14]

Formative Assessment (also known as a classroom-based or ongoing assessment) means assessment questions, tools, and processes--

(a) That are--
  (1) Specifically designed to monitor children's progress in meeting the Early Learning and Development Standards;
  (2) Valid and reliable for their intended purposes and their target populations; and
  (3) Linked directly to the curriculum; and

(b) The results of which are used to guide and improve instructional practices.

Full-Day means a day that is--

(a) Equivalent to a full school day at the public elementary schools in the State; and

(b) Not fewer than five hours a day.

High-Need Community means a geographically defined area, such as a city, town, county, neighborhood, district, rural or tribal area, or consortium thereof, with a high level of need as determined by the State.

High-Quality Preschool Program means an early learning program that includes structural elements that are evidence-based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality, including at a minimum--

(a) High staff qualifications, including a teacher with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in any field with a State-approved alternate pathway, which may include coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood, and teaching assistants with appropriate credentials;

(b) High-quality professional development for all staff;

(c) A child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1;

(d) A class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications as outlined in paragraph (a) of this definition;

(e) A Full-Day program;

[14] The 2014 Federal Poverty Line, also known as poverty guidelines or "Federal poverty level" (FPL), can be found at http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/14poverty.cfm.

(f) Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities;
(g) Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry;
(h) Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities;
(i) Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff;
(j) Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement;
(k) On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development; and
(l) Evidence-based health and safety standards.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment means an assessment that--
(a) Is administered to children during the first few months of their admission into kindergarten;
(b) Covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
(c) Is used in conformance with the recommendations of the National Research Council reports on early childhood;[15] and
(d) Is valid and reliable for its intended purposes and for the target populations and aligned to the Early Learning and Development Standards.

Results of the assessment should be used to inform efforts to close the school-readiness gap at kindergarten entry, to inform instruction in the early elementary school grades, and to inform parents about their children's status and involve them in decisions about their children's education. This assessment must not be used to prevent children's entry into kindergarten or as a single measure for high-stakes decisions.

Lead Agency means a State-level agency that administers public funds related to early learning and development and is participating in the State's ambitious and achievable plan; this agency is designated by the Governor for the administration of the Preschool Development Grants funds and is the fiscal agent for the grant.

Local Educational Agency (LEA) has the meaning given the term in section 9101 of the ESEA.

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[15] One example of these reports is referenced here. National Research Council (2008). Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
Available at: www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446.

Measures of Environmental Quality means valid and reliable indicators of the overall quality of the early learning environment.

Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions means the measures obtained through valid and reliable processes for observing how teachers and caregivers interact with children, where such processes are designed to promote child learning and to identify strengths of and areas for improvement for early learning professionals.

Program Standards means the standards that serve as the basis for a TQRIS and define differentiated levels of quality for Early Learning and Development Programs. Program Standards must measure, at a minimum, the extent to which--

(a) Early Learning and Development Standards are implemented through evidence-based activities, interventions, or curricula that are appropriate for each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers;

(b) Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment Systems are used routinely and appropriately to improve instruction and enhance program quality by providing robust and coherent evidence of--

(1) Children's learning and development outcomes; and

(2) Program performance;

(c) A qualified workforce improves young children's health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes;

(d) Culturally and linguistically responsive strategies are successfully used to engage families, help them build protective factors, and strengthen their capacity to support their children's development and learning. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports, adult and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development;

(e) Health promotion practices include health and safety requirements; developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow up; the promotion of physical activity, healthy eating habits, oral health, and behavioral health; and health literacy of parents; and

(f) Data practices are effective and include gathering Essential Data Elements and entering them into the State's Statewide Longitudinal Data System or other early learning data system, using these data to guide instruction and program improvement, and making this information readily available to families.

Screening Measures means age and developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable instruments that are used to identify children who may need follow-up services to address developmental, learning, or health needs in, at a minimum, the areas of physical health, behavioral health, oral health, child development, vision, and hearing.

State means any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

State Preschool Program means a preschool program predominately supported with State funds that provides services to four-year-old children, including a State Head Start program.

Statewide Longitudinal Data System means the State's longitudinal education data system that collects and maintains detailed, high-quality, student- and staff-level data that are linked across entities and that over time provide a complete academic and performance history for each student. The Statewide Longitudinal Data System is typically housed within the State educational agency but includes or can be connected to early childhood, postsecondary, and labor data.

Subgrantee means an Early Learning Provider serving at least one High-Need Community that is receiving a subgrant from the State, and is participating in the State's ambitious and achievable plan.

Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) means the system through which the State uses a set of progressively higher Program Standards to evaluate the quality of an early learning and development program and to support program improvement. A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System consists of four components:

(a) Tiered Program Standards with multiple rating categories that clearly and meaningfully differentiate program quality levels.
(b) Monitoring to evaluate program quality based on the Program Standards.
(c) Supports to help programs meet progressively higher standards (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial support).
(d) Program quality ratings that are publicly available and include a process for validating the system.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to compete for funding under this program a State must--

(a) Serve 10 percent or more of four-year-old children in a State Preschool Program; [16] or

(b) Have received an award under a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge competition.

Therefore, only the States of Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin are eligible to apply for Preschool Development Grants--Expansion Grants.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements apply to all applications submitted under this competition:

(a) The State's application must be signed by the Governor or an authorized representative and an authorized representative from the Lead Agency.

(b) The application must include a letter of support from an operational State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care that meets the requirements described in section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837(b)) and in paragraph (l) of the Program Requirements. If the State does not have an operational State Advisory Council, the application must include a letter of support from a similar State council on early childhood education and care established by the State's legislature or assigned the duties of the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care by the State's Governor that meets the requirements described in section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837(b)) and in paragraph (l) of the Program Requirements. The letter must describe the council's level of support and, if applicable, participation in the grant.

(c) The State must include a budget narrative that details how it will use Federal grant funds awarded under this competition, and, if applicable, funds from other Federal, State, private, and local sources, to achieve--

  (1) The goals outlined in its ambitious and achievable plan; and

  (2) Its ambitious and achievable targets for increasing the number and percentage of Eligible Children who are enrolled in High-Quality Preschool Programs through, as applicable, newly created and improved State Preschool Program slots as described in selection criterion (D)(4)(b).

(d) The State must complete the Excel spreadsheets that are provided on the Preschool Development Grants Website at www.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants and upload to the Other Attachments Form in Grants.gov as explained in Part 5 of the application.

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[16] Based on current data from: Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M.E, Squires, J.H., and Clarke-Brown, K. (May 2014). State of Preschool 2013: First Look (NCES 2014-078). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Available at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

(e) The State must provide, for each selection criterion or priority in this notice that solicits an ambitious and achievable plan, a description of the following elements, at a minimum--
    (1) The key goals of the plan;
    (2) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up over time;
    (3) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;
    (4) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;
    (5) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation and sustainment of the plan;
    (6) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;
    (7) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable; and
    (8) How the State will address the needs of Eligible Children, including those who may be in need of additional supports, such as children who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English learners; who reside on "Indian lands" as that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) (ESEA); who are migrant; who are "homeless," as defined in subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11434a(2)) (McKinney-Vento Act); whose families are involved in the child welfare system; who reside in rural areas; who are from military families; and other children as identified by the State, if applicable.

(f) The State must provide a letter of support or preliminary binding agreement, such as a preliminary memorandum of understanding (MOU), from each Subgrantee attesting to the Subgrantee's participation (a model MOU is provided in the Appendix B of this notice).

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

States and each Subgrantee that receive funds under this grant program must meet the following requirements for, at a minimum, the duration of the grant period:

(a) The State must continue to participate in--
    (1) The programs authorized by part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA;
    (2) The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program (pursuant to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.));
    (3) The program authorized under section 418 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 618);
    (4) The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (section 511 of title V of the Social Security Act, as amended by section 2951 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Pub. L. 111-148)); and
    (5) Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act.

(b) The State and each Subgrantee must use funds made available under this grant to supplement, not supplant, any Federal, State, or local funds (e.g., IDEA, title I, Head Start, CCDF, and any matching funds included as part of Competitive Preference Priority 2) that, in the absence of the funds awarded under this grant, would be available for improving the

quality of State Preschool Programs and increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs.

(c) The State must participate in grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS, individually or in collaboration with other State grantees, to share effective program practices and solutions and collaboratively solve problems, and must set aside a minimum of $25,000 annually from its grant funds for this purpose.

(d) The State and each Subgrantee must participate in any evaluation of the State's High-Quality Preschool Program, including any cross-State evaluation, if funded by ED or HHS.

(e) The State and each Subgrantee must comply with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, including the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g), the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (Pub. L. 104-191), and IDEA.

(f) The State and each Subgrantee must ensure that the grant project is implemented in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, including the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and require that individuals with disabilities be served in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.

(g) The State and each Subgrantee must provide researchers with access, consistent with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, to available data regarding the enrollment and school readiness of Eligible Children in State Preschool Programs.

(h) Unless otherwise protected as proprietary information by Federal or State laws or a specific written agreement, the State and each Subgrantee must make any work (e.g., materials, tools, processes, systems) developed under its grant freely available to the public. Any Web sites developed under this grant must meet government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.

(i) The State must have a Statewide Longitudinal Data System that links early childhood data with the State's kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) data system by the end of the grant period.

(j) The State must ensure that the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care includes, in addition to the members of the State Advisory Council described in section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837(b)), the State's CCDF administrator, State agency coordinators from both part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA, the State Title I Director, the State Coordinator of Education for Homeless Children and Youth, State agency representatives responsible for health and mental health, and parent representatives.

(k) The State must establish policies and procedures that ensure--

(1) Collaboration between each Subgrantee and programs authorized by section 619 of part B of IDEA so that Eligible Children with disabilities in the High-Need Community are being appropriately identified and served in the least restrictive environment; and

(2) Ensure that the percentage of Eligible Children with disabilities served by the High-Quality Preschool Programs is not less than either the percentage of four-year-old

children served statewide through part B, section 619 of IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), or the current national average,[17] whichever is greater.

(l) The State and each Subgrantee are prohibited from spending grant funds, including any matching funds, if applicable, on construction, renovation, modernization, or related activities.

(m) For activities involved in improving existing State Preschool Program slots to meet the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs, the State and each Subgrantee may only spend grant funds, including any matching funds, if applicable, on activities listed in selection criterion (D)(4)(b)(ii).

(n) Within 90 days of receipt of an award, the State must submit to the Departments a signed MOU (a model MOU is provided in Appendix B of this notice) or other binding agreement between the State's Lead Agency and each Subgrantee that, at a minimum --

(1) Includes a scope of work describing the portions of the State's plan that the Subgrantee will implement;

(2) Incorporates the State's ambitious and achievable plan, in particular the sections that the Subgrantee is responsible for implementing;

(3) Is signed by an authorized representative of the State's Lead Agency and the Subgrantee;

(4) Describes the roles and responsibilities of the State's Lead Agency and Subgrantee in implementing the project plan;

(5) Describes the method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational);

(6) Describes how the State and Subgrantee will exchange data; and

(7) Describes how the MOU can be amended.

(o) The State must submit scopes of work for the State and each Subgrantee within 90 days of the grant award notification date. These scopes of work must contain detailed work plans and budgets that are consistent with the State's grant application, and must include the State's and each Subgrantee's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures for the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Subgrantee is agreeing to implement.

[17] Note: The current national percentage of four year-old-children receiving services through part B, section 619 of IDEA is 6.4%. Source: 2012 IDEA Part B Child Count (www.ideadata.org).