

Goal 3. Early Learning:

Improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through 3rd grade, so that all children, particularly those with high needs, are on track for graduating from high school college- and career-ready.

Goal Leader: Assistant Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)

Objective 3.1: Access to High-Quality Programs and Services. Increase access to high-quality early learning programs and comprehensive services, especially for children with high needs.

Objective 3.2: Effective Workforce. Improve the quality and effectiveness of the early learning workforce so that early childhood educators have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to improve young children’s health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes.

Objective 3.3: Measuring Progress, Outcomes, and Readiness. Improve the capacity of states and early learning programs to develop and implement comprehensive early learning assessment systems.

Public Benefit

Each year, about 4 million children enter kindergarten in the United States. Unfortunately, not every parent has access to high-quality early learning opportunities for their children. There are large disparities in enrollment based on geography, race, and socioeconomic levels. As a result, too many children enter kindergarten a year or more behind their classmates in academic skills and social-emotional development.⁴¹

A robust body of research shows that children who participate in high-quality preschool programs have better health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes than those who do not participate. The gains are particularly powerful for children from low-income families and those at risk for academic failure who, on average, start kindergarten 12 to 14 months behind their peers in preliteracy and language skills.⁴² Studies also reveal that participating in quality early learning can boost children’s educational attainment and earnings later in life.⁴³

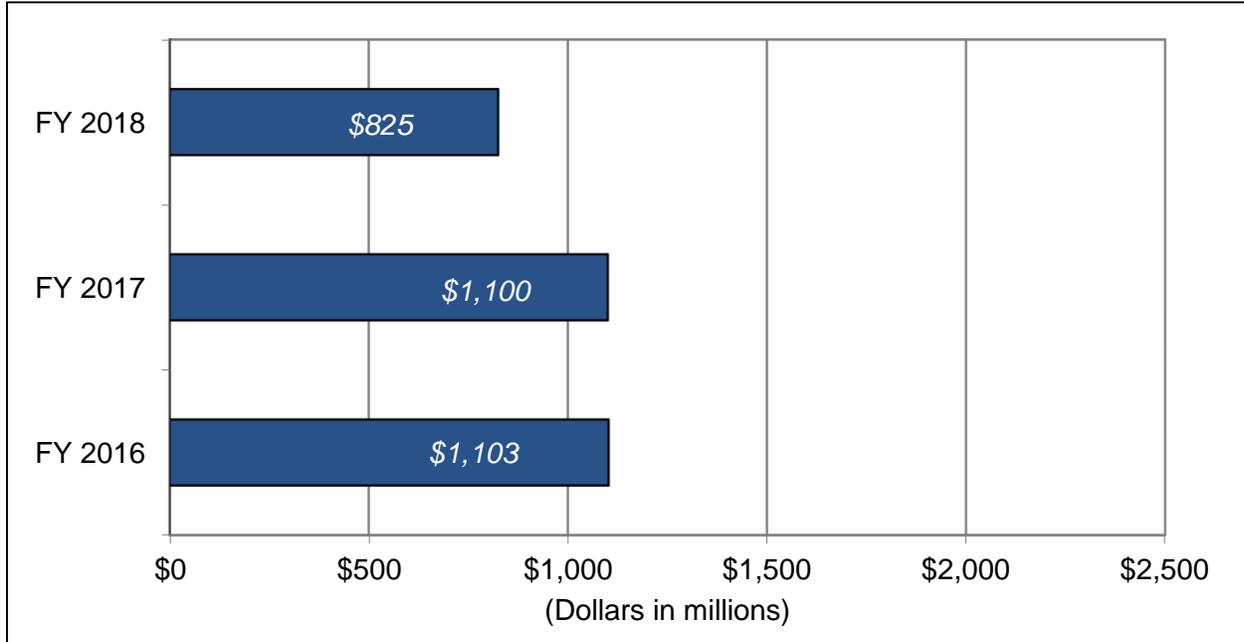
In FY 2016, the Department’s investments in early learning included IDEA Part C and Preschool Development Grants (PDG).

⁴¹ Yoshikawa, Hirokazu, Christine Weiland, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Margaret R. Burchinal, Linda M. Espinosa, William T. Gormley, Jens Ludwig, Katherine A. Magnuson, Deborah Phillips, and Martha J. Zaslow. *Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education*. Vol. 9. Society for Research in Child Development and Foundation for Child Development, 2013.

⁴² Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development. *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. (2000). Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, eds. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

⁴³ See, e.g., Yoshikawa, et.al., *Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education*, 2013.

Goal 3 Discretionary Resources



Major Discretionary Programs and Activities⁴⁴ Supporting Goal 3 Performance Metrics [Dollars in Millions]

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2016 Appropriation	FY 2017 Annualized CR ⁴⁵	FY 2018 President's Budget
OESE	I&I	3.1	Preschool development grants	250	250	--
OSERS	SE	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Grants for infants and families	459	458	458
OSERS	SE	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Preschool grants	368	368	368
Subtotal				1,077	1,075	825
Other Discretionary Programs/Activities				26	26	0
TOTAL, GOAL 3				1,103	1,100	825

POC = Principal Operating Component.

CR = Continuing Resolution.

NOTES: Many programs may have sub-activities that relate to other goals. Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

⁴⁴ All the programs listed are discretionary programs, as distinct from mandatory programs. These include both competitive and noncompetitive/formula programs.

⁴⁵ A full-year 2017 appropriation was not enacted at the time the FY 2018 Budget was prepared; therefore, the Budget is built off of the *Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2017* (P.L. 114-254). The amounts included for 2017 reflect the annualized level provided by the continuing resolution.

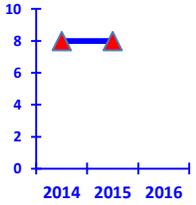
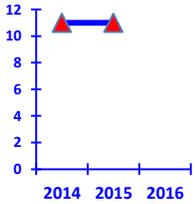
Goal 3: Details

U.S. Department of Education Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Current Year Target	Current Year Results	Actual-to-Target 2016		Out-Year Targets		Trend Line (Actuals)
		2014	2015	2016	2016	2016	 Missed ⁴⁶	 Exceeded ⁴⁷	2017	2018	
3.1.A. Percentage of 4-year olds enrolled in state preschool programs⁴⁸ 	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) 85.5%	NA	NA	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) 85.5%	NA	NA	NA		92.7%	100%	NA

⁴⁶ Missed target by <=1, or if percentage, <=1.3 percentage points.

⁴⁷ Surpassed target; not just met the target. If a diminishing target, the actual was below the reduction target set.

⁴⁸ Metric is aligned with an Agency Priority Goal (APG). This metric is being revised from what was reported in the 2015 Annual Performance Report (APR) to focus on the 18 Preschool Development Grants (PDG)-funded states (Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia) and more accurately reflect the grants' impact. The data source has also been changed from National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) Yearbook to the states' annual performance reports: Preschool Development Grants Annual Performance Reports, Data Workbook, Table A(1) (a) and (b).

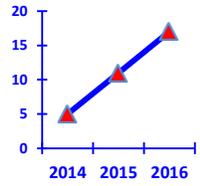
U.S. Department of Education Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Current Year Target	Current Year Results	Actual-to-Target 2016		Out-Year Targets		Trend Line (Actuals)
		2014	2015	2016	2016	2016	Missed ⁴⁶	Exceeded ⁴⁷	2017	2018	
3.1.B. Number of states with high-quality preschool program standards⁴⁹ INCREASE 	SY: 2013–14 (FY: 2014) 8	SY: 2013–14 (FY: 2014) 8	SY: 2014–15 (FY: 2015) 8	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) Q3 of Following FY	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) 10	TBD	TBD		12	TBD	
3.2.A. Number of states that require a teacher with a bachelor's degree in a state preschool program⁵⁰ INCREASE 	SY: 2013–14 (FY: 2014) 11 ⁵¹	SY: 2013–14 (FY: 2014) 11	SY: 2014–15 (FY: 2015) 11 ⁵²	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) TBD Q3 of Following FY	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) 15	TBD	TBD		18	TBD	

⁴⁹ Metric is aligned with an APG. This metric is being revised from what was reported in the 2015 APR to focus on the 18 PDG-funded states (Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia) and more accurately gauge the grants' impact. The data source is being updated to reflect the column from which the data are pulled: NIEER Yearbook Table 1: State Ranking and Quality Checklist Sums, Column "Quality Checklist Sums."

⁵⁰ This metric is being revised to focus on the 18 PDG-funded states (Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia) and more accurately gauge the grants' impact. All of the data have been revised from what was reported in the 2015 Annual Performance Report. The data source is being updated to reflect the column from which the data are pulled: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) Yearbook, Workforce Supplement, Table 3: Preschool Teacher Qualifications and Salary, Column "BA Required."

⁵¹ For the baseline year/data, the NIEER SY 2013–14 Yearbook did not have a Workforce section, which is where the data for this metric should be pulled. Thus the "Teacher has a BA" column was used and the 11 states that met the criteria were: Alabama, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Tennessee.

⁵² In SY 2014–15 (FY 2015) the column changed to "BA Required," so if a state reported on more than one program, and all programs did not require a BA, then the state was not included in the count for the state requiring a teacher with a bachelor's degree in a state preschool program. Where a state reported on more than one program, all programs in that state must require a BA in the state preschool program to be included in the data count. PDG-funded states meeting criteria include: Alabama, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Tennessee.

U.S. Department of Education Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Current Year Target	Current Year Results	Actual-to-Target 2016		Out-Year Targets		Trend Line (Actuals)
		2014	2015	2016	2016	2016	Missed ⁴⁶	Exceeded ⁴⁷	2017	2018	
3.3.A. Number of states collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure INCREASE 	SY: 2010 (FY: 2010) 2	SY: 2013–14 (FY: 2014) 5 ⁵³	SY: 2014–15 (FY: 2015) 11 ⁵⁴	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) 17	SY: 2015–16 (FY: 2016) 14	MET	 		16 ⁵⁵	TBD ⁵⁶	

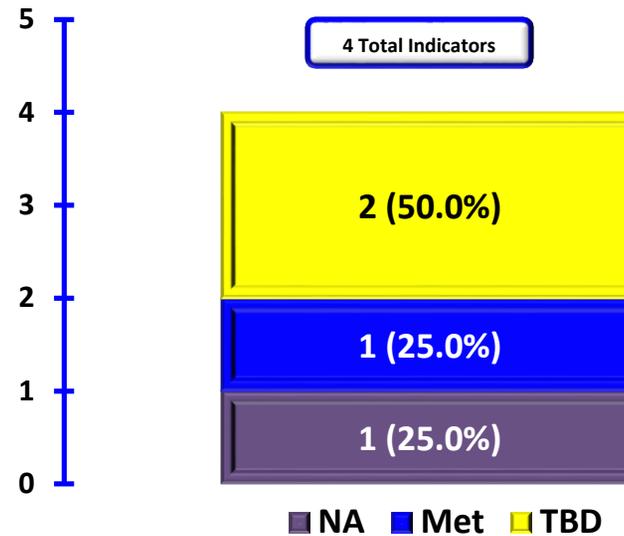
⁵³ Five ELC states implemented their KEA (OR, KY, VT, MD, and OH) in the 2014–15 school year. One state (DE) had planned to implement its KEA in 2014–15 year, but later adjusted its timeline to implement during the 2015–16 school year. As such, the FY 2014 actual is revised from six to five states.

⁵⁴ Eleven ELC states (CA, CO, DE, KY, MD, MA, MI, NC, OH, OR, and VT) are implementing their KEAs in the 2015–16 school year. The remaining eight states that chose to implement KEAs (GA, IL, MN, NJ, NM, PA, RI, WA) will begin after the 2015–16 school year. Wisconsin did not select to implement a KEA, but is implementing a statewide literacy assessment and is exploring the development and use of a KEA.

⁵⁵ There will be difficulty collecting ELC data in out-years because some grantees will no longer be reporting APR data.

⁵⁶ In FY 2017, the data source will change from RTT-ELC to ED*Facts*. However, the data will not be available until FY 2018 Q3 with a collection commencement timeframe of December 2017. Nine (9) of 19 RTT-ELC states that wrote to this optional area will have completed their grants and the Department will only have 10 states reporting in FY 2017. KEA data collection has been added to ED*Facts*.

Goal 3 FY 2016 Indicator Performance Summary



NA = Not applicable.

TBD = To be determined.

Academic Year (AY) is a collegiate year spanning August–May; School Year (SY) spans August–July and is aligned with a P–12 school year; Fiscal Year (FY) corresponds to a federal fiscal year; Calendar Year (CY) spans January–December.

Data Sources and Frequency of Collection:

- 3.1.A. Preschool Development Grants Annual Performance Reports, Data Workbook, Table A(1)(a) and (b); annually
- 3.1.B. National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) Yearbook Table 1: State Ranking and Quality Checklist Sums, Column “Quality Checklist Sums”; annually
- 3.2.A. NIEER Yearbook, Workforce Supplement, Table 3: Preschool Teacher Qualifications and Salary, Column “BA Required”; annually
- 3.3.A. Race to the Top (RTT)-Early Learning Challenge (ELC) Technical Assistance Center; annually

Note on performance metrics and targets: These metrics were established as a part of the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Metrics may be updated or revised to reflect awareness of more accurate data or clarifications. Such updates or revisions are identified in footnotes.

Analysis and Next Steps by Objective

Objective 3.1: Access to High-Quality Programs and Services. *Increase access to high-quality early learning programs and comprehensive services, especially for children with high needs.*

FY 2016 Implementation Strategy

In 2010, the Department and HHS formed an Early Learning Interagency Policy Board (IPB) to advise the Secretaries on how to better align programs and systems, and improve coordination and administration of federally funded early learning programs serving children from birth to age 8 (e.g., Head Start, Child Care, Home Visiting, and early learning programs funded under Title I, Part A of the ESEA and IDEA). Meeting quarterly, the IPB has provided a venue for developing policy recommendations and improving program coordination and quality across federally funded early learning and development programs. Through the work of the IPB, several policy statements were released that focus on improving the quality of early childhood programs.

Improving access to high-quality early learning programs has been a priority for the Department. In FY 2016, the key programs on which the Department focused are the PDG and IDEA programs serving children from birth through age 5. Other efforts to improve the quality of early childhood programs focused on activities such as reducing suspensions and expulsions, addressing chronic absenteeism, promoting family engagement and inclusive settings, and supporting STEM for early learners.

Preschool Development Grant Technical Assistance (PDG TA)—the technical assistance provider for the PDG grantees—held a number of webinars in FY 2016, providing information on communicating with families to prevent chronic absenteeism, supporting young children demonstrating difficult behaviors, and avoiding suspension and expulsion in early childhood programs.

In order to improve the quality of early learning programs from birth through third grade, the Department and HHS collaborated with the National Center for Education Research (NCER) at the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and leveraged \$20.5 million of NCER resources with \$5.5 million of PDG national activities funds to support the \$26 million [Early Learning Research Network](#).

Several webinars and documents were produced in FY 2016 to provide the tools and resources to support families and their engagement with children's learning and development including resources on supporting children and families living in poverty in rural areas and family engagement.

FY 2016 Barriers to Success

As PDG program administration transitions to HHS under the ESSA, the Department and HHS will work together to continue to support existing grantees and ensure that they are able to successfully meet their commitments during the project period.

Despite a recent increase in federal funding, IDEA Part C systems within many states were stretched thin because of high demand for early intervention services. Some states have narrowed their definition of developmental delay as part of their eligibility requirements for serving children with disabilities and their families. Staff and Department-funded centers support

states in using their resources most efficiently. This was the first time in many years that there was an increase in Part B, Section 619 funding, yet because there has been an increase in the number of children served in the program over the years, the funding increase did not substantially increase the historic per child funding for the program.

Key Milestones and Future Actions

OSERS and its technical assistance centers have been supporting states on implementing and evaluating their State Systematic Improvement Plans (SSIPs) to improve results for children with disabilities. As OESE, OSERS, and HHS developed policy statements, the Department conducted input sessions with multiple stakeholder groups to ensure their perspectives were included and to get their input on additional resources that would be of benefit.

In October 2016, the Department and HHS held their annual meeting for the 29 Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) and PDG grantees—11 RTT-ELC and 18 PDG—to share best practices and lessons learned. In February 2017, the Institute of Medicine/National Research Council (NRC) released a new report, “Fostering School Success for English Learners: Toward New Directions in Policy, Practice, and Research,” and in July 2016, “Supporting the Parents of Young Children” was released. Both were funded by the Department, HHS, and philanthropic partners.

The Department also may consider revising this objective and/or strategies for achieving the objective to reflect changes to early learning programs made by the Congress in the ESSA.

Objective 3.2: Effective Workforce. *Improve the quality and effectiveness of the early learning workforce so that early childhood educators have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to improve young children’s health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes.*

FY 2016 Implementation Strategy

A number of activities were held to support states in building and strengthening the early learning workforce, including a joint webinar with HHS and a Peer Learning Exchange entitled, “Cultivating Excellence: Developing and Strengthening Your Early Childhood Workforce.”

The new PDG program under the ESSA will provide continued support for the early learning workforce. The Department participated in meetings and planning regarding implementation of the new PDG under the ESSA, including working with HHS, OMB, and the Domestic Policy Council on creating an agreement between the Department and HHS to implement the program. The [nonregulatory guidance developed by the Department](#) will help ensure that administrators, teachers, and paraeducators are supported as they work to improve outcomes for young children in early learning programs.

In addition, OSERS funds the Early Childhood Personnel Center (the Center) to work with states to improve their personnel systems to increase the quality and effectiveness of the early learning workforce to serve children with disabilities. The Center recently finished providing intensive technical assistance to a cohort of four states, targeted technical assistance to six states, and chose six more states for intensive technical assistance. The Center also held leadership institutes for IDEA Part C and Part B, Section 619 coordinators. OSERS also continues to fund personnel preparation grants. The Center was supplemented to develop online modules on evidence-based practices for use by faculty and professional development providers preparing personnel that will serve young children with disabilities and their families.

On October 27, 2015, the Department and HHS released a [report](#) that summarizes the progress of professional development systems in the RTT-ELC states. In November 2015, the Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Program (ELC TA) released a report, [Articulation Strategies in RTT-ELC States](#), to highlight best practices in supporting future practitioners in transferring from two-year colleges to four-year universities. In December 2015, ELC TA released a report, [RTT-ELC Grantees That Incorporate Business Trainings for Child Care Providers in Their Scope of Work](#). In January 2016, ELC TA published a report, [Scholarships for Early Childhood Educators in RTT-ELC States](#). In June 2016, the Department and HHS released [Credentialing in the Early Care and Education Field Report](#).

FY 2016 Barriers to Success

While the ESSA includes language explicitly stating that Title II dollars can be used for early childhood educators, it remains unclear whether or how that will affect the workforce. Challenges abound in developing an effective early learning workforce. States that can sustain programs for longer periods have less difficulty recruiting and retaining strong early childhood educators.

In FY 2016, the Department and its technical assistance providers worked to address some of these challenges through webinars, peer learning, and highlighting promising practices, such as mentoring and coaching.

Limited resources are a risk to achieving this strategic objective. The IDEA Part C and Part B, Section 619 programs report personnel shortages, specifically related to service providers who have specialized knowledge and skills in serving young children with disabilities and their families (e.g., speech-language pathologists, physical therapists). Additionally, there is an increased demand for resources under Part D that can address personnel shortages and improve the quality of the workforce serving young children with disabilities and their families.

Key Milestones and Future Actions

During May 2016, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) worked with HHS to develop a plan for the National Academies of Science to review and synthesize available research and analysis on the resources needed to meet the true costs of high-quality early care and education. The committee will produce a report that synthesizes the information gathered and, based on their analysis and interpretation, draw conclusions about and make recommendations for concrete, implementable funding strategies in the public and private sectors at the national, state, and local levels. In addition, an early childhood workforce case study is progressing well.

During September 2016, the Department's Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS) office worked with HHS to develop a plan for a study on articulation from two-year to four-year colleges. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is contracted to complete the study and is supported by PDG national activities funds. The report is expected to be released late next year.

The Department may also consider revising this objective and/or strategies for achieving the objective to reflect changes to early learning programs made by the Congress in the ESSA as well as related budget proposals by the new administration.

Objective 3.3: Measuring Progress, Outcomes, and Readiness. *Improve the capacity of states and early learning programs to develop and implement comprehensive early learning assessment systems.*

FY 2016 Implementation Strategy

The Department will continue to reach out to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), and other organizations that share its interest in advancing quality kindergarten entry assessments (KEAs), share resources, and develop strategies that might increase its collective impact.

OESE staff are working with Enhanced Assessment Grants (EAG) staff in supporting the three EAG grantees developing KEAs, paying particular attention to the RTT-ELC and PDG overlapping states. The Department has reviewed the applications submitted for the PDG competition that discuss the states' assessment practices, and will use the PDG TA contractor's electronic grant monitoring tool, GRADS 360, and other means to monitor and report on KEA/assessment progress. OESE is working with the national comprehensive center, CEELO, to provide targeted technical assistance on KEA development or enhancement.

The Department, HHS, and ELC TA support both the RTT-ELC states and many voluntary nongrant states and PDG states through an online early learning community. In October 2015, the ELC TA center updated its brief, "Kindergarten Entry Assessments in ELC Grantee States."

On August 27, 2015, the Department posted for comment the ED*Facts* Data Set "[Kindergarten Entry Assessment Data Collection through EMAPS](#)" as part of the Annual Mandatory Collection of Elementary and Secondary Education Data. The Department is reviewing and responding to comments received and expects to post the final data collection in FY 2017. The data collection will fill a void left when RTT-ELC KEA data collection diminishes as states finish their grant periods.

To support implementation of the high-quality preschool program components, the Department and HHS reviewed the PDG and RTT-ELC APR data collected through February 2016. The PDG TA center published a brief, "[State Technical Assistance Report: Comprehensive Assessment Systems in Preschool Development and Expansion Grant States](#)." In September 2016, the ELC TA center updated its report, [Kindergarten Entry Assessments in RTT-ELC States](#). Project officers continue to work with grantees to support implementation of high-quality, coordinated early learning systems and continued monthly calls with grantees to provide technical assistance.

FY 2016 Barriers to Success

Some states have challenges implementing their KEAs due to funding constraints and local district decisions. For example, in Maryland, one of three EAG grantees, a new law restricts the Maryland Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to sampling, rather than assessing all children when they enter kindergarten. A district may still voluntarily choose to assess all its kindergarteners.

Key Milestones and Future Actions

On October 27, 2015, the Department and HHS released a [report](#) that shows the Department surpassed the 2015 performance target of nine states collecting and reporting disaggregated

data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure. Eleven ELC states (CA, CO, DE, KY, MD, MA, MI, NC, OH, OR, and VT) are implementing their KEAs in the 2015–16 school year. The remaining eight states that chose to implement KEAs (GA, IL, MN, NJ, NM, PA, RI, and WA) will begin after the 2015–16 school year.

The 2015 APRs for 19 states—WI did not choose to spend funds on a KEA—show that all states have made progress in moving towards implementing their KEAs. The [18 PDG states](#) are required to report on the school readiness of the children participating in their high-quality preschool programs, with encouragement to use a KEA. States describe the assessment they will use in the 2016 APR to report the school readiness of the first PDG cohort of children. The Department expects to have data in spring 2017 for the second year of the grant. The 18 states reported serving 28,000 4-year-olds in high-quality preschool programs. In the 2016 APR for PDG, the Department will collect data on school readiness.

The individual state RTT-ELC [APRs and Progress Reports](#) were posted on September 1, 2016. Seventeen of the 19 states that used RTT-ELC funds for KEAs are either phasing in implementation (7 states) or fully implementing (10 states) their KEA in the 2016–17 school year. Rhode Island and Georgia are piloting their KEA.

The Department also may consider revising this objective and/or strategies for achieving the objective to reflect changes to early learning programs made by the Congress in the ESSA as well as the policy priorities of the new administration.