Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page

Application # NY-5026

Peer Reviewer: [redacted]
Lead Monitor:
Support Monitor:
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CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development	20	11

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--

(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(1)

(a)The State contributions to all funding for Early Learning and Development since 2007 have increased 330 million dollars. This includes programming such as the full day kindergarten and Universal Prekindergarten which is provided for the entire early childhood population, not just Children with High Needs. This makes it unclear as to how much of this money actually went to the population targeted by the RTT-ELC grant. It is clear that the State anticipates substantially increasing its match to CCDF (10.59M) next year. This year, the State match fell almost 4.7M dollars. These facts indicate that while the State has invested in Early Learning and Development for Children with High Needs since 2007, it has not shown an equal growth in allocating funds over the years. (b)Six of the 19 Early Learning and Development Programs listed do not have information recorded for the numbers of Children with High Needs participating in them during 2011. The number of children in each program fluctuates from year to year with growth in some areas and declines in others. In comparing the 2007 enrollment numbers with the 2011 numbers, however, there is virtually little change in the numbers of Children with High Needs participating in the State's Early Learning and Development Programs. (c)In 2005, the Board of Regents drafted a policy statement on Early Education. This was followed by legislation, policies and practice put into place by the State. The State has begun a Universal Prekindergarten and is working toward a mandated kindergarten. They have also had in place QUALITYstarsNY which is a quality rating and improvement system. (The State's Early Learning and Development Standards address all five essential domains of school readiness. The QUALITYstarsNY program includes early learning and development standards. It has some assessment pieces in place, but is not comprehensive. There are indications that this program will be pulling all of these building blocks together in the future. It promotes 4 of the five elements of health promotion practices. It includes a strong parent component. This QUALITYstarsNY is being utilized to some extent but is not yet applied across the State. There are several health promotion practices that are firmly established in the state. This includes The Child and Adult Care Food Program, which has shown a slight increase in enrollment since 2007. Other programs include Children's Health Insurance Program, Nurse Family Partnership and services provided to Early Childhood populations by the State Office of Mental Health. Unfortunately, there are other important programs that show a decline in children and revenue. These include Physically Handicapped Children and Healthy Families New York.

The later incorporates all five elements of health promotion practices. Family engagement strategies currently in place are located in the federally funded Head Start and Even Start. IDEA Part C is an early intervention program, but its funding has fallen. Licensing has a variety of policies which require family engagement to some extent. One of the stated goals for the grant is to provide families with a scale by which they can identify a quality care program for their child. There is a workforce knowledge and competency framework. All credentials are aligned to it. Right now there is not a statewide kindergarten entry assessment. It is being developed. This section does not state a date for reaching statewide administration on table (A)(1)-12. The NYS Department of Health-Early Intervention and NYS Home Visiting Programs have all seven of the Essential Data Elements in place. However these programs are not available to the state as a whole. Eventually, QUALITYstarsNY will have a state wide system in place. It is unclear in this section when this will happen. The State has begun implementing some programs such as the Universal Prekindergarten, Full Day Kindergarten Conversion Aide and QUALITYstarsNY. They are in the process of developing a Kindergarten Entry Assessment System which will be used statewide. Fully implemented, these programs are important building blocks toward the goals of RTT-ELC. However, due to the fluctuations in funding of programs and the relatively lack of growth in the number of children served over the course of the last five years, the decrease in children served and monies allocated for programs which contain the quality domains in such areas as health and family involvement and the lack of a date or any indication of what is included in the not yet developed Kindergarten Entry Assessment system [Table (A)(1)-12], this section was scored at the Medium Quality score.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	14

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

a. Given the groundwork already in place, the goals set by the State are achievable. These goals center on improving the quality of education for all young children in the State, with the implication that by so doing, the Children with High Needs will also benefit. This includes a system of assessments to identify needs of children as a whole, including programs with large high needs populations. Other than ensuring that the majority of centers with Children with High Needs will be at least a three star program (on a scale of 1 one to five) there is little stated specifically to close the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers. b. The summary of the State Plan describes a system – QSNY - of tracking, documenting and identifying children and populations with an initial emphasis on high needs. Current services will be utilized as the need arises. Since, according to tables (A)(1)-4 and (A)(1)-5 funding and population served for several of these programs are not increasing, it is not clear how the State will meet any additional demands for service. c. The rationale for the criteria chosen for Areas (C), (D) and (E) is clear in how they will best achieve the State's goals. The State intends to use the momentum gained from the successful 2010 RTT application to help with achieving (E)(2). The approach of improving the entire system for all children does not address in full the needs of the Children with High Needs. However, it does have systems in place, being developed or planned that could be of help in identifying and helping Children with High Needs. The State is very clear in how the criteria chosen for Areas (C), (D) and (E) will achieve their stated goals. Because of all of this, the section was scored Medium/High range.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	6

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

(a)The organizational model clearly shows how decision making will be done. The MOU/Scope of Work outlines how the work will be allocated and what will need to be done to follow-through on the plan. A central agency is already in place to administer the grant and other agencies, such as the Board of Regents, are part of the process. It is vague as to which partners other than those on the model specifying governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency and the State's Interagency Coordinating Council will be chosen and involved. The State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA will not be a partner in this process. Operational processes are fairly well stated and policy, if not in place, is already being formulated. Some planning from representatives of Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders has already been done. There are places in the Plan where these entities may become involved, but it is unclear who and how much of this will be done under the grant. (b)The State has a Scope of Work description from the major state agencies. There are 6 major contributors, but it is unclear who else will become participating programs or that there is a mechanism to maximize the number of programs involved. Four of the six authorized representatives of each Participating State Agency signed the MOU. The MOU does not show a signature from CCF, SED, "other professional development partners" or "other participating partners" (c) There are over 200 stakeholders who sent in a letter of support over all the areas suggested in the application. The quality of those letters varied but many of them were very good and several were impressive. The vast majority were letters of support rather than letters of intent. It is clear that should these stakeholders be asked to participate, they would. The ground swell of support from across the State is impressive and indicates that the ability to mobilize these entities to accomplish their goals is high. However, there is considerable uncertainty as to who, beyond the administering programs, will be involved and it should be clearer as to their responsibilities if they are involved. For these reasons, the State is credited for a medium-quality response. The Administrating agency already coordinates those programs which would be used to help the Children with High Needs. But because there is limited discussion as to how the grant will be used to meet the needs of these children, the State has partially implemented the elements in (A)(3)

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	9

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

(a)Four state agencies are identified on table (A)(4)-1 funding to achieve the outcomes of the State's Plan, but not federal, private, and local sources of funding. Some mention of federal funding as it is funneled through State agencies is discussed in the narrative. There is limited discussion of how they would leverage existing funding to support the State Plan. The MOU and most of the Letters of Intent do not address this. (b) The monies appear to be more than adequate to support many of the activities described in the State Plan. Some, such as the budget for the Early Childhood Guidelines, which are already developed, appear excessive for simply disseminating/training the workforce. Colleges of Education already deal with changing guidelines as part of their normal operations, so their part of dissemination/training should be minimal. It is not certain whether some of the monies allocated for the Department of Health will be going to allowable uses of funds under RTT-ELC. The largest portion of the money will be allocated to QUALITYstarNY, which appears to be the mechanism by which the local programs will receive a portion of the Grant monies. (c) There is a plan to plan how to identify funding streams once the grant is awarded. It is expected that there will be private monies and enthusiasm from the public which will allow for further funding. The financial incentives for programs and individuals to participate in the tiered rating systems are not reflected in the budget. At this point about 17.6 M over four years is being reallocated from other sources to support the program. These come from sources that will be available once the grant is complete. Since QUALITYstarNY will not have yet been implemented throughout the State at the end of five years, this alone will not be sufficient funds to continue to drive the change. The State is optimistic about being able to continue the funding of the programs put in place by this grant. Several of the projects should be completed by the end of five years and already be in operation. These will be able to be maintained by the funds already in place now. However, the key program – QUALITYstarNY – will continue to be funded and at a higher rate than is currently allocated. This, combined with sketchy information on table (A)(4)(a), qualifies the State for a Medium/low score in this section.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	8

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

(1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

(2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;

(3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;

(4) Family engagement strategies;

(5) Health promotion practices; and

(6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

Through QUALITYstarsNY, the State has tiered Programs Standards. QSNY was implemented in a small group of programs throughout the State last year. The Early Learning Guidelines (the State's ELDS) have developmentally appropriate guidelines for birth through kindergarten entry children. It has been developed to be used in all types of programs regulated by State agencies. They cover all Essential Domains of School readiness. QUALITYstarsNY (the State's CAS) includes screening measures, formative assessments, the Environment Rating System and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System. Early Childhood Educator Qualifications and Experience is an entire domain of QSNY. The same is true of family engagement strategies. Health promotion practices are addressed throughout the system, and must be addressed for a EDLP to receive a 1 Star rating in the tier system. QSNY will pool data from all participating agencies which work with young children, including the public school data collection system and state licensure, for effective data practices. It has been field tested but is not yet implemented State-wide. One of the purposes of this application is to obtain the funding to do this. The Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System is based on Program Standards that include standards that are clear and measurable. The mOHS QUALITYStarsNY and Office of Head Start Monitoring Protocol Crosswalk includes the measures for each standard. The QSNY program guide divides points between four main categories of standards, which are then used to determine the quality of the program and quality of child outcomes. The programs are differentiated into 5 levels. These standards reflect high expectations of program excellence, especially at the 4 and 5 start levels. They are commensurate with nationally recognized standards, such as National Head Start Standards. QSNY incorporates the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs. The response addresses all areas of (B)(1) and is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	6

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

(1) State-funded preschool programs;

(2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;

(3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;

(4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and

(5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

(a) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part C of IDEA and Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA will not be required to participate in QSNY, which means that those programs may or may not be included in the system. This is significant because a large portion of High Needs Children are served under those programs. All other State programs will be included in QSNY, including state-funded preschool, Early Head Start, Head Start and those receiving funds from CCDF. (b) The State plans on implementing, through QUALITYstarsNY, effective policies and practices designed to maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs. These areas have been identified and will be the target of the next step in implementing QSNY. The State maintains that access to quality care is not so much a financial issue as a quality issue. It already provides a number of assistance programs for families. QSNY is seen as the way to make quality care accessible through increasing the number of

programs in the 3 to 5 star range. The increased star rating does come with inherent subsidies, the highest going to programs with a large number of High Needs Children. (c) Even though the State anticipates encouraging Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part C of IDEA and Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA to participate, chart (B)(2)(c) indicates that any growth in number or percentage of enrollment is not applicable to the implementation of the State's plan. This hurts the State's ability to maximize program participation in QSNY. In addition, the chart does not indicate how many sites are not going to be part of the system, giving only a partial picture of the overall State improvement. The State funded Preschool and Head Start programs project ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages expected of applicants. Sites receiving IDEA Part B and CCDF funds, per chart (B)(2)(c), have no goals. Consequently, this is a medium response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	10

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

(a) The State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and are in the process of implementing a combination of the ERS and CLASS, both systems having already undergone validity and reliability tests. The plan is to train master monitors who will train others in the State to apply the assessments. The inter-rater reliability plan is strong. Their rationale for a three years assessment cycle is sound. Allowing the 1 and 2 star programs to self assess is weak, given that the validity and reliability of the assessments is based on trained monitors applying the assessments. (b) The State is planning on providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs in a variety of formats, including posting it on site and disseminating how to get this information and understand it through the internet and other public and private entities. For the most part, the plan is strong and of high quality. Most of this is not yet implemented – though the current programs participating in QUALITYstarsNY have begun the process of implementation, showing it to be Partially Implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	7

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

(a)The State and its Participating State Agencies have developed, in part, and partially implemented, a Plan which has in place support and some incentives for Early Learning and Developmental Programs to continuously improve through minimal compensation, providing help to go from one level to the next and through the prestige of having a higher Star designation. It is expected that parents will show a preference for placing their child in a program associated with QUALITYstarsNY. This shows a weakness in the plan, since the cost on many levels may be so great that these less immediate incentives may not be enough to motivate a program to change. (b) Programs where 25% of children being served are High Needs Children will be shown preference early into the implementation of the plan and will be assigned an individual who will help them through the process and help with setting up networks that will provide access to services and networking. There is minimal funding going toward increasing paid experts, though some will be hired should the need arise. It is expected, however, that all programs that wish to participate, regardless of the child demographics will be encouraged to be part of QSNY. (c) At the end of the Grant (2015) it is anticipated that 55% of the all participating programs will be three star or higher, and 10% of these programs will have reached the 5 star (highest level). Certainly, this is an achievable goal for QSNY, but not quite as ambitious as a TQRIS which had been previously field tested could be. The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System constitute about 45% of the population of High Needs Children being served by the four Programs participating in QSNY. Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part C of IDEA and Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA will not be participating in this Plan. It should be noted that baselines for (B)(4)(c)(1) and (B)(4)(c)(2) were not given, which is a weakness for the Plan. The lack of baseline information and minimal incentives weakens this portion of the application. It is a medium quality response. With QSNY somewhat in place, the Plan is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.	15	7

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

(a)The State has done a field study on QSNY and will modify the plan based on the results. This includes revisiting the the tiered rating system. There are some changes they have made on the rating of the Standards based on this. An independent evaluator will be designing a research plan and implementing it in order to validate the changes. It is possible for the independent evaluator to be able to do this, but the criteria the State will use are somewhat sketchy, with discussion centering on changing the weighting of the Standards. While important, this is insufficient for accurately reflecting the different levels of quality. (b) The Kindergarten Readiness Tool is being (re)designed at this point and results from the finished Tool will be used to check whether the quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness. The KRT will also be checked for validity and reliability by an independent evaluator. The plan includes checking results for the KRT against another, already validated, tool. The State is anticipating evaluating one classroom per program in the QSNY to determine the star rating for the entire program. This is not adequate for the purpose of evaluating a large program. The narrative made mention that all the classrooms in a program may be included in the total evaluation, but this is only an aside possibility. Many of the decisions as to how the tiered system is evaluated for reliability have not yet been determined. The use of only one class will be used to evaluate a program also shows weakness in this area.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--

(1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);

(2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and

(3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant

chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	16

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;

(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and

(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

(a)The State has in place three sets of Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs. These have been aligned with each other. The Early Learning Guidelines and the Prekindergarten Foundation to the Common Core and Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework address all age groups. The standards is each cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness. (b) The Early Learning and Development Standards, all three of them, are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards. The Early Learning Guidelines and the Prekindergarten Foundation to the Common Core are aligned with Common Core State Guidelines. These Guidelines include early literacy and mathematics. (c) Early Learning and Development Standards are to be incorporated in different ELDP. Funding to ELDP is made based on incorporating these standards. The Environmental Rating Assessments required by the tiered rating system monitors the quality of the curricula and activities. QSNY, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities are scheduled to be fully in place by the end of year 2016. (d) The State is in the process of putting supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs. This includes creating and implementing training modules on the Standards and working through those entities that currently provide in-service for providers and practitioners. These will not be totally in place until 2015. The response to (C)(1) is thorough. This is a high-quality plan. There is partial implementation already in place.

	Available	Score
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.	20	14

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment Systems by--

(a) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;

(b) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to strengthen Early Childhood Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems;

(c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple Early Learning and Development Programs; and

(d) Training Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(2)

(a) The State's plan involves providing Early Learning and Development Programs a selection of assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes and having them choose those which are appropriate for the ELDP's needs and population. These include the Environmental Rating Scales and CLASS. The State Plan requires the screening of all children prior to entering the program to determine development, learning or health needs. These assessments were not identified by the State. (b) The State will provide training for administrators of ELDPs who will then train their own Early Childhood Educators on the administration of assessments and the use of data to inform change. (c) Building on the NYC's Common Metric, which is currently being developed based on three already validated and respected assessments, the State will then design their own Common Metric. This will serve to align the assessments that may be chosen by the ELDPs. QSNY will be responsible for a system which will communicate assessment results and thus avoid duplication of assessments. It is hoped that this will help coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple Early Learning and Development Programs. Though QSNY has been field tested, all of this has yet to be developed. The NYC Common Metric in process could be a major help in this effort. (d) Training Modules for Early Childhood Educators will be developed and made available to them by administrators, who will be the ones receiving the training through the grant. The administrators are responsible to make certain that the educators appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction. Administrators are responsible for assessment as it relates to programs and services. The State's plan in regards to supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems is strong. The plan, at this point, is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	**20**	**14**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

(a) The State already has a set of standards for ensuring children's health and safety. It will be modifying those standards based on the QSNY field study results. The plan works on ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards. It does not include parent and child health literacy education nor does it address eating habits. (b) The training of Early Childhood Educators in health issues appears to be limited to day care workers and other pre k personnel in nonpublic school settings. No mention is made of those educators who work in the pre kindergartens in the public school. Administrators are trained and they in turn are responsible for training their personnel. The extent to which they do this will be reflected in the star rating the program receives. Resources will be made available to administrators for doing this. (c) A specialist will be hired to help train programs on how to expand physical activity. Promoting healthy eating habits and improving nutrition is not directly addressed, but is part of the standards. (d) There is a plan in place for leveraging existing resources to meet annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who are screened. The screening measures meet all the required measures and are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA. Children are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and do receive follow-up. One of the purposes of the State's plan is to increase the continuity of care from screening to follow-through for High Needs Children. Protocols will be established and those providing screenings and care will be trained in them to establish consistency across the State. Projected participation over the next four years is ambitious yet achievable. The State is maximizing a health system which is already in place and which, for the most part, is very strong. Nutrition, health literacy of families and eating habits are minimally addressed, which is a weakness. Overall this response is strong. The plan is partially implemented.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	20	10

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

(a) The State has several pieces already in place to develop a statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. This will be in the Core Body of Knowledge currently being revised. The various Competencies, combined, present a convincing picture that children learning and development should be positively influenced. QSNY will be testing the Core Body of Knowledge as learning and developmental outcomes are received. Modifications will be made to CBK based on those outcomes. This allows the system to adjust expectations based on the children served. (b) QSNY addresses credentials and allocates progressively higher points for each credential and degree. Fifty percent of the star rating is based on the credential or degrees of the providers and administrators. The alignment of the Core Body of Knowledge and the bachelors and masters degrees in education is somewhat aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. From the documentation provided, the alignment is not as clear. (c) A limited number of postsecondary institutions (CUNY) along with other professional development providers have been engaged in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. There is an attempt on the part of the State to balance competencies already in place in the various agencies through the use of crosswalking and other methods. This seems unwieldy at this point since so many are currently being used. At this point it is not clear that a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework will be developed. The vagueness in how all of the parts will be pulled together to create a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency is a weakness. The ongoing revision of the established Core Body of Knowledge is a strength. Consequently, this is a medium quality response. The ongoing revisions to the Core Body of Knowledge indicates that this is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.	20	9

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers

that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(2)

(a) The State's plan provides for a wide variety of effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. These include Web based inservice, access to a career calculator, outreach and encouragement to legally exempt care providers – including monies for education, and extensive training and support opportunities for QSNY programs with High Needs Children. (b) The monetary incentives through the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework are limited to scholarships or other training and to participating programs providing incentives as they attempt to become higher in the star rating. It provides some grants, supports and scholarships for participating programs. There is no indication of a raise in pay, particularly for practitioners. This is a weakness of the plan. (c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention will be done through QSNY and New York Works for Children. (d) (1) By the end of 2015, it is anticipated that all postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs will be aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and from that point all Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers will then have degrees that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. (2) The chart (D)(2)(d)(2) does not include the data from Associate and Bachelor degrees. This cannot be currently accessed. The goal is to increase the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework to 10% once the baseline is known. The other credentials are to increase another 10% in ten years. The information provided is incomplete and the goals are achievable, but not ambitious, especially given the scope of QSNY. The plans for accessibility are innovative and varied, making this a strength for the Plan. Monetary incentives are limited and are not adequate for retention of the work force. The State's plan for data collection and dissemination should be able to do the job of reporting data to the public. The goal of having all postsecondary institutions and professional development ready to implement trainings by 2015 is adequate and ambitious. But, the data and goals on chart (D)(2)(d)(2) are incomplete and less than ambitious. This results in a medium response and partially implemented designation.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--

(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)

(a) The State's plan will align the Kindergarten Readiness Test with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and it will cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness. SED has established a plan for how this will be done, including a review of best practice and the Early Learning Standards to identify the skills, abilities and knowledge base from each of the Essential Domains of School Readiness. (b) The plan is to bring in outside evaluators who will be responsible to make certain the assessment is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used. The State Regents will be responsible for the considerations for English learners and children with disabilities. (c) The KRT will be administered the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering public school kindergartens. The Board of Regents will determine which programs will be first to be tested. Full implementation will occur the following year. (d) Is reported to the P-20 Interagency Data Warehouse where it will be made available to interested agencies. This Warehouse appears to be separate from QSNY, but is statewide and accessible to QSNY. (e) The KRT will be funded by the State and will be sustained by the State after implementation. The SED will be funded to develop and implement the project. None of the RTT Grant funds will be used for the KRT. The State has met the requirements for a high quality response. The plan is not yet implemented

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	**20**	**16**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;

(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;

(c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;

(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and

(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

(a) The State will include all of the Essential Data Elements in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. With the P-20 Longitudinal Data System already in place, other data systems, such as the New York State Student Identification System and New York Works for Children registry, will be used as part the data linked between the various early childhood systems. The Early Education Reporting Portal, a data entry site which allows agencies and individuals to access information in QSNY is in the planning stage. (b) The State has developed a plan that ensures the data system will enable uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs. Chart (E)(2) NYS Early Learning Data Systems Diagram shows how this will be done. (c) The State has developed a plan that facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data. (d) The State has developed a plan that anticipates generating information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making. It is in the generating information and analyzing it High Needs Children will be helped. This will be done on the individual level as a child's data is used to improve the child's individual care. It will also be done by seeing trends and pinpointing populations which need additional support so that the State knows where additional support is needed. The data system is also intended to provide help for parents, with information to help them choose high quality programs. e) The State has developed a plan that meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws. It appears that the Early Education Reporting Portal can limit information given to agencies and individuals, which further complies with privacy laws. Many of the data bases already exist and some sharing of information is occurring. As the rest of the State's Plan comes into place, such as the establishment of Standards for curriculum, programs and the KRT, the data system will be modified accordingly. Overall this is a strong component of the plan.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	**280**	**169**

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	**0 or 10**	**No**

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

a) The State has not yet implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment. b)The lack of implementation of an otherwise high quality response earned a score of 60% of the maximum points available.

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	**Yes**

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Comments on Absolute Priority

The State's application addresses how it will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for the children so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Additionally, the State's discussion centers to a large part on the total improvement of the process and the resulting improvement for all children. The design and implementation of the State's common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System will allow for heightened ability to utilize resources in place for all children. The QSNY will help identify/encourage programs to self-evaluate and provide the opportunities in such areas as trainings and making program level changes to support quality improvement. The QSNY will promote Early Learning and Development Outcomes for all children by articulating expected outcomes and seeing if the programs are making a difference in the development of the children.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page

Application # NY-5026

Peer Reviewer: [redacted]
Lead Monitor:
Support Monitor:
Application Status: **Reviewed**
Date/Time: **11/16/2011 - 9:14 PM**

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development	20	17

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--

(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(1)

The State of New York provided a high quality response that demonstrated a long-term commitment and investment to serve children with high needs that are accessible to ELPD programs. a)The state indicates an enormous amount of funds allocated to their Early Learning and Development programs. The allocated funds do not equate with the Table (A)(1)-4) and the referenced 24% annual increase. Table (A)(1) indicates the total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families as 593,942; the charts are not clear and could be a representation of duplication, therefore, determining the specific number of children with high needs cannot be determined. Nevertheless, the State displays a significant amount of funds commitment to Children with High Needs since January 2007. b) Overall, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs displayed an upward progression. Although there were several down years in the number of children participating, there was no developing trend as the programs indicated an increase the following year in the vast number of cases. c) The state leaders indicated support of a broader education reform agenda. This is evident by the State's Early Learning Invitational Priority which committed resources to improve early learning and strengthen alignment between ELDPs and the first years of elementary school. The State is a national leader in assuring that children with high-needs have access to affordable health insurance and high-quality, comprehensive primary health care services. This is evident by the State collaboration by a MOU with state agency that was able to provide full day services to more than 16,000 Children with High Needs in the 2010-2011 school years. Moreover, the state's Early Learn initiative leverages an innovative interagency partnership with the NYCDOE to expand universal, integrated, high-quality ELDPs. d) The state indicated five categorized areas targeted to developing and maintaining a high quality early learning and development system. Several key areas of acknowledgment that emphasized building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system was the child care licensure requirements to include rigorous standards for health and safety, ongoing provider professional development, requiring a provider to attend 30 hours of professional development every two years, and developmentally appropriate activities that set a much higher baseline for minimum quality. The State, in 2010, developed and implemented a P-20 Longitudinal Data System to a system which UPK and preschool special education programs are already built in. The state committed resources to

create linkages with early learning data systems.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	18

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

The State of New York expressed a commitment to three ambitious and achievable goals: increase the number of high-quality ELDPs, close the achievement gap, and improve the quality of the early childhood workforce. New York has demonstrated significant progress towards reaching these goals to improving school readiness for Children with High Needs as indicated below. The State's overall score for submitting their high-quality response is 18 points or 90%. a) The state's goals are certainly obtainable and the plan to be successful in reaching this goal is outlined with priorities. The state articulated a rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals with an obtainable plan. A key component to improving the school readiness gap would be to have parents being actively involved in the progress and planning stages. b) The State articulates how this High Quality plan focuses on Early Learning and Development Standards and comprehensive assessments that are clear, and developmentally appropriate. The State's goal is to ensure all children achieve the standards across the Essential Domains of School Readiness, are healthy and prepared for their transition into the early elementary grades, and continue on the road to becoming college and career ready. The CAS will improve the ability of Early Childhood Educators and program directors to use data to drive instruction and practice. c) The state makes a specific reference to the "recognition of the critical importance of health to school readiness and success". Although the reference is great, it was not clear how the state would ensure the service providers and the clients would be linked to ensure service delivery. In Focused Investment Area C, the State expressed promoting early learning and development outcomes for children by: (1) Developing and using Statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards; (2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems; and (3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness. Moreover, the State Plan continues to be consistent with past years of early childhood development with an emphasis on high standards that define clear expectations for both program quality and children's learning and a commitment to collecting and using data and appropriate assessments to evaluate performance and inform improvement efforts. Focused Investment Area D Early Childhood Education Workforce: The State implies that by developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, a progression of credentials and supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities are primary factors to successfully producing outcomes. The state provides clear evidence of achievement by their strong relationships with postsecondary institutions that will enable them to enhance and transform Early Childhood Educator preparation by aligning it with the State's CBK. Focused Investment Area E Measuring Outcomes and Progress: The State recognizes that the understanding of the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry, and building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies are specific rationales for justification. The State will continue to use their Kindergarten Readiness Tool (KRT) and the P-20 Longitudinal Data System to enable policymakers to understand the skills children have at kindergarten entry, to inform program design to tailor instruction, target resources, and also inform K-12 reform efforts to better target school readiness and achievement gaps. The state recognizes that comprehensive assessment and ongoing use of data is critical for driving instructional practice.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	9

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency

governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

The state did a very good job in developing a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders. The structure and commitment from all partners displays a solid plan to co-labor in the success of this initiative. The State Plan was written with a large group of stakeholders from multiple entities agreeing to support this initiative. The State Plan faltered in not being inclusive, clearly and specifically, to parents and families in this section. Although, the State indicated/stated reference throughout the grant including parents and families, it was not detailed enough to reward full points. The total points awarded for this high quality response was 9 or 90%.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	11

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

a) The State's ability to demonstrate the usage of existing funds allocated for the Early Childhood Initiative to achieve the outcomes in the State's Plan appeared to be adequate to support the activities and how the quality set-asides will be spent. The State states more than $15.4 million dollars of current funding (federal, state, private, and local) will be realigned in order to successfully implement the goals articulated in the budget. The State will rethink how existing staff and resources can be utilized and current initiatives leveraged to achieve the State's mission. b) The budget narrative was not detailed, even though it appears the State is committed and dedicated to substantially investment in Early Childhood Education. As for the programmatic activities, the State Plan supports the activities listed in the budget, but the costs are not detailed clearly to justify the spending. There are several line items requiring more attention to detail: 1) fringe benefits are calculated as high as 56%. The State does not breakout the specific details of the line items; therefore, the spending cannot be justified. 2) The line item for taxes is excluded and the narrative does not indicate who will be responsible for payment and at what rate of taxation. When the estimated 130,000 children with high needs are calculated with the projected spending over the 4-year grant period, the cost per child is $769.23 contributed by the federal government, whereas the state would be investing $135.56 per child. The two items are in question of being potentially unreasonable and "somewhat" a question of concern based on the dollar amount being spent by the federal government over the state government per potential child being served. A concern for supplantation is paramount, because of the disparities in spending per entity. c) Despite the concerns, the State demonstrates a comprehensive written plan and a commitment to provide a quality service to high need children. The State Plan can be sustained and maintained after the grant period by commitment of the Governor, who will identify public-private partnerships in the business and philanthropic communities to support quality ELDPs that promote school readiness. This public-private partnership will sustain the state as the foundation for their high quality plan. Over the course of the next 4 years, State Agencies committed to improving the state's early learning and development system will identify funding streams that will be invested in supporting the sustainability of the State's high quality plan. Additionally, the Governor will continue to include financial support for state's plan in their state budget.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	9

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

(1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

(2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;

(3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;

(4) Family engagement strategies;

(5) Health promotion practices; and

(6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

New York has provided a high-quality response for quality, and implementation of their Quality Rating Improvement System. Currently, the State's system is in the full/partial (pilot-testing stage) implementation stage. The overall points awarded for this response 9 or 90%. a) The State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System indicate a collaborative effort by many of the state partners to develop and adopt a High-Quality Plan. The state created the TQRIS to provide the framework for defining and improving quality in our early learning and development system. The state stakeholders were extremely inclusive of all public and private entities across the state being. The state did not indicate a direct inclusion of home visitation programs, which are key ingredients to improving the learning outcomes of children. The State's Health promotion practices are ideal. b) Overall, the State did not clearly address the five tier rating system in detail. The State plans to integrate data systems across the state and provide training on the system capabilities. QSNY is the state's common, statewide, tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System created to provide the framework for defining and improving quality in their early learning and development system. QSNY does this by providing ELDPs with aligned Early Learning and Development Standards used in the State Prekindergarten Foundation to the Common Core, and Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework). The state considers this to be a common protocol for the assessment of program quality and leveraged resources for supporting program improvement and rewarding program success. QSNY was designed to include all settings for children that are regulated by a State Agency: child care and Head Start centers, family child care and group family child care homes, State-funded prekindergarten programs, and registered nonpublic nursery schools. QSNY was designed to align with the CAS, and the State Works for Children. The nationally recognized standards, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation standards, the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation standards, and the Head Start Performance Standards (HSPPS) are measurable. The state used supporting evidence of a crosswalk between the QSNY standards and the Early Head Start and Head Start Performance Standards. Each of these nationally recognized standards highlights the importance of program elements that the National Research Council has found in exemplary programs, including teacher-child ratios in licensing that support optimal adult-child interaction in the learning environment; developmentally-appropriate, research validated curricula that provide rich and varied learning experiences; reflective professional development focused on improved practice; collaborative relationships with parents; and comprehensive support services.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	12

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

(1) State-funded preschool programs;

(2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;

(3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;

(4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and

(5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

a) Providing a high-quality response, the State Plan is partially implemented and aligned to incorporate all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs to participate in their TQRIS. The State's expectations of a successful program are outlined, and linkage to the State's licensing system will be required. QSNY implementation is guided by a philosophy that values universal access by all ELDPs. The state aligned their strategies to coincide with years of researched data documenting the powerful impact of high-quality early care and education on the lives of our most vulnerable children. b) The State plans to model after the success of a neighboring state for guidance in projecting achievable targets for increasing participation. This choice will allow the state the grand opportunity to ensure their endeavor is successful by learning from the neighboring state's experiences. The state will be able to implement effective policies and practices from the experienced State's lessons as well. Moreover, the modeling approach will allow the state to cost-effectively test the state's approach to quality rating and improvement, so as to make Statewide implementation more effective and efficient. The State will be able to ensure affordable co-payments, provide incentives to high quality providers, and better control reimbursement rates. This is evident by the fact that a family in the state receiving child care assistance will have access to 75 percent of available care options (based on rates charged by programs/providers for care). c) The State's focus in high needs communities on the high quality of care chosen through their QSNY is evidence of their

commitment of program excellence. The five year State plan to increase the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the state's TQRIS is progressive and there is high potential for this plan to greatly impact the state. The state sets another ambitious yet achievable target by defining their scope by including regulated child care, Head Start/Early Head Start, and UPK, this translates to adding 500-1,000 programs per year over the next six years.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	12

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

The State indicates partially implemented quality rating system with a high quality plan, in which several components of the tools to be used for monitoring the system are being field tested in 2011. The State received 12 points. a) The State plans to implement three valid and reliable environmental rating scales, FDCERS, ITERS, and ECERS-R for monitoring and measuring classroom quality. In addition, the State will use CLASS, an Adult-Child interaction tool, to measure the Quality of ELDPs on seven subscales. The environmental rating scales assist programs seeking a Star 1 or 2 rating to take a self-assessment using the appropriate ERS instrument. To receive a Star 3 or higher rating, programs must be independently assessed using both the ERS and CLASS tools. The CLASS assessment provides instructional support domain, resulting in better preschool student outcomes in pre-reading and math skills. The research has resulted in higher outcomes in the emotional support domain contribute to preschoolers' kindergarten social readiness. The State expressed the desire to conduct ERS and CLASS observations every three years in conjunction with the QSNY rating renewal process. b) The state plans to interface with the QSNY data system and other state agency licensure databases to automatically display the quality Star ratings of all of the ELDPs in New York. This tool will also function as a new parent portal so that parents/caretakers can access program-specific information on the quality of ELDPs. The state expresses that once the QSNY data system is fully functional, it will be possible for a parent/caretaker or any other interested party to see whether a program site is participating in QSNY and, if so, whether a Star rating has been assigned, and what that rating is. The ratings will be clearly explained, along with instructions on how to learn more about what comprises a particular rating. The State's plans to provide quality rating and licensing information to parents who are enrolled in ELDPs are on target and evidence is provided to prove high potential of success in their chosen model to disseminate information.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	15

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

The State is rated slightly above the High Quality Response rating as for the reasons referenced in sections (a) and (c) below. The State does not provide any baseline data, but does set targets for the performance measures. The goals outlined are highly progressive, and the program is partially implemented. The State received 15 or 75% of the total awardable points. a) The State provides support and incentives for ELDPs to continuously improve working with families with high need children. The State indicated technical assistance in relation to participating providers being assessed with the environmental rating scales and the CLASS tool. The State indicated financial rewards and incentives would be provided, but the State did not clearly indicate how participants would receive compensation for higher subsidy reimbursement rates. Moreover the State indicated funds would be used to nominally award non-high-needs communities for achieving the highest quality rating. This is not in line with the purpose of this RTT-ELC grant competition. b) The state has been a leader in interagency collaboration to enable providers to combine child care, Head Start, and State prekindergarten funds to provide high-quality, full-day ELDP experiences for young children. In addition, the state launched an Early Learn initiative, which integrates multiple funding streams to provide full-day services to high-needs families. The State will use the funds to provide enhanced technical assistance to child care providers, including addressing specific issues they have identified in their program, and supporting providers as they develop new infant/toddler care programs. The State's goal is to fund a child care delivery system that supports very young children's healthy physical, social, and emotional development, and better prepares them for school. c)(1) The numbers and percentages estimated to achieve ambitious targets with their TQRIS is supported by their field tests, and the State displays evidence that targets will be obtained based on their submitted documentation for section (1). (2) The State did not support this section clearly, since no data was submitted for the top tier "...the data gathered through the study do not serve as an accurate baseline for the purpose. The programs in the field test self-selected, and were not a representative sample of the different modalities of care and/or funding streams."

	Available	Score
(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.	15	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

a) The State will work with program evaluators to conduct three types of evaluation: validation of the tiers of QSNY, validation of QSNY ratings against student outcomes, and implementation evaluation of QSNY's PLA scheduled to be implemented in 2011-12. The Qualifications/Experience and Learning Environment domains of the state's QSNY allocates 55 percent of a program's total score based on the lead Early Childhood Educators responsible for children's growth and development. The State will implement a revised point structure and include an additional instrument to measure the quality of adult-child interactions. The state states they will implement an enhanced Health and Learning (HL) survey tool. This instrument will build on lessons learned from the field test. The State plans to contract with an independent evaluator to validate the tiers of QSNY. Again, the state will work with evaluators to validate that the emphasis on these categories, as well as the inclusion of the adult-child interaction measure, differentiates levels of program quality in an accurate manner. b) The State states their primary objective is to evaluate the relationship between a change in QSNY ratings and improved outcomes for children is to ensure the measures of quality in QSNY. The State plan is to assess whether the measures are improving programs to move towards the ultimate goal of school readiness for children. The evaluators will need to examine to what degree specific measures in QSNY are related to child outcomes, and also work with evaluators to validate how well QSNY standards accommodate programs serving children with disabilities. The State indicates solid evidence that the appropriate assessments and research designs will be in place to utilize reliable measures that will rigorously evaluate the validity of QSNY in its ability to measure program quality that is linked to children's progress in learning, development, and school readiness.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--

(1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);

(2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and

(3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the

same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	17

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;

(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and

(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

The State provided a high-quality response, fully implemented plan, and received 18 points or 90% of the points. a) The State's evidence shows Early Learning Development Standards that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across age groups and inclusive of all service delivery systems. The state's Early Learning and Development Standards are designed to foster high-quality learning, experiences, and outcomes for all children, and support our goal of ensuring that all of state's children achieve standards across the Essential Domains of School Readiness, are healthy as they transition into kindergarten, and continue on the road to becoming college and career ready. Also, through a collaborative interagency partnership led by the ECAC, numerous early childhood stakeholders and experts in the field contributed to the development of the Early Learning and Development Standards and ensured alignment of the developmental domains. b) The State's prekindergarten standards for ELA and Math in New York's Common Core State Standards align with expectations for preschool children with the expectations for K-12 students. Vertical alignment of the standards helps Early Childhood Educators understand the differences between prekindergarten and kindergarten, bolstering developmentally appropriate practice across early years. Because the Common Core State Standards includes only ELA and Math, the Board of Regents further adopted the Prekindergarten Learning Standards in January 2011 to set standards in the Essential Domains of School Readiness not covered by the Common Core State Standards for prekindergarten. c) The State has worked to develop key components of their common statewide early learning and development system, including QSNY based on common program standards, the Core Body of Knowledge for Early Childhood Educators, the State Works for Children workforce developments system, and the CAS. The QSNY standards state expectations for what programs need to do to enable children to meet ELDS, and include standards requiring programs to utilize curriculum, assessments, and activities that are aligned with and support children's development against Early Learning and Development Standards. d) The State's DOE developed curriculum embedded performance tasks in UPK programs to reflect how children demonstrate progress in developing skills and knowledge towards the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core standards. These tasks build upon the existing practice in early childhood education of documenting and collecting student work throughout the year to individualize instruction, and bring together curriculum, assessments and standards into a coherent instructional program designed to increase school readiness.

	Available	Score
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.	20	16

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment Systems by--

(a) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;

(b) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to strengthen Early Childhood Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems;

(c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple Early Learning and Development Programs; and

(d) Training Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(2)

The State provides an excellent partially implemented High-Quality response plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment System. The one concern would be in reference to the State's Strategy 2, which states, "Refining, finalizing and disseminating the State's Assessment Guidance document", this strategy would be submitted and presented to the Board of Regents for approval. Since the timeline is projected to occur within a year. What happens if the Board of Regents disapproves the strategy? What is Plan B? The total number of points being awarded for quality and implementation is 16 or 80%. a) The primary goal is that all programs in the State will appropriately and systematically use child and program assessments to inform Early Childhood Educators' practice, tailor instruction to support children's development, and support program improvement efforts. To accomplish this goal, the state has a high-quality plan to create and implement a CAS to monitor young children's learning and development in the five Essential Domains of School Readiness. Moreover, the State plan builds on the current practice in a variety of programs (Head Start, Early Head Start, UPK, and preschool special education) of conducting and collecting early screening results for children, as well as QSNY standards that incorporate measures of environmental quality and adult-child interactions. The CAS also builds on the work in multiple communities throughout the State that require their UPK programs to utilize authentic assessment systems. b) The State's strategy for supporting and expanding the appropriate use of CAS in ELDPs focuses on program administrators and leaders. Administrators and leaders have responsibility for the selection of assessment instruments for their program, the implementation of appropriate assessment protocols, and the professional evaluation and development of their staff, including developing staff's understanding and skills related to appropriate use of comprehensive assessment. The State will focus on leaders and administrators as key change agents in supporting Early Childhood Educators' understanding and use of the CAS. c) The State's goal is to align assessments and to avoid duplicative assessments for those children receiving services from multiple ELDPs. As the number of ELDPs that participate in QSNY increases, the proper use of valid and reliable child assessments continues to become more widespread. QSNY standards include use of valid and reliable assessment tools and the use of assessment data to inform planning and instruction for individual children. Also, the project will empower the state's ELDPs to continue using the formative assessment tools already in use in their classrooms to leverage best practices and make decisions that are best for their population of children and staff, while increasing teacher, administrator and agency level understanding of child outcomes against multiple standards. The project is especially important for providers that leverage multiple funding streams to provide seamless, full-day services to children and are required to respond to different program requirements which measure student progress against different sets of standards. d) The State will focus on early childhood program administrators and leaders as the drivers of comprehensive assessment practices at their sites, working through them to change program-level practice and Early Childhood Educators. The State's assessment plan and processes must address how it will ensure that assessments are administered by appropriately qualified and credentialed staff.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	14

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic

and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

The State provides an excellent partially implemented High-Quality response plan to support the effective implementation and address the health, behavioral and development of the State's children with high needs. The total number of points being awarded for quality and implementation is 14 or 70%. a) The State's plan clearly indicates a strong emphasis to ensure the medical focus to school readiness is address. The State has all key partnerships in place to fully implement their plan in the future. What is not addressed in the plan is how the State will secure funding to support a multiple screening component statewide. b) The State's indicates a significant investment in resources for trainings and support to enable Early Childhood Educators to meet health standards. In accordance with State regulations, all licensed/registered child care providers must complete OCFS-approved training on child health and safety and demonstrate basic competency with regard to health and safety standards. Also, the State's OCFS and DOH will use RTTT-ELC resources to supplement current ECCS-funding of health care consultants to expand the National Training Institute model to additional health care consultants working in CCR&R agencies across the State, and to recruit additional health professionals to be trained and serve in health care consultant roles. The State does not address how the Educators in the rurals communities, in such a large state, will receive on-going training. c) The State plans to expand the promotion of healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, and expanding physcial activities by promoting developmentally appropriate physical activity for young children in ELDPs and expanding ELDP participation in the State's CACFP. The State plans to implement each of these strategies within the first year. Also, the State is currently leveraging State funds and other resources, including in-kind contributions to achieve annual targets. d) The State's ELDPs play a key role in reinforcing the importance of developmental screenings and routine well-child care, helping families access health insurance and link to the health care system, and identifying and communicating potential concerns related to health or development based on their daily interactions with children. The State indicates that there were still over 365,000 uninsured children in 2009, with an estimated 86 percent of these uninsured children eligible for subsidized public health insurance through Medicaid or CHPlus. New York has increased children's enrollment in public health insurance since 2008, and the proportion of children without health insurance declined from 9.2 percent in 2007 to 7.8 percent in 2009, compared to a 10 percent uninsured rate for children nationally.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	20	18

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

The State has a comprehensive high quality response, fully implemented system and well thought out plan for expansion—excellent job! The State has implemented a highly effective and operative Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, which comprise of the State's CBK and the New York State Teaching Standards. The State has the resources in place to engage all the entities necessary to expand professional development opportunities throughout the State of New York. The State is awarded a high score for their evidence of a high quality response, and fully implemented state framework (18 points or 90%). a) The State Works for Children is the State's integrated professional development system designed to recruit, enhance, and retain a diverse, knowledgeable, and qualified workforce. Out of a central office, the State Works for Children will be equipped with a dedicated staff and regional coordinators who will develop and manage the infrastructure necessary to make sure policies, programs, and professional development initiatives are coordinated across sectors. The State Works for Children is integrated with QSNY. QSNY ratings will identify the professional development needs of participating programs, and provide comprehensive technical assistance based on needs. b) The State Works for Children will provide the essential infrastructure to ensure the quality of professional development as QSNY is implemented and grows throughout the State. QSNY is effective in promoting high-quality learning environments and positive outcomes for children by providing Early Childhood Educators access to opportunities for improvement. The State Works for Children addresses this critical component by serving the highest-need areas of the State through its regional coordinators to ensure that all children participating in ELDPs have the strongest start possible. As QSNY is expanded statewide, there will be an increased demand for Early Childhood Educators holding certifications, credentials, and degrees as programs employing highly qualified staff will achieve higher rating levels. Taken together, the categories Qualifications and Experience and Management and Leadership in QSNY comprise 50 percent of a ELDPs rating level. c) (6 points) The CUNY system is a major provider of teacher preparation and professional development coursework in the state, and its agreement to align coursework with the State's workforce competencies will reach a high percentage of students participating in Early Childhood Educator preparation programs. The State anticipates that this effort will result in the creation of model courses and course sequences aligned with the workforce competencies that can then be shared with faculty and staff at other higher education institutions in the State to increase the infusion of workforce competencies into all programs preparing and training Early Childhood Educator statewide.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.	20	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(2)

The State provided a high-quality response, and partially implemented plan. The State did provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measures. The State has been rated continuously as one of the top States with policies and regulations for the highest entry-level qualifications for its early childhood workforce. The State provided evidence of the educators' yearly education requirements for development, incentives and advancement, and retention (retaining Early Childhood Educators outside of the school workforce is critical). a) State will expand access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework by the State's Works for Children being the main form of communication for Early Childhood Educators and will be a highly accessible website that will serve as a gateway for Early Childhood Educators to access professional development and training opportunities and plan their professional growth. b) The qualifications and experience of Early Childhood Educators comprise a major component of ELDP QSNY ratings, programs will have incentives to improve their employees' qualifications and credentials, and the QIP supports included in QSNY will assist them in developing strategies and accessing resources. To support the QSNY field test, OCFS dedicated $500,000 in EIP funds in 2010 to a new QUALITY Scholars program, designed to support Early Childhood Educators working in QSNY field test sites in pursuing professional development and coursework opportunities aligned with their program's QSNY QIP. c) QSNY, in combination with the Workforce Registry, will report aggregated, program, and professional level data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention. QSNY will provide accessible, user-friendly information regarding the quality of

participating programs and will further support targeted professional development outcomes through the identification of areas in need of improvement for ELDPs. d) The State plans to implement an extremely progressive plan. The State has only one post-secondary institution that offers coursework in accordance with the existing framework. In 2012, the total number of aligned post-secondary institutions will be three. The State will, in 2015, have all SUNY and CUNY postsecondary institutions offer coursework incorporating the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. (2) The State did not clearly define this target as indicated by their respond, "...this chart does not reflect the full extent of our ambitious and achievable goals, because it does not include information on the numbers and percentage of Early Childhood Educators with Bachelor's or Associate's degrees—postsecondary credentials that are an important step in New York's career progression for Early Childhood Educators that are recognized in both our licensing/regulatory requirements and QSNY, but which the state's existing data systems to not allow us to track." Therefore, the ambitious yet achievable target cannot be validated.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	**20**	**11**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that–

(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)

The goal of the KRT development is paramount, well-constructed, and is aligned with the State's ELDS and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness. The State's special population of Children with High Needs is skillfully considered and addressed collaboratively with other state partners. The State Education Department will recommend to the Board of Regents to adopt the strategic plan. There is not an indicated backup strategy in case of SDE disapproval. New York has reported a high-quality plan that is minimally implemented as part of a cross-State consortium that provides the instruction and service for entry to early elementary grades. The score awarded to the state is 11 points or 55%. a) The Governor and the Board of Regents will develop a process to adopt an instrument that will be known as the Kindergarten Readiness Tool (KRT). The goal of KRT will be to establish an individual developmental baseline that will allow educators, parents, and policymakers to better understand the level of skills, abilities and knowledge. The KRT developed will be a single point-in-time measure of the five Essential Domains of School Readiness, aligning with both the NYS Early Learning Guidelines and the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core, which will be a particular strength in developing a unique tool for the State to assess children at the time of kindergarten entry. b) To ensure that the results obtained are valid and reliable, the State indicates it is crucial that the tool is administered in accordance with age appropriate best practices. The State's LEA administrators will be responsible for ensuring that the kindergarten teachers, as well as any other staff responsible for the administration of the KRT, have access to professional development prior to administering the KRT. School administrators will also be responsible for providing time and training for kindergarten teachers to modify instruction based on KRT results, as well as sharing KRT results with the early childhood feeder programs beginning communication and collaboration on how to close the achievement gap prior to kindergarten entry. c) The Board of Regents will create a Kindergarten Readiness Advisory Council comprised of expert stakeholders from around the State appointed to the Advisory Council by the Chancellor of the Board of Regents. The Chancellor will designate a member of the Board to serve as Chairperson of the Advisory Council who will be responsible for establishing and leading meetings of the Council. The Council will advise the

Education Department and the Board on the development of a comprehensive proposal to design, develops, and commence implementation of a statewide KRT beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. d) The State's LEAs will report the KRT results to the P-20 data system. Data gleaned from the KRT will link early childhood birth to age five data systems with P-20 data systems through the P-20 Interagency Data Warehouse. The P-20 Interagency Data Warehouse provides access for State agencies to share Early Childhood, K-12, Postsecondary, and Workforce data through a variety of applications. This data system will expand the impact of the KRT by enabling districts and ELDPs to collaborate around transition points from ELDPs to kindergarten entry based upon KRT outcomes. e) The State has committed to fully funding the KRT with resources other than those available under RTTT-ELC. The development and implementation of the KRT will be supported with State funds.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	20	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;

(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;

(c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;

(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and

(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

New York has demonstrated a medium-quality plan to enhance their current partially implemented Longitudinal Data System. The State will align all the Essential Data Elements, and implement a user-friendly system to enter information. The State has developed obtainable and achievable strategies with well-structured timelines. One area of concern is the State's estimation of the $21.2 million dollar, four year grant allocation to support the technical and professional staff, and contracts to plan, develop, and maintain the system. In addition, several other factors such as infrastructure support for the necessary hardware and software makes this endeavor costly. The state is awarded 12 points or 60%. a) The State indicates that they currently have 12 developed and developing data systems that provide information on early learning and development staff and providers, and the children who receive services from them. Collectively, these data systems collect information on all Essential Data Elements for ELDPs, Early Childhood Educators, and participating children and families. Because these systems are operated by seven different State and NYC agencies and are not linked in any meaningful way, New York is currently unable to use the data as effectively as it could to improve outcomes. b) SED will work closely with the staff of the other early learning data systems to develop standardized data structures, formats and definitions for the following early learning data elements such as child family data, ECE information, ELD program data, and QRIS. c) The State's SSIS ID, the P-20 data system will be able to follow children who receive early learning services throughout their public school career and into post-secondary education along with certain workforce data for that student. This will allow for analyzing of longitudinal data to help make determinations of what type of ELDP in conjunction with the qualities of the early childhood educators allows for long term educational and workforce success. d) The State system will bulk data export from P-20 to early childhood State agencies and counties, pre-defined reports for State agencies and counties, as needed data queries for State agencies and counties, predefined reports for early childhood service providers, predefined reports for K-12 educators, K-12 parent access to early learning and K-12 data (available through the K-12 data portal, and provide public access to aggregate data. e) The State indicates all parts of the Early Learning Data System will comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements and all other applicable privacy and confidentiality requirements. OCFS will create a process to allow for certain individually unidentifiable data sets to be given to outside researchers and analysts to report on and improve early education practices and policies. A data governance policy will be developed by OCFS which will ensure the Early Learning Data System complies with all Federal, State and local laws in regards to the privacy and sharing of early learning data. This policy will also outline which individuals and groups can have access to the data, and which data elements they can access.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	218

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	**0 or 10**	**No**

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

The State indicates there is no KEA or KRT in place at this time, nevertheless, the State indicated a High Quality Plan to implement a Kindergarten Entry Assessment. (a) The State of New York indicated they currently do not have a statewide kindergarten readiness tool or kindergarten readiness assessment. (b) New York has reported a high-quality plan that is minimally implemented as part of a cross-State consortium that provides the instruction and service for entry to early elementary grades.

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	**Yes**

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Comments on Absolute Priority

The State's application provides a comprehensive plan of the State to implement key components to increase the quality of ELDPs for children with high needs in the state. As for the State active components, they are producing at a high and sustainable level, and in the vast majority of programs performing at a level that consistently exceed performance expectations. The State of New York is highly populated and has an extremely diverse population within its inter-cities. In addition, the State has an extended area of rural communities. Nevertheless, New York provided a strong plan to expand their TQRIS throughout the entire State with the collaboration of multiple participating state agencies. The State government and their endless supporting agencies are committed to every aspect of Early Childhood to improving the reform areas that will significantly and directly improve program quality and the outcomes for children. New York has made significant progress in putting together the key foundations for a high-quality early learning and development system. The State believes its efforts in developing key components that have been thoughtful and deliberate and have included ample time for stakeholder feedback and buy-in, as well as evaluation and validation by external experts, and will result in high-impact implementation and better results for families and children over the long-term. The State has invested significant resources in developing key system components within each of the focused investment areas to best prepare the State's children with high needs for school readiness. New York indicates that they are now poised, with RTTT-ELC resources, to act on the plans that the State has developed and to expand statewide those programs that have been implemented in targeted communities.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page

Application # NY-5026

Peer Reviewer: [redacted]
Lead Monitor:
Support Monitor:
Application Status: **Reviewed**
Date/Time: **11/17/2011 - 10:49 AM**

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development	20	18

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--

(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(1)

(a) The yearly total state contribution for ELD has risen from $2.55 B in 2007 to $2.88 B in 2012, which shows a commitment to young children in the state. (a) There is a steady increase in state-funded preschool (UPK program), and a recent recovery and increase in state contributions for preschool special education services, a positive sign that New York is supporting its young children with high needs. (a) In general, health and nutrition programs for this population have been level-funded or increased 2007-2012. New York presently has an array of health and nutrition programs to offer its young children. (a) As described in this application, there is a great variety of education and health programs for young children with high needs, but the majority of children served are 3-K age. (b) There is an increase of children with high needs in programs in ELDP, but as the application mentions, this may well have been positively influenced by the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. (b) NY secured a RTT grant which focuses on the K-12 school population, and which has also used some of its funds to support the education of Pre-K children. That shows a commitment by the state and the department of education to this population. (c) NY has licensure standards covering health and safety, provider professional development, and developmentally appropriate practice (DAP), and, reportedly, it is in the top 10 states nationally. This is positive support for this grant application, because it shows that New York already has some important standards in place. (c) Family engagement is in New York regulations, which demonstrates that New York values parents in the education of their children. However, the majority of participant roles in place appear to be on oversight boards. Therefore, different roles for parents are an area that this RTT-ELC applicant may want to investigate. (c) In New York there are policies for the screening of preschool children, but in practice, the instruments used and the local procedures, as well as the use of data, vary from community to community. This RTT-ELC applicant is in a good position to use these policies already in place, and in the next step, add uniformity for all the programs. (c) The state has a certification for Birth to Grade 2, but a comprehensive plan for professional development and support for all early childhood teachers, in the variety of settings, is not yet in place. (d) The state has already adopted statewide learning standards and Early Learning Guidelines, which is a good start for this applicant. (d) NY does not have a uniform and comprehensive screening program for all entering kindergartners. In addition, the state is in the beginning stages of a longitudinal data system that would create

linkages with their early childhood programs statewide. This RTT-ELC plan may be a good place to record the outcomes of a universal kindergarten screen with other longitudinal data connected with the K -12 systems in the state. This is a high quality response.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	18

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

(a) The state plans to increase QUALITYstarsNew York, first to the Persistently Lowest Achieving schools and high need areas, and then over ten years, make it available to all children and schools, with public funding contingent on participation in QSNY. In addition, New York proposes to increase its 3-star ratings, decrease its 1 –star programs, and increase the percentage of 4- and 5- star rated programs. These are ambitious yet achievable goals. (b) New York proposes to invest in the educators of young children to improve their knowledge and skills by aligning present training and professional development programs and developing future preparation programs to ensure improved qualifications. This plan is appropriate and achievable under this RTT-ELC application. (b) NY will use QSNY as the framework for program improvement and suggests that it will result in improved outcomes for children. New York has been thoughtful in developing this framework, and it is a good plan. (b) NY will develop and utilize Early Learning and Development Standards and align them to the Common Core Standards. This appears feasible under this grant application. (b) Teacher training programs at institutions statewide may well be good resources for education and professional development. The applicant might strengthen this application by integrating more of those resources into this proposal. (b) The expectations of the Early Learning Data Systems may be too broad in scope, too difficult to fully implement, and may not be able to provide the outcomes suggested. However, it is an ambitious goal, and if it was implemented as planned, it would be the best in the nation. This is a high quality response.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	6

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or

other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

(a) The Office of Children and Family Services will be the lead agency for the applicant. However, a large part of this project is educational, and will be under the auspices of the State Department of Education. Although both agencies are part of the Council of Children and Families, along with 11 other agencies, it is imperative that the connection and collaboration between the Office of Children and Family Services and the Department of Education is especially strong. (a) There is more than one agency responsible for QSNY, and SED is taking the lead in the state's public preschools. These neighborhoods should be focused upon, but planning to have more than one agency responsible for QSNY may lead to a lack of coordination and quality. As is appropriate, the proposal included a description of the roles and responsibilities of the lead agency, and report quarterly to CCF members on the progress of the QSNY. It is a positive start that the CCF is administratively housed within OCFS. (b) The SED appears to have some responsibility for encouraging QSNY and for the child data system, without commensurate authority. (b) As part of this application there is an MOU, signed by the authorized representative of the lead agency and by the other participating agencies. It contains information about the responsibilities of the lead agency, the scope of work, joint responsibilities, and what constitutes failure to perform, among other things. This demonstrates that the participating state agencies are fully aware of this application, and are committed to New York's state plan. (c)There are a over 200 letters of support from entities within the state, including legislators, higher education, schools, social service agencies, camps, and individuals, which are all enclosed in this application. This is persuasive support for this proposal. This is medium quality response, partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	13

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

(a) Participating agencies will realign a total of $15.5 M and provide in-kind services to help achieve the outcomes in this state plan. That is a good use of existing resources in support of this application. (a) The state will also commit to provide the SED funding in the support of developing a Kindergarten Readiness Tool. (a) Other agencies, including the DOH and OMH, are reprogramming funding for initiatives within their departments. (b) The budget tables and narrative show that this application has been thoroughly planned to achieve its intended outcomes. (c) A number of expenses in New York's grant application are development costs, and therefore, the annual expenditures to sustain the newly-developed Early Learning System would be smaller than the budget costs during its four years of implementation. In order to sustain this grant after the RTT-ELC funds are no longer available, one possibility suggested is that the governor will "fund raise" to ensure its continuation. That might be a more promising possibility in New York than in some other states, due to its access to many large corporations and foundations.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	6

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

(1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

(2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;

(3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;

(4) Family engagement strategies;

(5) Health promotion practices, and

(6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

(a) QSNY is the universal tool used in this application. There is a state-wide tiered program plan, that by report and description has been included, and contains all of the elements required. Many parts of it are presently in place, but there is much more work to be done to complete it. (b) New York stated in this application that the QSNY standards differentiate program quality levels and reflect high expectations of program excellence, including the National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation standards, the National Association of Family Child Care accreditation standards, and the Head Start Performance Standards. These are all measurable standards, and are nationally accepted as high quality. The plan needs to be completed for use with the RTT-ELC application. (c) QSNY is linked to the state licensing system through its data system. That is an effective way to assure that licensing information is accessible to agency administrators, early childhood educators, parents, and other stakeholders. However, the date system plan is very ambitious, and will take time to be implemented. This is a medium quality response, partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	13

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

(1) State-funded preschool programs;

(2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;

(3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;

(4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and

(5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

(a) The initial goal of QSNY is to be used in settings that include subsidized children and high needs communities, but not specifically centers for children with identified handicaps, because the SED already has stringent requirements for those centers. It is appropriate to focus on children with high needs who are not already placed in highly regulated centers. (b) Online training tools will be implemented, but other sugestions for support for early childhood programs to improve practices would strengthen this proposal. (b) In 2013 there will be an attempt to reach out to all 10 regions in the state, in order to provide QSNY to high needs areas in each region. This will allow more children and families all over the state to have access to high-quality early childhood education. (c) The focus in New York is on quality of care in programs, using their planned QSNY tool, because that is the perceived need in the state. They are very focused on implementing the QSNY in a variety of kinds of programs because they expect their policies and plans around the use of the QSNY to be the means to their perceived goals of improving outcomes for children with high needs. Setting goals based on that premise is appropriate. This is a high quality response, substantially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	**15**	**14**

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

(a) New York has presented a thorough plan, including a variety of appropriate tools, such as the ERS and CLASS, which are valid and reliable, as part of its QSNY. Its proposal is convincing. (a) Objective observers will be hired to confirm standardized reliability on observational instruments, and they will train the in-state trainers. Plans are in place to retain inter-rater reliability, which is appropriate. (a) The expectation of this application is that the overall quality of many programs will increase with the implementation of QSNY, starting in 2013. It appears that New York has a cadre of early childhood educators that are in a position to quickly benefit and make changes in their programs and practices from the knowledge they will gain from the QSNY. b) The QSNY data system and the preschool data system provided by the SED, may be difficult to make functional and linked. If it does work, it is highly ambitious. (b) Outreach to families in high-needs communities will appropriately be done by finding them where they live, work, shop, and interact in their world. (b) The QSNY website will interface with the QSNY data

system and OCFS and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) licensure databases to automatically display the quality Star ratings of all of the ELDPs in New York. It will also function as a new parent portal so that parents/caretakers can access program-specific information on the quality of ELDPs. Once the QSNY data system is fully functional, it will be possible for a parent to see whether a program site is participating in QSNY and whether a Star rating has been assigned, and what that rating is. The ratings will be clearly explained, along with instructions on how to learn more about what comprises a particular rating, such as the specific domain scores, and even the sub-scale scores. This is an ambitious plan. This is a high quality response, substantially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	12

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

(a) Programs may not want to participate in QSNY if they are "stuck" in a Star 1 or Star 2 rating, and an online training course may not motivate them to continue in the process. The skills and supports provided by the Quality Improvement Consultants are important and necessary. (a) Individual child care providers need to be involved in the incentives offered to programs or it may be difficult to get them to take on the extra work of QSNY. (a) Financial incentives to support quality and recognize quality may need to be adjusted in order to get the "buy in" for which the applicant is striving. (b) The target for the numbers and percentages of high needs children participating in programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by the end of 2015 may not be ambitious enough. (31% - 55%). (b)New York has not shown in this application that it has a plan in place to support working families who have children with high needs with programs to support those needs, such as full day programs and additional services like transportation and meals. This proposal suggested that Early Learn NYC is a promising model for the state to follow, but that did not have all of the necessary components either. Support for the targets related to Increasing the Number of Early Learning and Development Programs and to Increasing the Number of Early Learning and Development Programs on Tables (B)(4)(c)(1) and (B)(4)(c)(2) was not submitted with this application, and many responses were N/A or No Rating. Therefore it is not possible to evaluate those goals. This is a medium quality response, partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.	15	8

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

(a) The QSNY has already been field tested, and the state will work with the evaluators revise its implementation, and improve its validity and its usefulness for the future. This is a good start, but it is not ready as of yet to institute. (a) The applicant suggested that they would add, but did not name or describe here, an additional instrument to measure the quality of adult-child interactions, which is needed. The Supports for Social-Emotional Growth Assessment (SSEGA) evaluates social-emotional growth, but, in addition, it is necessary to specifically evaluate the quality of the language and verbal interactions of children. (b) This applicant described two ways that a program's quality could be measured, in order to validate improvement over time. It would be imperative to assess more than one teacher in each program, in order that one individual instructor should not represent the skills and abilities of all teachers in that setting. The expectation that New York will use its QSNY to measure program quality that is linked to children's outcomes is still in the planning stage, and was not successfully described in this proposal. (b) The kindergarten readiness tool has not been addressed in enough depth here. This is a medium quality response.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application–
(1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C),
(2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D), and
(3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).
The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	19

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;

(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and

(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

(a) The New York State Early Learning Guidelines, the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Frameworks appear to be aligned into the NY Essential Domains of School Readiness, and they all appear to be appropriate for multiple types of learners. (b) New York's Early Learning Guidelines and the Prekindergarten Foundation to the Common Core are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, which the Board of Regents adopted in 2010 as New York's P-12 academic standards in ELA and Math. In addition, New York incorporated prekindergarten standards for early literacy and math as part of New York's Common Core State Standards. This shows evidence that this part of New York's plan is already appropriately in place. (c) New York plans to implement the Early Learning Guidelines and the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core across the ELDPs by the fourth year of the grant period. Consequently, this completed plan is not in place yet. (d) New York is one of the largest states, with a diverse population and geography. The four-year timeline for implementation of the Early Learning Guidelines and the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core seems appropriate. This is a high quality response, substantially implemented.

	Available	Score
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.	20	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment Systems by--

(a) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;

(b) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to strengthen Early Childhood Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems;

(c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple Early Learning and Development Programs; and

(d) Training Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(2)

(a) This applicant does not identify the screening instrument to be used for each child upon entry into an Early Learning and Development Program, but will help them select their own. This may lend itself to allowing programs to use tools that are appropriate for their demographics and needs (a) Significantly, the CLASS was mentioned here and will be used to identify the quality of adult-child interactions. (b) New York will finalize and disseminate the state's assessment guidance document to support programs in understanding the purposes and uses of screening, baseline, progress monitoring and outcomes assessment, and then create and disseminate training modules to go with it. New York's strategy for supporting and expanding the appropriate use of CAS in ELDPs focuses on program administrators and leaders, as they will be expected to distribute the information to their teachers and staff. However, the details of the plan have not been developed yet, as all of the appropriate assessment instruments have not been chosen. (c) The applicant plans to create a state-wide common metric for the variety of assessment systems in use, similar to one piloted by NYC. This would help align them for those programs and caregivers who would be using them. (c) It may be difficult to have interagency assessment data-sharing with Head Start, due to their internal rules and regulations. If it is allowed, that is an ambitious goal. (d) New York will focus on early childhood program administrators and leaders to be responsible for comprehensive assessment practices at their sites. This plan is not complete. This is a high quality response, partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	19

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)
(a) The DOH will hire a consultant and convene a workgroup to develop a health and learning survey to be incorporated with the QSNY. This is one of the few required parts of the QSNY that has not already been started by New York. (b) In accordance with New York regulations, all licensed/registered child care providers must complete OCFS-approved training on child health and safety and demonstrate basic competency with regard to health and safety standards. As part of its RTT-ELC application, New York will build on their health training and consultation supports to help ELDPs meet the current QSNY health standards. In addition, health training and technical assistance supports will be embedded in the larger QSNY quality improvement support and workforce development systems to assure a consistent and seamless set of resources for ELDPs. This is an appropriate approach to meeting the health standards of this request for proposal. (c) A systematic approach will be made to increase the numbers of programs participating in Child and Adult Care Food Programs, since at present only about half of eligible programs take part. It is fortunate that the program is in place, and outreach to ensure more participation is appropriate. (d) Quality Assurance Reporting Requirements will require managed care health plans to report on the percentage of young children screened for developmental delays. That is an ambitious goal, and should increase the number of children identified with special needs at a younger age. (d) A process is already in place to link children with high needs to public health care and primary health care services, supported by DOH. This supports the intent of this RTT-ELC application. (d) In the State of New York there is presently a high percentage of children with high needs who participate in ongoing healthcare (93.3%). This is very positive information, and a good basis for screenings and other health services. This is a high quality response, substantially implemented.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	20	19

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)
(a) New York has already developed a statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework which describes skills for educators of children birth to 5 years old, and it is in the process of being updated. (b) New York has a variety of credentials and degrees for professionals in the early childhood field, and the qualifications for working with young children, especially in NYC, are stringent. Therefore, that should make the development of the QSNY less difficult. (c) Partnerships with postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers will allow New York to enhance and strengthen pre-service preparation and in-service professional development by aligning them with workforce knowledge and competencies. CUNY has agreed to endorse the CBK and the Early Learning Guidelines and to align objectives for the dissemination of the CBK and the Early Learning Guidelines. This is a useful and supportive collaboration for this RTT-ELC grant application. (c) New York has developed an Early Learning Trainer's Credential to ensure the quality of professional development providers and the efficacy of professional development workshops. OCFS is committed to tailoring their continuing education opportunities for early childhood educators to those trainings that meet a rigorously defined standard of quality, are aligned with the Workforce and Competency Framework, and are provided by a credentialed professional. This is a high quality response, substantially implemented.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.	20	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(2)

(a) A strength in a large and varied state such as New York is that the applicant proposes to enhance an online calendar which will include all professional development and training opportunities offered. In addition, they plan to identify gaps in content and locations, in order to improve the availability of them to early childhood professionals all over the state. (a) Informal caregivers, who receive state child care subsidies, will receive enhanced outreach for access to professional development. It is important but difficult to reach out to this most challenging group of childcare providers. (a) RTT-ELC funds will create a video library showing successful practice of early childhood professionals for teachers and parents of young children. That is a helpful way to share with parents appropriate information about their children and their early childhood education. If well done and used properly, it is also a good professional tool for early childhood program staff. (b) In this application there appears to be no direct monetary payment to early childhood educators to take coursework and to improve their skills, on their own time. These workers may be in the field for a variety of personal reasons, and may not be particularly interested in career advancement. And since, in general, it is a low-paying field, unless the child care providers themselves receive financial rewards for extra classes and coursework, it may be difficult to motivate teachers to give up their personal time and to put their energy into professional development opportunities. (b) Unless degrees and credentials make a major difference in the compensation of those who work with young children, it is still going to be difficult in New York to recruit and retain quality early care and education providers. This New York RTT-ELC plan appears to focus on those who want to make early childhood education a career, and the early care and education programs that employ them. It might be useful to explore the possibility of a variety of incentives for employees, such as locating trainings at work sites after hours, paid college credits, stipends, snacks and/or meals after the classes, and funds for purchasing materials for the participants' classes. (d) New York's goal of increasing the number of early childhood educators receiving credentials and enhancing their skills through offered coursework and programs is ambitious but may not be achievable unless there is buy-in from the caregivers themselves. Many will not participate unless they are given incentives, such as those suggested above, to participate. Unless that is done, New York's goal may not be achievable. (d) New York's goal of increasing their aligned post secondary institutions and programs from one (1) today, to all 44 SUNY and CUNY by the end of 2015, may well be too ambitious and not achievable. These programs also have to buy into the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and the individual institutions need to have a reason to do so. This is a medium quality response, partially implemented.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	14

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--

(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)

(a) The applicant's first stated purpose for the use of a new Kindergarten Readiness Tool (KRT) for the State of New York is to inform instruction in the kindergarten classroom. And although there are several other purposes for this tool, it is imperative that improved educational practices and procedures, as well as increased outcomes for young children, are in the forefront. (a) Although the Office of Children and Family Services is the lead agency in this application, the Department of Education is responsible for the universal Kindergarten Readiness Tool. This is one place where it is very important for these two large, comprehensive, and diverse agencies to come together to complete this primary part of this proposal. The strength of that connection, and the ability of both agencies to do their parts well, will strongly influence the success of this grant proposal. (b) The KRT will be field tested in the fall of 2013, a year before it is required to be administered, and implemented in a phased-in manner regionally during the 2014-2015 school year. Appropriately, the results of the administration of the tool will not be used to make high stakes decisions. This is a high quality response, partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	20	16

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;

(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;

(c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;

(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and

(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

(b) NY already has a student identification system in place which gives each student an individual identifier, which can be expanded to preschool programs and settings. The number (6) of responsible parties for future universality of this system may make this activity very cumbersome, however. (c) The effort to link seven different data systems is an enormous and difficult undertaking, and the predicted cost and breadth of the extensive Early Learning Data System ($21.2 M), taken from the RTT-ELC funds, appears overwhelming. However, if it is done the way it is planned, it ambitious and achievable. (d) As suggested in this application, it is not clear or even probable that the proposed implementation of the Early Learning Data System will provide a view of what types of early childhood education services prepare children to succeed. That is a research question that could be explored. (d) It may also be too complex for a proposed data system, as described, to ensure that children are getting the supports and services they need to be kindergarten ready. However, this data system should have the supports and services information available to interested stakeholders. This is a high quality response, partially

implemented.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	**280**	**222**

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	**0 or 10**	**No**

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

New York, as self-reported, does not currently have a kindergarten assessment tool in place, so it does not qualify for this Priority 3. The state has a plan in place for an appropriate kindergarten assessment tool in order to meet the deadlines described in this application, but this plan did not score at least 70% of the total points on(E)(1).

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	**Yes**

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Comments on Absolute Priority

New York has met the Absolute Priority by submitting a proposal that is well-written, organized, and well-thought-out, and it comprehensively describes how its extensive variety of early childhood programs already in place can be expanded upon, and their quality can be improved. However, there is much work to be done to complete and to fully implement this application. In a state as large and varied as New York, the leadership has already invested an inordinate amount of time, energy, and money in early childhood programs. Through this proposal, the applicant has shown that it has the human resources and determination to universally improve their early childhood programs and system so that children with high needs will be better prepared to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. The State of New York already has a good quantity of quality health care and nutrition programs for young children, and a good basis for this proposal to build upon. The Comprehensive Early Learning Data System is complex and comprehensive, and will be difficult to implement. However, the ambitious plan would be truly valuable in New York, and as an example for other states, if it could be put into working operation.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page

Application # NY-5026

Peer Reviewer: [redacted]
Lead Monitor:
Support Monitor:
Application Status: **Reviewed**
Date/Time: **11/15/2011 - 6:33 PM**

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development	20	17

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--

(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(1)

This response was scored within the high quality response range. NY has a solid history of financial and logistic investment in Early Learning and Development programs. They have appeared on the top ten or higher state lists of various measures of early child care. In many ways, NY has been in the forefront of many other states in developing programs (e.g., prek to all 4 year olds). There also have been significant attempts to facilitate communication and coordination across the various agencies involved in preparing children for entry to kindergarten (NYC Access program). • NY state reports that it has increased its overall spending in ELDP programs from 2007 by 24%. The amount of contribution to individual categories has varied over the years. The number of children being served and the number of those with high needs also has increased. In fact, NY serves more children in prek than most other states. It is not possible, however, to determine whether the percentage of children being served has increased or whether funding has kept up with increases. • There appears to be a solid infrastructure in place to support the use of the RTTT-ELC funds. There are statutes and policies in place. Some have been there for quite a few years; some have been more recently rolled out. A few still need development. Some of this will come through funds allocated from the RTTT grant (already received). In fact, receiving the RTTT-ELC grant will facilitate the downward extension of record keeping. • There do appear to be some weaknesses in what is now in place. o There appear to be far fewer children under age 3 who are served by programs. o Although some jurisdictions within state are using a comprehensive assessment system, many are not yet doing so. There appears to be research-based assessment systems in use in NYC; however, that does not appear to have extended across the state. o There is not yet a kindergarten entry assessment system. This is a goal of the present proposal. o There does not yet appear to be a data tabulation system that is in place state-wide and is aligned with standards. Some of this is in process of being created.

	Available	Score

(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	**20**	**16**

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

The rating received for this response was at the high end of a medium to high quality response. NY has presented an ambitious, well-justified set of goals: increase number of high quality ELDP, close gap between children with high needs and their more fortunate peers, improve quality of the workforce. It also has provided sufficient rationale for its choice of focused investment areas C, D and E. The proposal notes that currently there is little means of determining at a state level how well children are faring getting ready for kindergarten. The state will be using a tiered QStars system to rate the various programs/providers. Such a system will include information about providers, programs, etc. This system has been piloted and will be brought to scale, starting with programs in most at-risk areas. The at-risk areas have been identified. A significant strength of the proposal is that some of the goals or objectives built into the current proposal are consistent with those in the 2010 funded RTTT. Money has been allocated in that funded proposal to bring systems/standards/record keeping into alignment. Both having money in place already and having goals that are consistent with 2010 RTTT grant strengthens the probability that the goals will be achievable during the time frame (the achievable aspect of this portion of the response). Nevertheless, there are questions about whether the ambitious goals proposed by NYS are able to be accomplished during the time frame. One unknown is what percentage of the children are currently ready for kindergarten? A large percentage of NY state children are low income or high needs. A large percentage (about 40%) is not proficient in reading in third grade. Closing the gap when the gap is large may not be achievable in four years. Reducing gaps seems more realistic. Two more minor issues: • No mention was made of the issues that can occur bringing such a system to scale or how problems would be handled. • The proposal listed a set of 20 factors that play into risk for children's outcomes, and provided some description of these. However, there was almost no research support (justification) included in the discussion. Some of the findings for factors presented singly or in combination can be quite nuanced. How are the factors combined?

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	**10**	**7**

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

The rating for this response was partially implemented, high quality. This proposed plan reflects a strong commitment by the government agencies and stakeholders. OCFS will serve as the lead agency, coordinating and overseeing work of the many other agencies. There do appear to be many agencies that will need to interface; however, OCFS already has experience overseeing and coordinating child care programs in the state and interfacing with other agencies. This is something that has been already in place, enacted by NYS statute. And, in fact, many of the other agencies are already housed within OCFS. The proposal details exactly what role the various agencies will play to improve children's education. However, not all groups/units/processes are yet up and running. For example, the Delivery Unit, the agency within OCFS, actually responsible for implementing the grant activities has not yet been implemented. On the other hand, it will be modeled after one that is in place for the funded RTTT grant. Similarly, not all components of the QSNY system have been rolled out. Almost all the groups/stakeholders in the state provided strong support for this grant: over 200 stakeholders wrote detailed letters of support. Letters came from schools, educational professionals, child care agencies, business leaders and so on. Therefore, it was surprising that the Council for Exceptional Children did not provide a letter of support. No mention was made of why CEC did not provide support.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	**15**	**10**

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

Overall, plans for funding the project appear good with a few exceptions. a and b. On the positive side, NYS has leveraged (temporarily, at least) a substantial amount from existing sources, including federal and existing state funds, to support the proposed programs. It will leverage $30 million. It also is using a portion of the monies from the currently funded 2010 RTTT which will save money. With one exception, which is noted below, the funds set aside, combined with the grant funds, were sufficient to fund the grant. There were three weaknesses in NYS's response. One concerns amount of funds allocated. More funds should be allocated to creating/testing/putting in place the Kindergarten Readiness Test. Creating a psychometrically sound instrument and teaching people how to use it is an iterative process that always takes longer than expected (and hence costs more). Two, there were quite a few high level administration staff, whose roles (and distinctions among roles) were not well-specified. c. The third weakness is sustainability. Fiscal plans for sustaining the program after grant funding ended were too vague. The proposal indicates that many agencies are temporarily realigning funds to help pay for the grant while the grant is in place. Unless something changes, those funds won't be there once the grant ends. Although some of the costs of the grant are start-up costs and won't need to continue or will be greatly reduced, there still will be real costs of this program once the grant ends. The current proposal just indicates ways the governor will try and raise funds from private companies. Such an approach might work but it might not. No plans were voiced for permanent realignment of funds.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	8

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

(1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

(2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;

(3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;

(4) Family engagement strategies;

(5) Health promotion practices; and

(6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

This response was scored in the partially implemented/high range. Although the key elements seem to be in place, the program has not yet been fully implemented. a. NY state has developed the QSNY program, a tiered quality rating and improvement program. The program includes the 6 required aspects, as noted in a1-6 above. b. The program reflects nationally recognized standards (e.g., NAEYC, Head Start) and current research. The program has been piloted, evaluated and revised and seems ready for larger scale roll-out. c. The program is linked to state licensing requirements

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	11

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

(1) State-funded preschool programs;

(2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;

(3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;

(4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and

(5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

Ratings for this response fall within the partially implemented/high quality range. a. NYS has field-tested its QSNY system but not yet fully rolled it out. NYS's goal is to apply a set of developmentally appropriate standards and measurable outcomes for all federally and state funded early childhood programs. Programs that have 25% subsidized enrollment or are located in high needs communities must participate. Others are encouraged to participate. b. The state correctly argues that it already generously provides payments etc. so that the goal is not to increase affordability for families but to increase the number of high quality child care sources. However, the issue of number of slots/placements is really one of availability. One of the issues facing many families is having to juggle where they work and the hours they work with available child care. Having excellent child care available but not near work or home, or not open for requisite hours will not fully address a parent's need for child care. The proposal did not sufficiently address this issue. c. The state has set rolling target dates for programs to come on board. The plan for implementation seems reasonable given that the QSNY system has been field tested, evaluated, and revised based on the results of the evaluation.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	12

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

Ratings are based on a partially implemented system. Response was rated at high end of that range. a. NYS has proposed (not fully implemented) an excellent system for rating/monitoring ELDP. They propose using psychometrically sound instruments to assess quality of programs. They are using 3 tools to capture the environment (FCCERS, ITERS, ECERS-R). These, particularly the ECERS-R, are among the most commonly used measures of environment. They are considered to be high quality measures. NY have selected the CLASS to monitor the quality of the classroom interactions. This is quickly becoming the most frequently used measure of classroom interactions. NYS has proposed a reasonable means of training personnel to administer the various measures. They will train a core group to an appropriate level of reliability on the measures. These trainers will then train others. This train-the-trainers technique is an often used and successful approach. Frequency of such ratings will be every 3 years. The frequency of such monitoring is not optimal but is consistent with that required by federal agencies. NYS makes a reasonable case that one must offset frequency with burden of the various other monitoring requirements. In addition, NYS is using a desk-review system (seemingly a less burdensome approach to get at quality information) on off-years as another means of monitoring quality. b. Another excellent feature of the program is the outreach. That is, information about programs will be made available in nonstandard places such as Laundromats. These are ones most likely to be frequented by the neediest clients.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	12

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

This response was scored in the partially implemented, high quality range. a. NYS has a 10 year horizon for promoting access to high quality ELDPs so that all children with high needs attend a 3-5 star program. By the end of 2015, half of the children will attend at least a 3 star program. The proposal includes 3 logically ordered strategies: 1) Defining quality. Upon enrolling in QSNY, each provider will engage in a self-assessment to learn where they stand. 2) Providing support for quality improvement. Providers will be assisted to write a quality improvement plan. 3) Providing incentives to support and recognize quality and improvements in quality. These appear to be well-conceptualized strategies that should be relatively easy to implement. b. One weakness appears to be in the area of providing support for families with children with high needs to have access to programs. Not all portions of the state have something implemented. NYC has some supports in place (e.g., increased infant and toddler care, full-day and full-year programs), however, not much was mentioned re: children with disabilities. In contrast to what is available in NYC, it appears from what was provided that the rest of the state has far less, if any, such coverage. The proposal calls for looking into ways to do this but this is still far too vague to seem like it can be fully operationalized during the grant period. Another concern stems from what may be an overreliance on the EarlyLearnNYC initiative. It appears good but it is important to realize that NYC does not necessarily mirror the needs of NY state, which has many rural areas.

	Available	Score
(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.	15	10

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

This response was rated in the medium quality range. a. NYS has well-addressed criterion a, with one exception. On the positive side, QSNY is well-conceptualized. It has been field-tested and modifications were made to points allocation based on the results of the field-testing. It is a strength of the proposal that they are considering social-emotional development and what programs do to foster that. More negatively, however, the measure they have chosen, the SSGA, needed further justification. It is unpublished so one cannot rely upon the rigors of peer-review for validation. Some information was provided but more about how many centers, reliability, etc. could have been provided to compensate for it being an unpublished measure. b. Criterion b is harder to evaluate. It appears that NYS has thought through the pertinent issues. These include but are not limited to such things as devising an appropriate research design, and determining the outcomes that need to be assessed. One evaluation goal will be to validate the QSNY tiers and changes in tiers against student outcomes. However, NYS does not yet have a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. They will use grant funds to develop such an assessment. c. The program has been planned, field-tested (in large part) but not fully implemented. The plan calls for initial roll-out in lowest achieving areas, which makes sense because such areas typically include the children most in need (not perfect overlap, perhaps, but high overlap). Financial incentives as well as intangibles

(recognition) are awarded to high scoring centers/programs. The goals for improvement also seem appropriate.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--
(1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
(2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
(3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).
The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	**20**	**15**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;

(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and

(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

Ratings for this response fell within the partially implemented/high quality response range. a. NYS has developed a high quality plan for statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards. It reflects all the domains of school readiness and is based on 3 aligned documents : Early Learning Guidelines, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. The first document addresses the full age range of children. The second focuses on Head Start children ages 3-5. The third document addresses kindergarten readiness. The documents are aligned with each other and reflect P-2-Common Core developmentally appropriate standards. The plan is based on review by nationally recognized experts in the field who have experience working with the target populations. It also has been vetted by stakeholders. The documents specifically address the needs of special needs and ELL students, as noted in the proposal. It should be noted, however, that the vetting of the program was stronger for horizontal alignment across programs and meeting of developmental standards than for cultural and linguistic appropriateness. b. The plan is aligned with the state's K-3 academic plan. Prek standards were part of the state's Common Core State Standards, something fairly unique among states. A working group met to make sure the ELD Standards were well-aligned. This was further reviewed by a national expert, Dr. Barbara Foreman, whose expertise focuses on literacy development. c. The state presents further evidence that the ELD Standards are incorporated into program standards, curricula and activities, work force framework and professional development activities. The standards will be linked to CAS and other systems to be developed. d. The plan is not yet implemented but there is a credible set of strategies in place for targeted roll-out of the plan during the life of the grant. These strategies include creating/disseminating training modules which will build upon train the trainer modules already being implemented in some places in the state.

	Available	Score
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.	**20**	**6**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment Systems by--

(a) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;

(b) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to strengthen Early Childhood Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems;

(c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple Early Learning and Development Programs; and

(d) Training Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(2)

Scoring was based on the "not or minimally implemented category/medium quality response". This section of the proposal indicates appropriate awareness of the need to assess children and, at a general level, what needs to be taken into account (a, b). It also indicates awareness of the need to align assessments and share information (c), as well as train the early childhood educators (d). However, it is apparent that NYS does not yet have concrete, operationalized plans in place for what will take place. Instead the response described what will need to be done to begin to formulate effective assessments and so on. Given that NYS seems to be early in the planning process, it does not appear feasible that a final program will be developed and implemented during the grant time period. The one exception to what was a vague response is that NYS draws from NYC's well-designed assessments, already in operation, and from Early Head Start and Head Start to guide planning and future conceptualization.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	**20**	**16**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

Scoring for this response was based on substantial implementation/medium quality response (upper end). a. NYS already appears to have an excellent system, with one or two exceptions, in place for providing for children's health needs. However, the proposal lists quite a few ways this system will be improved upon. For example, a specific focus on health promotion will be included into the QSNY. The major focus of NYS's response to this component was based on health with more limited attention paid to developmental issues. b. Although NY already provides training and support for early childhood educators to meet health standards, this will be increased. c. NYS already supports federal programs/guidelines to increase healthy eating habits and promote physical activity. However, the state will hire a new person to further promote such endeavors and develop additional programs. Moreover, an additional number of early childhood educators will receive training in this area. d. The actual outreach of the current program may not be that high. For example, only 14% of children with high needs are

reportedly currently screened.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	20	20

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

This response was scored in the substantially implemented/high quality response. NYS already has in place what appears to be a common, statewide plan. The proposal indicates reasonable ways it will improve upon the plan such as making it web-accessible. Web-accessibility will greatly improve its availability to a larger audience. a. The plan is now in its third edition. It includes appropriate standards of knowledge that early childhood educators need to have, as indicated by its alignment with national and state standards: NAEYC, Division for Exceptional Children, NYS teaching standards. b. There are currently in place statewide standards. However, this proposal goes further to provide a statewide progression. Among other strengths, the qualifications of the staff will feature into the rating system of child care facilities in QSNY. In addition to CDAs, AAs and BAs, various certificates and credentials focusing on (for example): infant/toddler, family care, trainers and so on, will be available. c. Postsecondary institutions and other professional organizations have been involved in the development and expansion of the plan. For example, the CUNY system, a major provider of early childhood educators, has agreed to align its coursework with the NY workforce competencies. CUNY also has agreed to endorse the CBK and the Early Learning Guidelines and infuse these resources into their preparation programs. SUNY, another large source of educational programs in the state, is likewise considering doing so.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.	20	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(2)

This response was scored within the partially implemented, high quality response range. NYS already has a system in place for ensuring high level credentials for at least some of its child care providers. The proposal addresses improving upon infrastructure by ensuring its alignment with other ELDP goals, by providing materials/training/information and so on in web-based format, by expanding on the target of training to include caregivers from exempt facilities, and by implementing more direct training on the development of children's social-emotional needs, an area that is important but not the focus of much training (at least until recently). Access to training is often an issue for caregivers so on-line training programs are particularly useful. In addition, creating a web-based video library will be very helpful. On the other hand, it is not known whether all the trainers who need to do so will have sufficient means of online access. Childcare facilities are rewarded for having more educated employees under the new QSNY system, so they will support their employees seeking educational opportunities. Some scholarship money is also available, however, it was not clear what percentage of applicants would be able to avail themselves of funds or whether priority would be given to certain types of caregivers (e.g., those working with children with special needs). It would have been nice to see some form of support made available to allow caregivers to take time off from work to seek out preservice or inservice opportunities. Employers may not be able to afford to allow workers paid leave and workers may not be able to afford to take unpaid leave. It is unclear what incentives will be in place to ensure that all the SUNY/CUNY postsecondary institutions will offer coursework incorporating the new WORKFORCE Knowledge and Competency Framework.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	**20**	**6**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--

(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)

This response was rated as falling within the not or minimally implemented/medium quality range. NYS does not yet have a state-wide plan that is currently implemented or even really in the works. A few jurisdictions use some form of assessment but it is not clear whether these assessments are valid or what they assess. The proposal discusses what needs to be done to devise an assessment appropriate for its target populations but it is far removed from any true operationalization of such an assessment. All of the criteria (a-e) are answered in a manner that reflects knowledge of what the state will need to do to devise an appropriate Kindergarten Readiness Test that will fulfill each of the criteria. For example, they note the need to develop a test and field test it to make sure it is developmentally, lingusitically and culturally appropriate to the target population. However, the KRT is still more a general idea in someone's mind rather than a test/set of assessment tools that can be field-tested. Based on what is currently listed in response to criteria a-e, the next step would be to try and operationalize these into an actual plan.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	20	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;

(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;

(c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;

(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and

(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

This response was rated as falling within the partially implemented/high quality range. NYS already has in place some of the components of the data system, although articulation across stakeholders and components is yet lacking. The system is not yet statewide. NY's State Department of Education has implemented or is implementing a P-20 Longitudinal system. The ELD system will seamlessly link with the P-20 one. Funds from 2010 funded RTTT are already in place to help with some of the linkages. The proposal describes a coherent set of steps (e.g., develop signed MOUs, prepare to align NY State Student ID numbers, begin linking data across various systems and so on through developing the actual portal) to take that will expand upon and improve the system so that it provides information that is relevant for educators and easy for them to access.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	196

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	0 or 10	No

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

a. NYS does not yet have a Kindergarten Entry assessment in place. b. The score earned in E1 was less than 70%.

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	Yes

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Comments on Absolute Priority

This proposal does a comprehensive job of addressing how it will build a statewide system to increase the quality of ELDP for children with high needs. NYS has a long history of providing early child care in the state. It has been in the forefront of what other states offer. That history includes promoting health care. Much of what NYS proposes has been field tested and is ready to be implemented or already has been implemented. NYS also has proposed an innnovative approach to informing parents about the quality and availibility of child care in the state. NYS will be able to use its already funded 2010 RTTT grant to support alignment of early child care with transition to kindergarten and elementary school. Funds from the 2010 grant are allocated for such.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page

Application # NY-5026

Peer Reviewer: [redacted]
Lead Monitor:
Support Monitor:
Application Status: **Reviewed**
Date/Time: **11/15/2011 - 6:08 PM**

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development	20	18

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--

(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(1)

(a) Regarding financial investment, NY's proposal documents a steady increase in overall investment for Early Learning and Development Programs. Overall investment across programs is documented at $2.55B for 2007; $2.65B for 2008; $2.86B for 2009; down to $2.71 B for 2010; back up to $2.88B for 2011 and 2012. This is most evident in the steady increase in state funding for universal pre-k which targets low income and other high need students but since 2007 is opened to districts state-wide in NY. There are funding incentives tied to this program to provide more opportunities for serving high need students. The state's contribution to Preschool Special Education steadily climbed from 2007 to 2009, dropped in 2010 but increased in 2011 and in 2012 the state proposes to fund preschool special education at the 869.9M level, a marked increase compared to 2007-2011. The state's contribution to Part C decreased each year from 2007-2010; increased in 2011 but decreases again for 2012. There is no state supplement for EHS and HS. Based on the overall increase in spending and the targeted increased spending in key programs such as universal pre-k and preschool special education the State demonstrates a high commitment to quality early learning and development during times of deep cuts in overall state budgets. (b) There is a clear increase from 2007 to 2010 in number of Children with High Needs participating in key programs including the Universal pre-k program; EHS and HS; IDEA programs; and programs receiving CCDF funds. (c) Existing early learning and development legislation, practices and policies in NY indicate a strong commitment to young children and their families. Evidence includes Board of Regents' 2005 policy statement that calls for an integrated birth through grade 3 system; developmentally appropriate standards based programs; instruction provided by highly qualified personnel; and comprehensive coordinated services including support and information for families. NY also included an Early Learning Invitational Priority to their successful 2010 RTTT application that highlighted an expansion of QUALITY starsNY a tiered program rating system; developing a comprehensive assessment protocol for pre-k through grade three; internationally benchmarked learning standards for pre-k and K; professional development and family engagement initiatives. Other innovative policies include a new childcare regulatory standard designed to allow a group of infants and their primary caregiver to remain together until the children reach 36 months. (d) NY documents that they do have in place the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system. Pre-k learning standards have been approved

for statewide adoption and Early Learning Guidelines provide a base for birth through K standards. They seem to be at the very beginning stage in developing a Comprehensive Assessment System. They have a network of Health Care Consultants to assist early learning and development programs that can be expanded. The NY State Parenting Education Partnership and other regulations provide the base for family engagement including parents of children with disabilities. NY's Core Body of Knowledge, developed in 1997 and recently revised provides a competency based tool to serve as a framework for professional development for personnel working with children birth through age 5. In addition an Early Childhood Education Birth – Grade 2 Certification is in place. NY does not have a statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment. However, they do have the beginning infrastructure for effective data practices including RTTT funds to develop and implement a P-20 longitudinal data system.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	18

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

New York's plan clearly builds on the State's progress to date in identifying ambitious yet achievable goals. They provide evidence of how they will build on existing initiatives including Pre-k standards, Early Learning Guidelines, Core Body of Knowledge for personnel and QSNY (their tiered rating system). Their goals include: 1. "Increase the number of high-quality ELDPs for New York's children, especially those with high-needs, as measured by QSNY 2. Close the achievement gap, by providing high-quality programs that prepare children for kindergarten entry and place them on track for successful early elementary outcomes, as measured by the Kindergarten Readiness Tool and improved outcomes in Grade 3 ELA and math exams. 3. Improve the quality of the early childhood workforce as the foundation to achieve program improvement." Each of these goals are accompanied by measurable objectives that appear to be both ambitious and achievable. The overall summary ties the overarching goals together using the QSNY as the infrastructure for their High Quality Plan. Their summary also builds the base for the criteria selected for each Focused Investment area and related rationale. They intend to identify high needs children, families and communities through a mapping method to target the highest need area within each state region. They intend to address Focused Investment areas C 1,2,& 3; building on their existing early learning standards; integrating a comprehensive assessment system into their QSNY; and building a "cross-sector approach" to promote health. Specific references to behavioral and developmental needs were not as emphasized as "health". Specific mention of groups of high need children such as children with developmental delay or disability also seemed sparse. Their rationale for Focused Investment areas D 1 & 2 are based on their RTTT application that focused on teacher effectiveness and their newly revised Core Body of Knowledge to serve as a framework for developing a strong early childhood education workforce. Their QSNY also has a QUALITY Scholars program aligned to existing resources to improve teacher quality and QSNY ratings. The New York Works for Children website will feature workforce registry, training calendar, and other resources aligned to the core body of knowledge and early learning guidelines. Finally, New York's plan includes Focused Investment areas E 1&2. This builds on the P-20 Longitudinal data system which was a key component of NY's RTTT plan and their plan to develop a kindergarten readiness tool. All together their rationale for each area supports a well thought out integrated system that is ambitious but seems to be achievable.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	9

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

The Office of Children and Family Services will serve as the Lead Agency for the grant. The other key participating agencies include the State Education Department, Department of Health, and Office of Mental Health. The Council on Children and Families is housed in the Office of Children and Family services. The CCF is an independent entity and is charged with coordinating cross agency collaboration and streamlining decision making. This existing council has long term sustainability ensured by state law and has the governance structure to oversee ELDPs. The plan indicates that the OCFS assisted by the CCF members and executive co-chairs will make decisions and resolve disputes. The method and process is not detailed. The NY Early Childhood Advisory Council which works under the State Council on Children and Families, is charged with engaging multiple stakeholders such as parent groups, providers, unions, researchers etc., to provide input. This council will work with the lead agency and CCF to provide forums for public input. There is clear evidence contained in the text of the MOU and attached scope of work that outlines a strong commitment to the state plan and how they will leverage existing funds and projects to support the plan. The OCFS will direct the collaboration of other participating agencies; will lead the scale up of the QSNY system; will create a "Delivery Unit" to ensure successful grant implementation; will use early childhood data to drive improvement in ELDPs. The NY State Dept. of Health will work on the state goal of identifying and addressing the health, behavioral and developmental needs of children to improve school readiness. They will link with early intervention and home visiting programs. The State Education Dept. will take primary responsibility for linking the P-20 longitudinal data system with the early learning data system; develop and implement a statewide kindergarten readiness tool. They will work with other participating agencies to provide for clear and developmentally appropriate standards and assessments; and effective early childhood workforce and improved learning outcomes. There is a clear commitment to the state plan from a broad group of stakeholders as evidenced by detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from key constituents including local child care councils, unions, advocacy organizations, child development centers, business leaders, parents, community organizations, school systems, higher education, legislators and other professional organizations. The Council for Exceptional Children did not provide a letter.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	11

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

a. The Office of Children and Family services commits to reprogramming $15 million in federal Child Care and Development Fund to support QUALITY Scholars, an Education Incentive Program to support targeted professional development. New state dollars are being committed to The State Education Department to support the development of a Kindergarten Readiness Tool. SED is also using $4 million of the 2010 RTTT funding to support the expansion of QSNY in the neighborhoods of persistently low achieving schools. The Department of Health will reprogram Child and Adult Care Food Program funds ($325,000) to support the healthy eating habits and nutrition aspects of the plan. The Office of Mental Health will reprogram ($215,000) from a special revenue account to support social-emotional consultation. b. The budget tables and narrative detail how funds will be distributed across agencies and project. The budgeted amounts seem to be adequate to support the activities with budgeted amounts linked to the relative magnitude of emphasis of project in the overall plan. The Lead Agency for the grant OCFS will be responsible for most of the work and will receive the majority of funds. The narrative and budget tables detail the plan of use for funds over the course of the 4 year funding period. OCFS plans to create a new unit within their agency to administer this grant with 8 new positions funded. There seems to be a lot of duplication among these positions. In addition 6 new administrative staff members will be hired. This seems top heavy especially because $69,549,474 will be contracted out with $47,391,741 to go to an outside vendor to administer the QSNY system which is the cornerstone of the grant. In a like fashion, it is unclear what three full time Program Analyst Specialists in the SED's Office of P-12 Education will be doing. The narrative states they will be "responsible for programming." c. Regarding sustaining the grant efforts after the funding period, there is a plan for the Governor and State Agencies to identify public-private partnerships to support on-going efforts. In addition much of the costs in the plan are development costs (e.g. developing the longitudinal data system). This plan seems rather vague.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	8

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

(1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

(2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;

(3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;

(4) Family engagement strategies;

(5) Health promotion practices; and

(6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

The QSNY has been developed (development began in 2005) and field tested in 2009. Based on an evaluation of the field testing, final revisions were made in 2011. The QSNY is clearly a tiered system that includes all of the required program standards. It should be noted that the Comprehensive Assessment System is not fully developed based on common set of assessment instruments for screening and formative assessment, but it does include all key components (e.g. screening, formative, environmental quality and child-adult interaction). There are 2 versions of the QSNY; one for center based programs including pre-k and one for family childcare. The standards documented in the QSNY are measurable and meaningfully differentiate program quality levels. For example, under the curriculum category of the tool, more points (20) are awarded for "assessment results are used to inform program practice or instruction that addresses the needs of individual children" versus 5 points for "the Program has a written educational philosophy or statement." The QSNY is linked to the State Licensing system in that programs enter the system at 1 star based on licensing. The additional tiers are built on that basic level. While the QSNY is fully developed and meets the criteria for a high quality system, based on the fact that the system is only recently completed and not used in the field this section is rated as partially implemented high quality response.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	**15**	**6**

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

(1) State-funded preschool programs;

(2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;

(3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;

(4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and

(5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

a. NY plans to have 100% of state funded pre-k and 100% of all Early Head Start and Head Start programs participate in QSNY by 2015. They don't have a plan to include 100% of programs serving children with developmental delays or disabilities involved in the system. These programs do not seem to be treated as part of the comprehensive early childhood system but rather, seem to be tacked on special programs. There is no indication of how children with special needs are included in other systems covered (i.e UPK). b.NY has in place subsidies for childcare available at the 75th percentile of current market rates. They have also expanded families' access to quality programming through UPK. The tiered system which will first be targeted in high needs communities will increase access to high quality programs through incentives. c. The timeline for adding programs to the system seems to be realistic. There is a plan to provide financial incentives to programs who have higher ratings (4 or 5) if at least 25% of their enrolled population are supported by subsidies. This is a minimally implemented medium quality response

	Available	Score

(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	9

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

NY has a plan for monitoring the quality of ELDPs through its tiered system – QSNY. They plan to use two common reliable valid assessment systems, Environmental Rating Scales (e.g. ITERS; ECERS-R; FCCERS) and CLASS, to measure adult child interactions. They describe a plan to contract out work to recruit and train observers to be able to reliably rate programs. They plan to use a train the trainers model to increase capacity for competent observers across the state. They plan to conduct observations using the above mention tools once every 3 years in tandem with the QSNY renewal system. A more frequent observation schedule would foster more urgency to improve quality. A yearly desk review is planned to augment the 3 year observation cycle. The plan includes clear methods for providing quality rating and licensing information to families by interfacing with other related agency licensure data bases to be integrated in the QSNY data system; to be integrated with related agency websites. In addition, participating ELDPs will be required to post their ratings in a visible place on site. Specific high need communities will be reached through specific methods such as informal channels to target ELLs etc. Finally, 14 Early Childhood Direction Centers and the State's Family to Family Health Information Center will be used as partners to reach families of children with disabilities to promote information about QSNY within their communities

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	8

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

The long range goal of NY is to have all children with high needs attending a 3,4,or 5 star program within the next ten years. By 2015 their goal is to have more than one half of the state's ELDPs rate at the 3 star level or above. They intend to increase quality though resources and supports to programs. Through self assessments and on-line training courses, programs will become aware of the components that yield a high quality program. The most intensive supports will be given to programs serving children with high needs (targeted initially in the high need communities with in each region. Quality improvement Consultants will assist programs with Quality Improvement plans. Communities of practice will be built within communities among ELDPs to promote cross program collaboration and support. Specific supports to encourage programs to serve children with disabilities or targeted to programs who do serve children with disabilities is not mentioned. Financial incentives are also planned to reward high quality programs and to reward programs for moving up in ratings. Again there is mention of financial incentives for high rated programs which enroll subsidized children but no mention of incentives or

supports for other high need populations (ELLs; young children with developmental delays). Regarding providing supports to help working families, the Early Learn NYC was described as a potential exemplar for the state to integrate multiple funding streams to offer full day and some full year services to high need families. An explicit plan is not provided for this effort. The performance measure for increasing the number of ELDPs in the top tiers seems achievable. The performance measures for increasing the percentage of children with high needs who are enrolled in ELDPs in the top tiers seem adequate for children in state funded preschool, Early Head Start and Head Start but less than adequate for infants, toddlers and children with disabilities and children in subsidized childcare. This section is rated as minimally implemented with a medium quality response.

	Available	Score
(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.	15	8

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

NY plans to build on the field testing results already determined for their quality rating system. They intend to determine the relationship between the independent program level quality ratings and the QSNY rating. The specific tools are not listed but perhaps they are alluding to the ECERS and CLASS, in that these measures are described in section B3 of this application in relation to the tiered system. The evaluation plan also includes a study to examine the validity of a second assessment that measures environmental and adult child interaction factors (The Supports for Social-Emotional Growth Assessment). Another factor to be evaluated is how well QSNY standards accommodate programs serving children with disabilities. Specific details regarding this research focus are not provided. While there is discussion about the need to determine the relationship between the QSNY and improved outcomes for children, no specific plan is offered. The state will hire an outside evaluator to develop the research design and determine the exact outcome measures to be used. They do suggest the use of the to be developed Kindergarten Readiness Tool along with other unobtrusive, authentic measures that are nationally recognized.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--
(1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
(2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
(3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).
The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	18

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;

(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and

(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

a. New York's proposed early learning standards encompass Early Learning Guidelines designed for children in all types of early learning programs Birth through 5 (including Head Start, according to the attached original document); The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework; and The Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. These sets of standards cover all Essential Domains of Readiness. While adaptive skills are not specifically noted as a category, examination of the standards reveals evidence that this area along with other essential areas is covered. The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework was used as a guiding tool in the development of the Early Learning Guidelines and the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. These latter sets of standards seem to be the primary documents that constitute New York's Early Learning and Development Standards. Evidence in the narrative and within the documents indicate that these standards are appropriate for all children including those with developmental delays or disabilities and English language learners. They are developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate. b. It is clear that the Prekindergarten standards are aligned vertically with the state's k-3 academic standards because the Board of Regents adopted P-12 academic standards in ELA and Math. The Early Learning Guidelines are aligned with the Pre-k standards and while there is overlap with the preschool age between these two documents they are aligned and complement one another. c. The Early Learning Standards based on the Early Learning Guidelines and Pre-k standards are embedded into the QSNY, Core Body of Knowledge (used for personnel development) and will be linked to the CAS and the data system to be developed. d. The state documents a high quality plan to implement the Early Learning Guidelines & The Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core across ELDPs by the end of the 4 year grant period. The plan includes a train the trainer model and a plan to develop modules and web-based tools. A plan for cross agency TA is documented. As a whole this section documents a high quality response with substantial implementation.

	Available	Score
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.	20	10

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment Systems by--

(a) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;

(b) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to strengthen Early Childhood Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems;

(c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple Early Learning and Development Programs; and

(d) Training Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(2)

New York has a high-quality plan to create and implement a CAS with minimal current implementation, therefore the rubric used to evaluate this section reflects this status. Regarding the plan: they plan to build on the current practice of screening in place in several programs such as Head Start and Pre-K; expand the authentic assessments used in some pre-k programs; include key assessment aspects such as environmental and adult child interaction as major components of the QSNY a. They plan to work with ELDPs to select assessment tools and approaches through refining a guidance tool and providing technical assistance. Note that specific tools have not been identified. b. In order to help providers understand the different purposes and uses for assessments in the CAS, NY plans to create and disseminate training modules. The target group will be administrators and leaders in the ELDPs who in turn can be change agents for their centers. The guidance tool referred to above will include information regarding purposes and uses for assessment tools. c. NY plans to develop a common metric that can be used to align and compare results across a set of assessment tools. They also plan to create a collaborative interagency data sharing policy to align assessment across programs and to avoid duplication for children who are served by multiple programs. d. In order to train Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer, interpret and use assessments, NY will rely on the Core Body of Knowledge which includes these competencies for pre-service teachers. As indicated earlier, the early childhood program administrators will be the drivers of the assessment process in their programs. The QSNY include key assessment practices in the tiered system. Training on how to administer, interpret and use assessment tools will be included in the guidance tool and modules to be developed.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	14

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

a. The QSNY documents health related standards and there is a plan to develop an enhanced health and learning survey tool to be incorporated within the QSNY to strengthen the progression of health related items. An Early Learning Development health promotion coordinator will be hired to promote health related program activities. b. There is no evidence provided regarding the current number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained on health related standards or how they plan to track an increase. Basic health and safety standards are currently required training elements for all providers in licensed centers. NY plans to review the current supports available for TA regarding health promotion. They plan to build on existing resources by hiring additional consultants and providing materials and training for consultants already in the workforce. c. NY plans to promote healthy eating habits, improve nutrition expand physical activity and enhance participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). They plan on building on existing initiatives (i.e. Eat well/Play hard) to promote developmentally appropriate physical activity in ELDPs. They plan to hire an early childhood physical activity specialist to develop training resources including adapted PE resources for young children with disabilities. These resources will be provided to consultants who will give TA to direct providers. NY also plans to extend the reach of CACFP by encouraging programs to participate because of related QSNY standards. They will also investigate and try to alleviate barriers to participation in this program through developing a multi-sector targeted campaign. d. NY plans to promote standards that recommend developmental health screening using a standardized tool at 9,18, and 30 months and an autism screening at 18 & 24 months at pediatric well care visits. This plan includes training and support for pediatric health care providers to implement these screening practices. NY will adopt a developmental screening measure that will be used and required for all managed care plan. They will be required to report to the Dept. of Health numbers of children screened. Referral for EI and preschool special education will be included in the training to be developed for pediatric health care providers to increase the number of children referred and receiving services. NY plans to expand an existing campaign developed to increase the number of eligible children who receive Medicaid and CHPlus insurance. Based on performance measures, NY's plans are achievable and ambitious regarding number of children screened. Because evaluated and received services rates

are fairly high (based on Part C data) the targets seem appropriate. The targets for children who participate in on-going health care seem high as well at baseline so the slight raise in targets across the 4 years is probably realistic. The number of children who are up to date on well care visits could be more ambitious. This area is judged to be partially implemented with a high quality response.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	20	14

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

This criterion is partially implemented with a high quality response. a. NY's Workforce competency framework is based on the Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) and the New York State Teaching Standards. It also coordinates with the early learning and pre-k standards presented in section C and the QSNY. Documentation provided in the CBK indicates comprehensive competencies needed by early childhood educators across 7 important domain areas. The document clearly includes competencies needed to educate young children with high needs including children with disabilities and English language learners. This newly revised document is due to be released by the end of 2011. NY plans to build an interactive web tool to support Early Childhood Educators to understand and use these standards in their classrooms. The tool can also be used by university faculty and professional development providers as they plan for instruction. b. NY has a progression of certifications and /or credentials offered ranging from an Infant Toddler Credential to a bachelor level teacher with Birth-grade 2 credential. It is not clear exactly how these are aligned and no articulation agreements indicating a true career ladder were mentioned. c. CUNY plans to endorse the CBK and Early Learning Guidelines and to align the objectives for dissemination. The CBK and Early Learning Guidelines will be presented to the Board of Regents for approval. These documents will also be aligned with in-service professional development. It seems critical that the CBK and Early Learning Guidelines are adopted for the Birth-grade 2 teaching credential to ensure these teachers are trained in the key areas important to early childhood learning and development. The plan described has this potential.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.	20	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs

that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(2)

This portion of the grant is minimally implemented with a high quality plan. The early childhood preparation system in NY has strengths to build from including the wide array of existing credentials, required on-going professional development and the requirement for Bachelor level teachers in pre-k and Head Start. The high quality plan for this section includes the following; a. NY plans to expand on its professional development tied to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework through New York Works for Children website. An interactive CBK tool will be available for Early Childhood Educators where they will be able to see video clips exemplars of various practices. This evidence based professional development tool is an innovative addition to their plan. The website will also include a workforce registry, training calendar and career calculator (an on-line career planning tool). They also have a plan to provide quality professional development to legally exempt childcare providers through a train the trainer program and on-line courses. PBS will develop high-quality training videos. Consultants will be trained to provide technical assistance on social emotional development and positive behavior supports. b. The QSNY has ratings linked to teacher qualifications and retention. QUAILTYScholars will provide funding for providers to advance their careers. NY plans to increase the required professional development hours and make sure they are aligned with workforce competencies. Regional personnel will provide career development consultation which will help providers know about local and state options for career advancement. NY plans to establish a credit bearing CDA that can serve as the beginning of a career path for teachers. c. The Workforce registry will report aggregated program and professional level data including credentials, professional development, degrees and certifications as well as retention. d. NY has set ambitious yet achievable targets for post-secondary institutions and professional development providers aligned to the workforce knowledge and competency framework, moving from 1 to 44 aligned institutions and providers. They also have an ambitious plan to increase the number of professionals who increase their credentials.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	8

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--

(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)

The Kindergarten Readiness Tool (KRT) is not currently implemented but the medium quality response includes the following evidence: At the request of the Governor, the Board of Regents will develop a process to adopt an instrument to be known as the Kindergarten Readiness Tool (KRT). The plan indicates the purposes of the KRT as informing instruction for Kindergarten; closing the readiness gap; informing policy and resource allocation that aim to identify gaps. a. The five essential domains of school readiness will be assessed through a single point in time measure. The tool will be aligned with the Early Learning Guidelines and the Pre-k Foundation for the common core. The five essential domains are not listed in the narrative and very little detail is included in this section. b. The Board of Regents has a history with test development and will be able to use this expertise in the development of this tool. The State Dept of Ed will work with experts in early child development and learning with experience with ELLs, pre-k, kindergarten and preschool special education. The timeline supports requirements of the grant to meet the 2014 deadline and professional development for the teachers will be the responsibility of the local education administration. c. The narrative provides the basics required for implementation of the developed tool by 2014 and a state-wide phase in but little detail is provided. d. NY plans to have KRT results uploaded to the P-20 longitudinal system and will link to the Birth – 5 data systems through the P-20 interagency warehouse. Aggregated data will be reported to the public. Training modules will be developed to train teachers how to administer the KRT and report data on the longitudinal system along with other training areas such as how to work with ELLs and their families based on KRT results. e. The system will be developed and supported with State funds.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	**20**	**14**

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system–

(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;

(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;

(c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;

(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and

(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

NY's longitudinal data system is partially implemented in that the state has begun work on the P-20 system. The high quality plan includes all required elements a. It includes all Essential data elements as noted in the narrative and on an illustration. b. The plan includes developing standardized data structures, formats and definitions for key elements c. The plan includes assigning an identifying ID for every child in EI, child care subsidy programs, and Head Start along with the already tracked students in pre-k, and preschool special education. Statewide required Early childhood assessment information will be entered by staff at the early learning and development program. K-12 educators will have access to their students' early learning records to help with educational planning. The QSNY data system will be linked in to track providers registered in the New York Works for Children registry back to their home systems. d. The plan indicates that stakeholders will be able to access certain data and outputs to analyze data and possibly take action to improve outcomes for children. The various types of data reports include pre-defined reports, as needed data queries, and public access to aggregate data. e. The plan assures compliance with federal state and local privacy laws. The Data System Oversight Requirements are not detailed in the narrative.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	**280**	**185**

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No

Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	0 or 10	No

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

a. NY does not have a Kindergarten Entry Assessment in place. b. Only 40% of the possible points were awarded for this criterion

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	**Yes**

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Comments on Absolute Priority

As a whole this application meets this absolute priority through addressing the key criteria with a high quality plan. NY plans to build on existing initiatives including Pre-k standards, Early Learning Guidelines, Core Body of Knowledge for personnel, and their tiered quality rating system. They have a high quality plan to create and implement a Comprehensive Assessment System, as well as a Kindergarten Readiness Tool. Finally, the longitudinal system planned will have the capacity to inform policy makers and stakeholders about the efficacy of NY's programs for on-going quality improvement.