

# PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

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## 2015 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

### Nevada





# U.S. Department of Education PDG Grant Performance Report Cover Sheet

Based on ED 524B OMB No. 1894-0003 Exp. 06/30/2017

Check only one box per Program Office instructions.  Annual Performance Report  Final Performance Report

### General Information

1. PR/Award #: S419A150004                      2. Grantee Federal Information Processing Code: 15A

3. Project Title: Preschool Development Grant - Development

4. Grantee Name: Nevada Department of Education

5. Grantee Address: 700 E. Fifth Street

City: Carson City                      State: Nevada                      Zip: 89436

6. Project Director Name: Patti Oya

Title: Director

Phone #: (702) 486-6492                      Ext.: \_\_\_\_\_                      Fax #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: poya@doe.nv.gov

### Reporting Period Information

7. Reporting Period: From: 1/1/2015                      To: 12/31/2015

### 8. Budget Expenditures (To be completed by your Business Office. See instructions.)

Budget Period	Federal Grant Funds	Non-Federal Funds (Match/Cost Share)
a. Previous Budget Period		
b. Current Budget Period	\$7,177,093.00	\$2,906,521.00
c. Entire Project Period (For Final Performance Reports only)		

### 9. Indirect Cost Information (To be completed by your Business Office. See instructions.)

- a. Are you claiming indirect costs under this grant?  Yes  No
- b. If yes, do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal Government?  Yes  No
- c. If yes, provide the following information:
- Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_
- Approving Federal agency:  ED  Other Specify other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Type of Rate: (Final Performance Reports only)  Provisional  Final  Other Specify other: \_\_\_\_\_
- d. For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:
- Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?

### 10. Performance Measures Status

- a. Are complete data on performance measures for the current budget period included in the Project Status Chart?  Yes  No
- b. If no, when will the data be available and submitted to the Department? \_\_\_\_\_



# U.S. Department of Education PDG Annual Performance Report Executive Summary

Based on ED 524B OMB No. 1894-0003 Exp. 06/30/2017

Grantee State: NV

PR/Award #: S419A150004

You are required to submit an Executive Summary of up to 3000 words with your Annual Performance Report. This summary should relate to your approved application and summarize the goals and objectives that have been achieved under your grant, what you learned, and any evaluation results. Describe any unanticipated outcomes or benefits from your project and any barriers that you may have encountered. If there have been any changes to the project from the approved application, those should be explained as well.

## Overview

Nevada received legislative approval in June, 2015 to implement the Nevada Ready! Preschool Development Grant in five "High Needs Communities", or counties across the state. The counties participating in Nevada Ready! Pre-K are Churchill, Clark, Lyon, Nye and Washoe. We are currently working with seven sub-grantees located within these high need communities to expand the number of children participating in high-quality pre-K programs. Our sub-grantees consist of LEAs, private entities, non-profits and charter schools. This report describes the goals and accomplishments achieved, as well as lessons learned in six short months of implementation. Our accomplishments center around our plans for and work around direct services to children and families, measures of Kindergarten readiness, implementation and monitoring program quality, collaboration with sub-grantees and alignment around the birth - 3rd grade continuum.

## Goals and Accomplishments

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) set a goal of enrolling 980 students in new and improved high-quality preschool programs in Year 1 Preschool Development Grant implementation. Although the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) was awarded to Nevada in January, 2015 state legislative approval to administer the grant was not approved until June, 2015. Because legislative approval was required prior to hiring staff, the PDG team was not fully staffed until January, 2016. Despite a late start due to the date of legislative approval and late staff hires, as of December 1, 2015, we were able to enroll 782 students (80% of our goal). Seven sub-grantees work with 27 different sites in high need areas to provide high-quality pre-K programs that, prior to this year, did not exist or did not meet the federal government's definition of high quality. Nearly 14% of the children served state-wide are children with disabilities.

We are making progress on a screening tool to assess Kindergarten readiness based on the State's definition of readiness. A tool has been selected and the Nevada Ready! Pre-K team is working across programs to effectively communicate information about this assessment, plan professional development, and secure funding for assessment materials. In conjunction with this project we are working to align data collection in pre-K to the state's K-12 information system. Student assessment data from State Pre-K programs has been collected for over a decade in a dedicated Early Childhood database, and provides current longitudinal accountability for providers and the Department itself by revealing various details and trends of the program's operation over time based on student outcomes. The existing database, being distinct from the State's Pre-K system, must migrate to a common technical platform in order to achieve operational integration with the K-12 system. To facilitate and prepare for this, the database and data collection procedures are being modified where necessary for a complete structural and conceptual alignment with the existing K-12 SLDS. As the resources become available to perform this migration, the State's existing longitudinal framework will fully incorporate young learners, including the Department's archival data. As we work to align assessments for pre-K programs we will likely shift to a new, common assessment tool that is aligned to the KEA and that can measure progress in the birth - 3 realm. Also a common assessment calendar will be developed along with system features to flag and track students participating in publicly funded pre-K programs. This work requires unique student identification numbers and logistical work to link to the state longitudinal data system. Unique

identifiers become problematic as we expand Nevada Ready! Pre-k classrooms into community child care provider locations, but we are working on creative solutions to these problems.

Great strides have been made in the development and implementation of policies and procedures to execute and sustain a high quality program in our five high-needs communities. Nevada Ready! Pre-K programs are expected to achieve each of the quality standards outlined in the PDG grant. We are finalizing our guidance document in order to communicate expectations clearly to our sub-grantees and providers. We have also established methods to identify sub-grantee and provider needs, opportunities to provide structured and informal professional development (including frequent site visits, coaching for leaders and teachers, and a Community of Practice for sub-grantee teams) and systems to facilitate planning for continuous improvement. Finally, we have robust structures in place for both formal and informal monitoring in order to gauge and review progress related to every aspect of the grant. Our monitoring tool is in the final phase of development.

We have received feedback from stakeholders across the state related to our P-3 work. In its current state, our P-3 work will include one year of planning with a representative committee of statewide stakeholders and P-3 experts, a two-year pilot project in one or more of our high-needs communities, and one year of professional development based on the refined P-3 plan. This professional development will then be used by other communities interested in implementing a P-3 system. The request for proposals for our P-3 work should be released in June and we anticipate starting the work by November, 2016.

We continue our efforts to collaborate with our sub-grantees to ensure the highest quality programming and most efficient use of funds possible. Our system to provide supports and to oversee progress entails direct support from NDE staff, close coordination and collaboration with the QRIS program, and professional development opportunities designed to address the collective needs of our sub-grantees and their providers. We believe that this is a sound structure that will help build capacity for this important work beyond the life of the grant.

### **Lessons Learned**

Lessons learned in Nevada's initial implementation of Nevada Ready! Pre-K revolve around missed opportunities and miscalculations, illuminating the need for thoughtful and thorough planning and coordination moving forward.

Nevada's legislature recently passed a Read by Third Grade bill. This law requires, among other elements, a series of assessment from Kindergarten through grade three, culminating with the criterion referenced test. There is also a requirement for Kindergarten assessment within 30 days of enrollment, but did not stipulate a common Kindergarten Entry Assessment. In order to reduce the assessment burden on teachers and children, we are working to incorporate provisions for the Kindergarten entry assessment (which is a goal of our grant) within the bounds of the requirements of the Read by Third Grade law (specifically, the initial Kindergarten assessment). We hope to do this by requiring all students attending a publicly funded pre-K program to participate in the KEA selected by the NDE. Due to funding issues around purchase of and training around the assessment tool, we plan to implement this in a phased approach.

In the PDG grant application, the budget was developed by high need community, or county rather than sub-grantee. Since, in some cases, we have more than one sub-grantee in a county, this made individual sub-grantee allocations difficult to determine. Also, PDG budget documents presented additional funds for specific direct services that were difficult to distribute equally. We have remedied this situation by establishing a per pupil funding formula and allocating funds based on the number of students actually served. Finally, the calculations of projected number of seats for each sub-grantee was miscalculated, requiring adjustments in the actual numbers of new and expanded state-funded seats.

These lessons have helped us to focus on thoughtful planning, team problem solving and creative solutions. We are thankful for the lessons we have learned from other states that are more advanced in their pre-K efforts and have taken advantage of their offers of support and shared resources. We have also committed to even greater collaboration with other State offices, our sub-grantees and providers as we move forward to provide

the highest quality services for our youngest learners.



**U.S. Department of Education**  
**PDG Annual Performance Report**  
**Grant Status Form**  
**Explanation of Progress (524B Section A)**  
Based on ED 524B OMB No. 1894-0003 Exp. 06/30/2017

Grantee State: NV PR/Award #: S419A150004

**Section A: Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (narrative)**

**1. Project Objective**

**1(a) GPRA Performance Measure: The number and percentage of Eligible Children served in High-Quality Preschool Programs funded by the grant.** Describe the State's progress in meeting this Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measure based on enrollment of Eligible Children in High-Quality Preschool Programs funded by the grant as of December 1, 2015.

Nevada set a goal of enrolling 980 students in new and improved high-quality preschool programs in Year 1 Preschool Development Grant implementation. Despite a late start due to delayed legislative approval and late staff hires, as of December 1, 2015, we were able to enroll 782 students (80% of our goal). Of the 782 seats now available, 369 are seats that have been expanded/improved by: expanding from half-day to full day (162), limiting class size and reducing child to staff ratio (33), employing and compensating a teacher with a bachelor's degree (13), providing in-service, evidence based professional development (36), and providing comprehensive wrap around services (36). 413 of the seats are new seats that did not previously exist. Sub-grantees and providers are constantly working to expand these numbers, with some classrooms opening as recently as mid-January.

Please describe, as required in Program Requirement (k)(2) in the Notice Inviting Applicants (NIA), how the State established policies and procedures that ensure that the percentage of Eligible Children with disabilities served by the High-Quality Preschool Programs is not less than either the percentage of four-year-old children served statewide through part B, section 619 of IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), or the current national average, whichever is greater.

*Note: The current national percentage of four year-old-children receiving services through part B, section 619 of IDEA is 6.4%. Source: 2012 IDEA Part B Child Count ([www.ideadata.org](http://www.ideadata.org)). States should include detailed information on ALL structural elements.*

While Nevada does not yet have written policies and procedures around inclusion, Nevada is following the federal requirements to ensure that eligible children with disabilities are being appropriately identified and served in least restrictive environments. Currently, 109 of the 782 children enrolled in Nevada Ready! Pre-K are reported to have a disability. This percentage (nearly 14%) exceeds the minimum percentage required (8.56%) in Nevada. Some sub-grantees are meeting and exceeding the required service percentage of four-year old children with disabilities, while other sub-grantees are not. The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team will continue to work to increase awareness around this requirement and provide supports to sub-grantees to ensure this goal is met by all. Two sub-grantees have used this requirement and support from NDE to completely restructure services for early childhood services for children with special needs. We are currently planning Community of Practice opportunities for sub-grantees in which they will work together to learn and understand important topics related to the PDG and network to build relationships with each other.

The first Community of Practice will center on reading and understanding The Preschool Inclusion Toolbox by

Barton and Smith (2015). This work will build sub-grantees' understanding of what quality inclusion is and why it is important, the barriers and solutions to successful inclusion, and development and implementation of policies and procedures that support inclusion. Participants will be exposed to research around inclusive practices, hear from others facing similar obstacles, have sheltered time to plan with a team, and analyze their efforts to improve outcomes for children.

Describe the State's progress in increasing the number and percentage of Eligible Children served in High-Quality Preschool Programs funded by the grant.

Nevada Ready! Pre-K partnered with seven sub-grantees including school districts, State sponsored charter schools, non-profit entities, and Head Start partners in a total of 27 different sites in "High Need Communities" to enhance and expand high quality pre-K seats through the Preschool Development Grant. We currently serve 782 children and their families. The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team is working to provide supports necessary (clear expectations, professional development, QRIS, targeted funding and resources, and consistent monitoring) to ensure effective implementation. Sub-grantees have signed Memorandums of Understanding that outline responsibilities for program implementation and outreach.

NDE is currently working with sub-grantee on their projections for next year and providing support for those sub-grantees who are struggling to achieve their projection goals.

**1(b) GPRA Performance Measure: The number and percentage of children served overall in the State Preschool Program.** Please describe any increases or decreases in this GPRA measure based on fall enrollment in the State Preschool Program for the 2015-16 school year.

Through the Preschool Development Grant, Nevada has been able to serve an additional 782 children and families with high-quality pre-K programs and services. This is a 7% increase of services and programs statewide. Previously, Nevada provide 11,108 seats through the state's existing half-day State-Funded Pre-K program, Early Head Start and Head Start, IDEA Part C and B, section 619, Title I of ESEA, and the CCDF program. With the addition of Nevada Ready! Pre-K, we have increased opportunities to braid funding and provide more inclusive classrooms where children with disabilities and children learning English can learn alongside their peers. We are now able to serve a total of 11,890 3- and 4-year old children. The Nevada Ready! Pre-K grant is responsible for increasing the number of seats available for 4-year-old children by 2.2% of in Clark County, 10.4% in Washoe County, 32.7% in Lyon County, 58% in Churchill County, and an impressive 100% increase in available seats in Nye County.

**1(c) GPRA Performance Measure: The number and percentage of children in the High-Need Communities served by the grant that are ready for kindergarten as determined by the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment or, if the State does not yet have a Kindergarten Entry Assessment, other valid and reliable means of determining school readiness.**

*In the Year 2 APR, grantees will provide disaggregated data on the school readiness of the children served by the grant. This may include information collected about the children served by the grant at the end of their 2015-16 preschool year or in their 2016-17 kindergarten year. States may provide data from a sample of children (e.g., a sample being used for any evaluation).*

In the Year 1 APR, grantees must describe their progress towards identifying the measures, methods, and data on the school readiness of children served by the Preschool Development Grant. In the narrative below provide the following information:

- The name of the assessment tool(s) and the Essential Domains of School Readiness measured;
- When the assessment tool(s) is/are given (e.g., in preschool and/or kindergarten);
- Whether the assessment is mandated by the State, and for which children;
- How long the State has been using the assessment tool(s);
- Whether the assessment tool(s) is/are implemented throughout the High-Need Community and/or Statewide;
- Whether the State provides or will provide training for local staff administering the assessment. If so, describe the requirements including processes to ensure continued reliability in the administration of the measure;
- If school readiness data is reported to the State, describe when and how data are reported.

Also, please describe, if applicable:

- The State's definition of "school readiness;"
  - Disaggregated information about children's school readiness on individual domains or subsets of the measure;
  - School readiness data for children disaggregated by subgroup (e.g., students who are American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian, not Pacific Islander; Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; Black or African American; Hispanic/Latino; White, not Hispanic; two or more races; with disabilities; English learners; and from any other subgroups the state determines appropriate; and
- How the State will continue to make progress in meeting this GPRA measure.

The Brigance Early Childhood Screen III has been selected as Nevada's Kindergarten Entry Assessment. The screener is nationally standardized, norm- and criterion-referenced and measure Physical, Language, and Academic/Cognitive development.

We are in the process of deciding whether this KEA will be administered a) as the first screening opportunity required for all Kindergarten students by our Ready by Grade Three Legislation or b) at the end of the pre-K year for all children participating in a publicly funded pre-K program. Our first administration of this assessment will be in the 2016-2017 school year (for administration option a) or in the spring of 2016 (for administration option b). The selection of option a or b will determine whether the assessment will be administered in only high-need communities (option b) or statewide (option a).

The State's definition of school readiness is:

Children's readiness for school is made up of multiple components and shaped by numerous factors. Improving school readiness, therefore, must address children's development of skills and behaviors as well as the environments in which they spend their time. Early childhood leaders at the state and national level agree that efforts to improve school readiness must address three interrelated components:

Children's readiness for school.

School's readiness for children.

The capacity of families and communities to provide developmental opportunities for young children.

Ultimately the goal is that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children.

School readiness is an ongoing process from the moment of birth, to prekindergarten, and through the transition into elementary school and beyond. It is the foundation defined by the intersection of two critical components: 1) children's condition to learn based on the five identified domains of learning, and 2) the school's capacity to meet the needs of all children to prepare them for future school success and the 21st century. This includes, but not limited to providing access to high quality services for all children including aligned standards and curriculum, supportive relationships, engaging environment, smooth transitions and strong family and community connections.

There is consensus, based upon a wealth of research, that a child's readiness for school should be measured and addressed across five distinct but connected domains:

**Physical Development and Health**--This domain covers such factors as health status, growth, and disabilities; physical abilities, such as gross and fine motor skills; and conditions before, at, and after birth.

**Social and Emotional Development**--This domain combines two interrelated components affecting children's behavioral health and learning. Social development refers to children's ability to interact with others and their capacity for self-regulation. Emotional development includes children's perceptions of themselves, their abilities to understand the feelings of other people, and their ability to interpret and express their own feelings.

**Approaches to Learning**--This domain refers to children's inclination to use skills and knowledge. Key components include enthusiasm, curiosity, and persistence on tasks.

**Language and Early Literacy Development**--This domain includes communication and emergent literacy. Communication includes listening, speaking, and vocabulary. Emergent literacy includes print awareness, story sense, early writing, and the connection of letters to sounds.

**Cognition and General Knowledge**--This domain refers to thinking and problem-solving as well as knowledge about particular objects and the way the world works. Mathematical knowledge, abstract thought, and imagination are included.

Once the assessment option is decided upon, the Nevada Ready! Pre-K team will work with other state department staff to develop an assessment training and roll-out plan to be carried out prior to the first assessment administration.

**For Preschool Development Grants - Development Grants States ONLY:**

**1(d) GPRA Performance Measure: The number of States that collect and analyze data on State Preschool Program quality, including the structural elements of quality specified in the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs.**

Nevada's Early Childhood Education database is currently not aligned with the State's K-12 information system. Nevada's school readiness is determined at entry to Kindergarten, and assessment data is maintained in that store. In its current state, Nevada Ready! Pre-K students cannot be successfully assessed against readiness data. We are currently designing policies, systems, and procedures which will begin deployment in year 2. These measures include SID alignment between the ECE database and Nevada Ready! Pre-K flagging. Once in place, these will create the general alignment which can be used in a variety of statistical comparisons with system extracts and the ability to draw specialized cohorts from raw data. In year 2 we are discussing the needs and desires of Early Childhood stakeholders and determining what data will be disseminated. In year 3 we will likely begin some form of data dissemination involving the newly identifiable Nevada Ready! Pre-K samples being compared through data sampling and proxy data dependent on the measure being explored.

The outline below depicts where expectations for each criteria of high-quality is outlined and where/how data are collected. All data are analyzed and synthesized into a compliance report which is disseminated directly to sub-grantees. Plans for remediating deficiencies are submitted to NDE staff via a continuous improvement plan.

**High staff qualifications** - expectations around staff qualifications are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (1.B.7).

**High-quality professional development** - expectations around high quality professional development are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (2.A.1).

**Child-to-instructional staff ratio** - expectations around staff ratios are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (1.B.4).

**Class size** - expectations around class size are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (1.B.3 and 1.B.8).

**Full-Day program** - expectations around instructional hours are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (1.B.5).

**Inclusion of children with disabilities** - expectations around inclusion of children with disabilities are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (1.B.8 and 2.A.3). Data are also collected in the APR in items A.3(a) and A.2(c).

**Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards** - expectations around curricula and learning environments are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (2.A.2) and QRIS.

**Individualized accommodations and supports** - expectations around individualized accommodations are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (1.B.8 and 2.A.3).

**Instructional staff salaries** - expectations around instructional staff salaries are outlined in the guidance document and data are monitored via sub-grantee budget reviews.

**Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement-** expectations around program evaluation and continuous improvement are outlined in the guidance document and are monitored via the monitoring plan and QRIS improvement plan.



**On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services** - expectations around comprehensive services are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (3.A.1, 3.A.2 and 3.B.1).

**Evidence-based health and safety standards** - expectations around health and safety standards are outlined in the guidance document and data are collected via the monitoring plan (2.A.7). 

## Section A: Part B - Selection Criteria

In this section of the APR, States will report on their progress addressing the Preschool Development Grant's selection criteria. The State should read the questions carefully and report in the narrative fields directly below the questions. Please include any data, data notes or formulas to help the readers understand the State's narrative responses.

### 1. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs (Selection Criteria “C” of the application)

Describe the State's use of funds received over the grant period for State Preschool Program infrastructure and quality improvements, including the State's efforts to implement a system of monitoring and support at the State level toward activities such as those described in Section (C)(1)(a-k) of the NIA.

*Note: States will report amounts and percentage of funds for State Preschool Program infrastructure and High-Quality Preschool Programs in the Competitive Preference Priority 3 Chart.*

The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team has nearly finished the development of a robust monitoring plan and tool that effectively measures each component of Nevada Ready! Pre-K sites (program operations, program quality, and comprehensive services). As we believe that crucial elements of program quality will result in improved child outcomes, each component will be communicated and monitored regularly. Monitoring evidence coupled with joint observation will be used to create a continuous improvement plan that will, in turn be monitored. NDE will use data collected from formal and informal monitoring to provide additional supports to individual sub-grantees as needed.

In addition the Nevada Ready! Pre-K team is working closely with NDE staff administering QRIS. The QRIS District Model has been designed to exactly align to federal quality definitions including elements around teacher qualifications, professional development, class sizes and ratios, inclusion, curriculum and standards, and comprehensive services. QRIS participants receive individual mentoring services based on the results of their QRIS assessment. Nevada Ready! Pre-K staff follow-up on these quality elements through the monitoring process. The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team meets regularly with State QRIS staff and QRIS mentors to coordinate supports and resources based on needs.

## 2. Expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs in Each High-Need Community (Selection Criteria D of application)

Describe the progress the State has made during the reporting year to implement and sustain voluntary high quality preschool programs for eligible children in two or more High-Need Communities (Selection Criteria D(4) of the application) that include **ALL** structural elements listed below that are included in the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs. States should include detailed information on ALL structural elements.

- High staff qualifications, including a teacher with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in any field with a State-approved alternative pathway, which may include coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood, and teaching assistants with appropriate credentials;
- High-quality professional development for all staff;
- A child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1;
- A class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications;
- A Full-Day program;
- Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities;
- Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry;
- Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities;
- Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff;
- Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement;
- On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that promote families access to services that support their children's learning and development; and
- Evidence-based health and safety standards.

Please describe the progress the State has made in establishing High-Quality Preschool Programs that include ALL structural elements listed above that are evidence-based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality.

**High staff qualifications:**

Each Early Childhood Education teacher responsible for providing direct instruction to early childhood students must fulfill the licensure requirements for teaching in the pre-K population. An Early Childhood teachers' license (requiring a bachelor's degree in education) or an ECE endorsement is required. 89% of teachers leading Nevada Ready! Pre-K classrooms meet current certification requirements. The state is currently experience a severe teacher shortage. This, combined with lack of access to higher education opportunities as well as geographic isolation in several of our high-need communities, make hiring and retaining certified teachers an extreme challenge that nearly all sub-grantees are facing.

We are exploring options with institutes of higher education around new certification combining Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education, but this is a long-term goal that will not meet our immediate needs. Sub-grantees are working to redouble their recruitment efforts within and outside of the state, considering alternative routes to licensure, and expanding appropriate professional development opportunities.

**High-quality professional development for all staff:** The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team includes a staff member whose sole responsibility lies with development of a high quality professional development system in order to boost the qualifications of teachers and leaders responsible for high-quality pre-K classrooms. This staff member is currently working with experts within and outside of the state to develop a comprehensive system. In addition, staff are currently working to design and implement high quality professional development for school leaders (around leading pre-K programs) and teachers (around supports for children learning English). In addition, several of the Nevada Ready! Pre-K sites are participating in the center-based QRIS pilot through which teacher receive intensive mentoring and support around high-quality interactions and appropriate early childhood environments. In the 2016-2017 school year, all Nevada Ready! sites will be participating in QRIS.

**A child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1;**

Nevada Ready! Pre-K class sizes and child/staff ratios must not exceed the following: Classrooms will have no more than 20 children with 2 adults. Currently, all of the Nevada Ready! Pre-K classrooms meet these ratio requirements.

**A class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications;**

We have set the expectation that at least one appropriately certified and licensed teacher and one appropriately certified teaching assistant be hired for each Nevada Ready! Pre-K program. Due to a severe teacher shortage in Nevada and problems recruiting teachers in rural communities, this goal has not been fully achieved.

**A Full-Day program:** All Nevada Ready! Pre-K programs are required to provide a minimum of 25 hours of instruction per week. Currently, all of the Nevada Ready! Pre-K classrooms meet the minimum hour requirement.

**Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities:** Currently, 109 of the 782 children enrolled in Nevada Ready! Pre-K are reported to have a disability. This percentage (nearly 14%) exceeds the minimum percentage required (8.56%) in Nevada. Some sub-grantees are meeting and exceeding the required service percentage of four-year old children with disabilities, while other sub-grantees are not. The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team will continue to work to increase awareness around this requirement and provide supports to sub-grantees to ensure this goal is met by all.

**Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development**

**Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry:** The Nevada Department of Education does not mandate a curriculum to be used for pre-K programs state-wide.

The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team is in the process of developing a tool for all participating programs to use to provide evidence that their selected curricula are aligned to the Nevada Pre-kindergarten Standards. This tool will be required and can be used to inform teachers and leaders of the Nevada Ready! Pre-K classrooms of the importance of the use of a quality, aligned curriculum. Additionally, programs participating in Nevada Ready! Pre-K will be evaluated by the Nevada Silver State Stars QRIS. The QRIS rating includes the Environment Rating Scales and CLASS assessment scores to evaluate teacher child interactions as part of assessing quality and developing quality improvement plans.

**Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate**

**fully in learning activities:** Nevada is following the federal requirements to ensure that eligible children with disabilities are being appropriately identified and served in least restrictive environments. Nevada Ready! Pre-K requirements stat that 8.56% of Nevada Ready! Pre-K sub-grantees' enrollment will be children with IEPs. Nevada has contracted with The Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) to supplement the sub-grantees' existing wrap around services. The comprehensive services that DPBH will provide include information and referral services, case management, community and parent engagement activities, outreach and direct services to all families participating in Nevada Ready! Pre-K programs.

In addition, Nevada Ready! Pre-K staff will provide targeted professional development to sub-grantees needing assistance with inclusion. DPBH, Nevada Ready! Pre-K staff and sub-grantees are in the process of working closely to identify existing services and service gaps so that opportunities to braid funding and supplement needed services are identified, coordinated, and implemented. Sub-grantees, districts and schools are working to braid funding, integrate services and collaborate around classroom instruction appropriate for included students.

**Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff;** NDE staff review sub-grantees' budgets to ensure that staff salaries in programs housed in districts and community providers are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff.

**Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement:** A comprehensive monitoring plan has been developed and submitted. The plan has been communicated to each of the sub-grantees. Monitoring protocols are currently being refined by the Nevada Ready! Pre-K team. Monitoring will include review of (at a minimum) programmatic and fiscal required elements. Monitoring will consist of regular, on-site visits; virtual and phone communication; submission and analysis of reports, and reviews of audit findings and fiscal expenditures. Monitoring will be used to both support sub-grantees with appropriate implementation as well as to compel sub-grantees to fully achieve their goals.

**On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that**

**promote families access to services that support their children's learning and development:** Nevada has contracted with The Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) to supplement the sub-grantees' existing wrap around services. The comprehensive services that DPBH will provide include information and referral services, case management, community and parent engagement activities, outreach and direct services to all families participating in Nevada Ready! Pre-K programs.

In addition, Nevada Ready! Pre-K staff will provide targeted professional development to sub-grantees needing assistance with inclusion, support for English learners, family engagement, and effective instruction and assessment. DPBH, Nevada Ready! Pre-K staff and sub-grantees are in the process of working closely to identify existing services and service gaps so that opportunities to braid funding and supplement needed services are identified, coordinated, and implemented.

Sub-grantees, districts and schools are working to braid funding, integrate services and collaborate around classroom instruction appropriate for included students.

**Evidence-based health and safety standards:** Nevada Ready! Pre-K programs housed in school buildings follow the district or authorizing charter's health and safety standards. Those programs housed outside of school buildings fall under the purview of State or Washoe County licensing authorities.

## Table 6 - Selection Criteria (D)(4) from NIA

Describe the number and percent of Eligible Children served and the cost per slot. Please explain if *Year 1 Target* from the application and *Year 1 Actual* in **Table 6** differ, and any approved changes in targets for Years 2-4.

Nevada projected to be able to serve a total of 980 students in Year 1 of the Preschool Development Grant. This projection included 660 seats expanded to a full day program and 240 new seats. We were able to fill 80% of the seats we projected. We served 782 students (369 expanded seats and 413 new seats).

Our biggest challenge in meeting our goals involved our largest district's inability to expand the number of state-funded pre-K seats to the number projected. Our largest provider maintains that inequity would result from having full day pre-K classrooms in the same building as half-day classrooms. They also cite space concerns. CCSD is, therefore unwilling to allow expansion of the vast majority of the state-funded pre-K classrooms. To remedy this situation, the sub-grantee for this county is working hard to recruit high-quality community based pre-K providers to participate in Nevada Ready! Pre-K, starting with community programs that are participating in QRIS and providers whose leaders are currently participating in an NDE leadership academy. United Way is projecting to provide between 140-200 seat in private licensed child care facilities in the 2016-2017 school year.

In addition, we discovered miscalculations in the Preschool Development Grant application. First, the total number of projected new seats across all sub-grantees for Year 1 was listed as 240 when it was actually 320. This miscalculation led to miscalculation of the percentage of children who were actually served (80% vs. 87%). Next, when the budget was initially calculated, funding for 40 of the seats projected by State Public Charter Schools Authority (SPCSA) for use in their northern facilities was included in the budget for Washoe (a northern county). Funding for those 40 seats have been moved to the budget for SPCSA. Finally, Clark County projected to be able to expand a total of 560 state-funded pre-K seats. The district only has a total of 540 half-day state-funded pre-K seats.

The cost per slot for the Nevada Ready! Pre-K program is \$8000 for a new, full day program and \$3900 for an extended/improved program. The \$3900 supplements existing half-day programs provided through the state-funded pre-K program and Head Start. In addition, sub-grantees are awarded an additional amount per grant year to fund discretionary items such as transportation, rent, substitutes, etc. The additional amount for Year 1 was \$1114.63 for each slot whether half- or full-day.

### **3. Collaborating with Each Subgrantee and Ensuring Strong Partnerships (Selection Criteria E of the application)**

Describe the extent to which the State has collaborated with each Subgrantee to ensure that each Subgrantee is effectively implementing High-Quality Preschool Programs (Selection Criteria E (1-9) of the application) and how the State ensures strong partnerships between each Subgrantee and LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate.

The Nevada Ready! Pre-K team has conducted formal site visits to all sub-grantees. Site visits helped to establish initial relationships among State staff and sub-grantees. In addition, the visits provided an opportunity for sub-grantees to showcase their progress to date. In addition, State staff is more aware of the challenges and roadblocks faced by the sub-grantees around important elements of the program including recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff, access to quality and appropriate professional development, and the needs and challenges of participating children and families.

Additionally, the Nevada Ready! Pre-K team includes one staff member in the north and one staff member in the south who is responsible for communicating with, supporting, and monitoring each of the sub-grantees. These team members visit and communicate with site leaders regularly, maintain close contact with mentors and supervisors who are providing QRIS services to those programs participating in the QRIS pilot, participate in on-going professional development around the needs of the sub-grantees and providers, and analyze and address challenges or concern experienced by sub-grantees.

The State's Nevada Ready! professional development coordinator is currently working on a state-wide professional development system that will be designed to monitor and address the needs of sub-grantees in a continuous fashion. In addition, this staff member is in the process of designing a framework for a Community of Practice for sub-grantees to participate in. This community will be involved in book studies and will have the opportunity to participate in in-person or virtual discussions the readings and issues and concerns around high-quality pre-K programs. We hope this professional learning opportunity will help build a strong network of professionals who can gain support through each other.

### **4. Alignment Within a Birth Through Third Grade Continuum (Section F of the application)**

Describe progress the State has made for alignment within a birth through third grade continuum in activities for birth through age five programs ((F)(1)(a-b) in the NIA) and kindergarten through third grade ((F)(2)(a-d) in the NIA).

Nevada has been working on P-3 activities since 2009. The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council is supported by seven local councils throughout the state. Nevada ECAC vision: "Nevada's children will be safe, healthy, and thriving during the first eight years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential." In cooperation with the State Board of Education, the Council is responsible for establishing guidelines to measure the school readiness of children. Membership includes Part B and Part C coordinator.

Information around P-3 has been gathered, through attendance at:

- National P-3 Institutes (in May, 2012 and August, 2012)
- NGA Birth-3 Summit (spring, 2013)

and disseminated to educators around the state via multiple mega conferences, mini-conferences, and NevAEYC events.

In 2015 Nevada's legislature passed the Read by Grade Three legislation (which includes procedures for assessing student proficiency in Reading beginning in Kindergarten, a program of intensive literacy instruction, provisions for ensuring Reading proficiency of English learners, and a learning strategists) and state-funded full

day Kindergarten (not mandatory).

OELD oversees the CCDF quality initiatives which includes targeted programs to improve quality and care for infants and toddlers. This office works to facilitates smooth and meaningful transitions from one setting to the next.

Nevada will use PDG funding to build on this important work. In 2016 the Nevada Ready! Pre-K team will contract with a national P-3 partner to develop and implement a P-3 plan which will include aligning early learning and development standards and providing professional development to state and local leaders, integrating P-3 into higher education, and reviewing and revising teaching licensing requirements for P-3 certification.

The RFP for this work is in draft stage and its anticipated release date is June, 2016. The work has been distributed into three distinct projects: planning, pilot, and professional development. One to three contractors may bid on this work. NDE plans to complete the RFP process in Oct. in order to begin work in Nov., 2016.

## Section A: Part C - Competitive Preference Priorities

### **Competitive Preference Priority 1: Contributing Matching Funds (if included in the State's approved application).**

Describe the progress the State has made on its credible plan for obtaining and using non-Federal matching funds to support the implementation of its ambitious and achievable plan during the grant period. For progress *not* made in this area, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made by the end of the grant period. Please describe any changes made to the data reported in **Table 7(a)**; explain if your *Year 1 Target* differs from the *Year 1 Actual*.

Nevada's Governor, Brian Sandoval, has submitted assurances and certifications to provide the state-required matching funds for each of the four years as follows:

Year 1 - \$2,135,288

Year 2 - \$4,727,993

Year 3 - \$6,918,816

Year 4 - \$8,983,737

for a total across four years of \$22,765,834. This amount has been fully funded for Year 1 and we have every expectation that it will be met in Year 2. No changes will be made to the matching funds certifications.

### **Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting the Continuum of Early Learning and Development (if included in the State's approved application).**

Describe progress made in creating a more seamless progression of supports and interventions from birth through third grade, such as high-quality infant and toddler care, home visitation, full-day kindergarten, and before and after care services for, at a minimum, a defined cohort of eligible children and their families within each high need community served by each Subgrantee. For progress *not* made in these areas, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made by the end of the grant period.

In 2016 Nevada will contract with a national P-3 partner. This plan will support transitioning of children address the full continuum of services for children in the state. The substance of this plan will address components of home visiting, parent education, and transitions from child care to preschool as well as transitioning of essential wrap around services to support children and families.

The State's P-3 work (which will complement Nevada's Child Care Development Funds plan) will build on the Early Learning and Development standards and the Early Childhood Crosswalk (designed to show the link between Common Core Standards and pre-K standards). A progression of professional development will be provided which reflects research and best practice in order to meet the developmental needs of infants, toddlers, preschool and school-age children that is aligned to foundational and specialized competencies including English language learners and children with disabilities. This professional development will incorporate knowledge and application of early learning and development guidelines.

Finally, the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council has developed subcommittees who will work to strengthen state-level coordination and collaboration between the various sectors and settings of early care and education programs in the states. The subcommittees' areas of focus are: Professional development, Systems, Family & Community and Early Learning.

**Competitive Preference Priority 3: Creating New High Quality State Preschool Slots (if included in the State's approved application).**

Describe progress made in using at least 50% of the State's federal grant award to create new State Preschool Program slots that will increase the overall number of new slots in State Preschool Programs that meet the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs. For progress *not* made in this area, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made by the end of the grant period.

We are on track to spend only 18.7% of our total funds requested on program administration costs which include training, contractual obligations, equipment, supplies, travel, salaries and benefits. The remaining 81.3% will be distributed directly to providers through our sub-grantees to provide high-quality preschool programs in high-needs communities.

## Section B: Budget Information

### Budget and Sustainability (Section G in the application)

1. Please provide a brief explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and its total expenditures for the reporting year. Explain carry-over funds that have not been expended or obligated from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.

We are very proud to have been able to make the amount of progress we have made in such a short period of time. Due to the late start caused by the delay in legislative approval, all involved in the Nevada Ready! Pre-K program have been working furiously to hire staff (both programmatic and fiscal) at the state and local levels to implement this program. In addition, classroom space has been secured, supplies and furniture has been ordered, and communication, registration, and transportation has been organized. Grant administration has been complicated due to new staff, new programs, new systems, and an separate calendar/reporting time line. While the grant runs on a calendar year, NDE and the sub-grantees operate on a fiscal year. Adjustments were needed to align program reporting requirements which have proven confusing for sub-grantees. We have refined and clarified our processes to simplify for our sub-grantees and ensure their draws, as well as funds drawn by NDE, are performed in a timelier manner in order to reduce carryover. We are building in professional development opportunities for sub-grantees around budget and grant administration processes that are specific for Nevada Ready! Pre-K sites for the coming year.

2. Please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State's Preschool Development Grant budget in the upcoming fiscal year (January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016).

We do not anticipate any substantive changes to the budget. We do hope to adjust some budget items in order to increase travel funds. The remote location of several of our providers requires additional funds in order to provide the appropriate amount of support via site visits and professional development opportunities.

We also hope to shift some of the funds remaining in our aid category (due to sub-grantees not meeting their projected enrollment numbers in Year 1) to other PDG-related projects that were not anticipated (Communities of Practice and increase in funding for QRIS coaches and assessors due to the increased numbers of classrooms to be rated).

3. Describe the State's progress on its plan for sustainability at the end of the grant period to ensure that the number and percentage of Eligible Children with access to High-Quality Preschool Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded, including to additional High-Need Communities.

Our goal is to be able to, by the end of the grant, show evidence that a high-quality, full-day pre-K program led by a highly qualified teacher is an effective intervention that will improve outcomes for children in high-need communities. By providing the support necessary to ensure the providers meet their quality goals and serve the number of students projected, coupled with broad communication of our accomplishments we will be positioned to leverage resources and secure legislative approval for funding necessary to sustain the program after the grant period.

4. Please provide a brief explanation of any discrepancies, if any, between the Subrecipients' approved budgets and their total expenditures for the reporting year. Explain carry-over funds that have not been expended or obligated from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.

Year 1 fund allocations were calculated in the grant according to county rather than by sub-grantee. Moreover, there were additional funds set aside (by county) for items such as transportation, rent, family training, language interpreters and substitutes, with no formula available for allocating the funds equally among sub-grantees or providers. This made allocations on a per child or per sub-grantee basis extremely difficult. We have revised the budget allocation process to provide a per-pupil allocation that includes a separate allocation for budget items that may include transportation, rent, etc. for each sub-grantee. In addition, a reporting process that incorporates a student count projection, followed by a final count date, with allocations periods twice each year will help us more accurately provide funds for sub-grantees based on actual student counts rather than solely on projections.

The formula was developed by compiling Remainder to Split funds that were allocated by county (not sub-grantee) together. This amount was then divided by the total number of slots projected across all sub-grantees. The quotient was then added on to the original per pupil amount (\$8000/ full day, \$3900/extended day) for each slot filled for a total allocation amount. For Year 2, the additional funds equal \$1114.63 per slot filled.