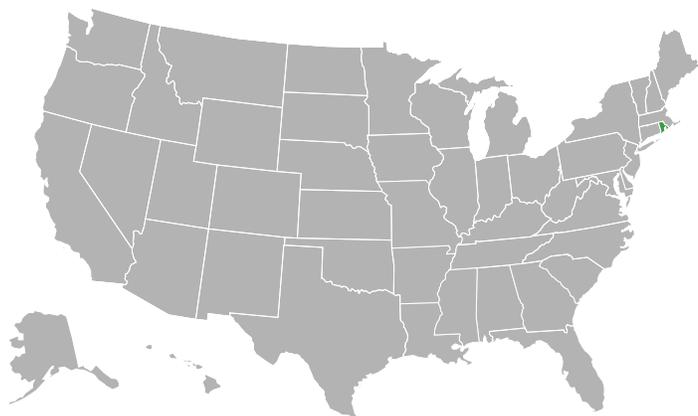


PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

FY2017 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Rhode Island



Preschool Development Grants

AUGUST 2018



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

Based on ED 524B OMB No. 1894-0003 Exp. 08/31/2020

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

General Information

1. PR/Award #: S419B150033 2. Grantee Federal Information Processing Code: _____

3. Project Title: Preschool Development Grants- Expansion

4. Grantee Name: Rhode Island Department of Education

5. Grantee Address: 255 Westminster Street

City: Providence State: Rhode Island Zip: 02903

6. Project Director Name: Mary Anne Snider

Title: Chief, Educator Excellence and Instructional Effectiveness

Phone #: (401) 222-8942 Ext.: _____ Fax #: (401) 222-3605

Email Address: maryann.snider@ride.ri.gov

Reporting Period Information

7. Reporting Period: From: 01/01/2017 To: 12/31/2017

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		
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: 07/01/2017 To: 06/30/2018

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. 08/31/2020

Grantee State: RI PR/Award #: S419B150033

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.

The third year of Rhode Island's Preschool Development Grant (PDG) focused on five main areas: continuing to expand access, further supporting high quality instructional practices, the implementation of comprehensive services, conducting the state Pre-K program evaluation, deepening itinerant special education model and evidenced based inclusion efforts. The 2016-2017 school year closed with 56 funded classrooms, in 11 communities, serving a total of 1,008 children. Of the children enrolled that year, 17% were English Language Learners, less than 1% experienced homelessness, 8% were in the child welfare system and 12% were identified as having disabilities and IEPs. During the fall of 2017, the following communities offered State Pre-K: Central Falls, Cranston, East Providence, Johnston, Providence, North Providence, Pawtucket, Newport, Warwick, West Warwick, and Woonsocket. The addition of the federal Expansion Grant funds, along with additional state funds, allowed the state to accelerate its planned expansion and for the first time to reach its projected total number of 60 classrooms, serving 1,080 children during the start of the 2017 school year. Of these children, 95 (8.7% were identified as having special needs, 18 (1.6%) are from military families, 4 (.37%) are from migrant families, 14 (1.29%) reported being homeless, 86 (7.9%) were in the child welfare system, and 153 (14%) were ELL's. Of those participating in the program, 38 (3.5%) utilized before school services, 76 (7%) afterschool services and 131 (12%) both before and afterschool services. The home languages of the children were reported as: English 738 (68%), Spanish 211 (19.5%), Portuguese 9 (.83%), Chinese 5 (.46%), Tagalong 4 (.37%), Vietnamese 2 (.18%), French 1 and 110 (10%) other. Lastly, 5 (.46%) were American Indian, 377 (34.9%) were Caucasian, 59 (5.4%) were Asian, 3 (.27%) were Pacific Islanders, 160 (14.8%) were African American, 366 (33.8%) were Hispanic and 110 (10.18%) were reported as being two or more races.

During the spring of 2016, in anticipation of the 2017-2018 school year, 4 new classrooms were awarded. This work began in January 2017, when a Request for Proposals to operate a state-funded Pre-K program was posted. Applications were due March 31st. Application reviews were conducted by the RIDE team and selected sub-grantees were notified in mid-May. The expansion increased the number of classrooms available in each community identified in the state's Pre-K application, and included additional new classrooms in Pawtucket, Warwick, Central Falls and Providence. The number of classrooms funded was informed by the needs of the community. Existing wait list data, combined with Head Start availability and overall Census data was used to determine where additional classrooms were needed. The chart below outlines the school year (SY) expansion:

Community # of classrooms # of classrooms # of classrooms # of classrooms
SY 14-15 SY 15-16 SY 16-17 SY 17-18

Central Falls 1 3 4 5

Cranston 1 2 3 3

East Providence 0 1 8 8

Johnston 0 0 1 1

Newport 2 3 3 3

North Providence 0 0 1 1

Pawtucket 1 1 5 6

Providence 5 11 18 20

Warwick 3 3 2 3

West Warwick 2 3 4 3

Woonsocket 2 5 7 7

Rhode Island 17 32 56 60

Existing Pre-K programs and new sub-grantees then began the process of recruiting families for application to the state Pre-K lottery. Throughout the year, RIDE worked closely with its Head Start partners on coordinated recruitment and data sharing, efforts established winter 2016. Additionally, it increased its efforts working with the Department of Children Youth and Families on coordinated recruitment of children in foster care. State Pre-K sub-grantees are required to actively participate in Pre-K recruitment. Pre-K applications are entered into an electronic application either directly by the parent or by the sub-grantee on behalf of the parent. RIDE staff track the number of applications entered by community on an ongoing basis. Feedback from communities also informed a series of revisions to the lottery application for the 2017-2018 school year. For example, the system now accounts for parents to indicate their preference of setting when multiple settings are available in a community, the system also accounts for multiples and accepts multiples together within a family. The 2017 lottery was conducted on July 5th, 2017. At that time, there were 2,066 applications for the 1,080 seats. At the same time, Pre-K grant agreements were being finalized for the July 1 start date, which coincides with the state fiscal year. This process included reviewing and approving proposed budgets to ensure compliance with state Pre-K budget guidelines, which ensure adequate expenditures in key areas, notably teacher salaries in order to ensure pay parity, staff time to participate in PD/TA activities, and educational materials and supplies corresponding with quality needs. By July 1, 2017, all 32 grantees and 60 classroom contracts for the 2017-2018 school year were completed. Following the Pre-K lottery which was run on July 5th, sub-grantees began contacting selected families and verifying income and residency information. Income levels in the states formula match those of the representative community, so for each classroom the number of children below poverty and above poverty varies based on that community. Sub-grantees are allowed to determine their own school start dates and all 2017-2018 classrooms were fully operational by September 8, 2017. In most cases, prior to the start of school grantees conducted a family orientation, which is a requirement of their contract as a way to welcome and orient families to the start of Pre-K.

Implementing a System of Continuous Quality Improvement

A significant focus under the state's Expansion Grant is ensuring that all RI Pre-Kindergarten classrooms operate at the highest level of quality. To this end, the following strategies are used to support this goal: comprehensive, high-quality program regulations; ongoing program monitoring; clearly defined performance goals at the program and teacher level, including defined learning outcomes for children; an aligned system of professional development supports, and an external evaluation of Pre-K impact on child outcomes. During their first year of funding, Pre-K sub-grantees applied for and received approval under the Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program regulations. These regulations meet or exceed accreditation standards and national benchmarks for Pre-K quality. The CECE approval process involves a detailed look at Pre-K program operations including a facilities visit, teacher and administrator interviews, reviews of written narratives describing program systems and policies, classroom observations using ECERS and CLASS, and on-site visits to review additional teaching practices and documents. As of spring 2017 all grantees were participating in the state's QRIS program and had applied for CECE Approval. CECE Approval is granted on a classroom basis. For the 2017 fall school year, we have 4 new classrooms that are first year applicants and will complete the approval process in the spring of 2018. All other programs are going through scheduled renewals and the

required continuous quality improvement cycle. The continuous quality improvement cycle of the state Pre-K system includes the following components: the development of what is called a 1, 2, 3, 4 plan in which programs address areas scoring under a 5 in their ECERS, CLASS assessments, and program level Quality Improvement Plans and Individual Professional Development Plans.

In addition to the above, RIDE staff conducts monitoring visits to review compliance with state Pre-K policies, which expand upon CECE regulations. During 2017, and with suggestions from Child Trends, RIDE staff worked to align the monitoring processes under CECE Approval to incorporate state Pre-K policies to create a more comprehensive monitoring system. The feedback from Child Trends helped inform several suggestions for monitoring which the state is working to incorporate moving forward. Thus far, this feedback has helped to inform the development of revised tabs in the electronic monitoring system, as well as the beginning of a conceptual plan for further rubric revisions in order to provide greater specificity on the continuum of expectations, as well as to reduce duplication.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance Supports

Using data from monitoring and past professional development initiatives, quality improvement goals for the state Pre-K system were established and a subsequent professional development vendor was selected to begin the 2015-2016 school year. The RI Department of Education selected Education Development Center's (EDC) Center for Early Learning Professionals as its professional development and technical assistance vendor. RIDE, together with the vendor implemented a services plan, informed by ECERS and CLASS data, as well as program Quality Improvement (QI) goals. The resulting plan informed a menu of services which included:

For education coordinators

- Community of Practice (COP) meetings (held 4th Thursdays of the month)
- Small group TA meetings, focusing on CECE application support/systems (held 4th Thursdays of the month)
- Program-level TA
- Classroom-level TA

For teachers and teacher assistants

- Teacher/Teacher assistant Group meetings (held 3rd Wednesdays and 4th Thursdays of the month; two meetings to accommodate schedules)
- TSG Users Group meetings (held 1st Tuesdays of the month)
- Classroom-level TA

RIDE worked with the vendor to develop an evaluation plan which would provide key information on the usefulness of services. The findings of the evaluation were first made available beginning summer 2016, and again for the second year summer of 2017. These results have been subsequently used to inform the service plan for the 2017-2018 school year.

Due to the increasing size of the Pre-K program, services have naturally been modified to meet the needs of the group. For example, beginning spring of 2016 we began to offer an end of year wrap-up, and again fall 2017 a beginning of year kick-off which functioned like a conference for grantees given the size. Participants registered as teams, and were able to choose from a variety of break-out sessions. We also featured a keynote speaker who provided content relevant to the entire group. Additionally, community of practice meetings have been established for those who are new to State Pre-K and/or their roles in order to differentiate those who have been in the program for some time and those who need more foundational content around expectations. We also implemented a RIDE Update for the 2017/2018 year, where RIDE staff make themselves available to share updates, reminders and discuss program elements with Education Coordinators and Administrators directly.

In Year 2's PDTA evaluation, there was an 81% response rate for Education Coordinators, a 91% response rate for Lead teachers and a 63% response rate for Teacher Assistants. On average, Education Coordinators worked on 6 to 7 topics with their TA provider during the course of the year. All Education Coordinators ratings of their experience with their TA provider were positive. Education Coordinators comments about the support they received from their TA specialists indicated that specialists offered a combination of knowledge, resources, and

interpersonal encouragement. Overall Education Coordinators felt that the technical assistance provided supported their program goals, and that meetings were relevant and helpful for their work. Of those that attended small group technical assistance, 82% reported the services as extremely relevant for their work. Others, provided feedback on ways to strengthen small group TA such as by creating separate tracks for new versus more experienced leaders.

Of those working directly in classrooms, the majority of respondents indicated that technical assistance was helpful or very helpful. Classroom level technical assistance was provided on a multitude of topics such as child assessment, teaching Strategies Gold, curriculum planning, classroom environments, daily schedules, inclusion etc. These most frequent areas of support requested were related to curriculum planning and child assessment. Teachers attended group technical assistance meetings, TSG user groups, and participated in in-class technical assistance. Findings based on attendance and participation reports maintained by the vendor, indicated a greater challenge is public-school grantees being able to obtain substitutes so that they could attend offerings.. Of the teachers attending the Teacher Group Meetings, 80% reported that they were extremely relevant or very relevant. For teachers attending the TSG users groups, the majority reported they were relevant and useful, although attendance was consistently lower for these sessions. Among Teacher Assistants, 94% rated working with their Technical Assistance Specialist as very helpful.

Results of the evaluation have informed some changes such as greater differentiation in topics and rigor for various participants, increasing opportunities for Education Coordinators to attend with their team, and deeper dives into specific areas identified whereby the state brought in national experts to facilitate PDTA on topics such as math, equity, and challenging behaviors.

State Pre-K Evaluation

RIDE engaged in an RFP process to select a program evaluation vendor. An RFP solicitation was released March 16, 2016. During this time a technical review committee was formed. There were five received submissions and ultimately an award was made to Child Trends on August 22, 2016. The vendor was selected based on their understanding of the issues, their experience, developed work plan, capacity and budget proposal. After receiving the award, RIDE worked with the vendor to finalize a work plan. The work plan includes a cost study, classroom quality study as well as a longitudinal child outcome study. It was determined that given the award was made the week before school was to begin, that it was too late to begin child level data collection for fall 2016. Year 1 activities, as a result, included evaluation staff focusing on program policy and monitoring recommendations, hiring and training the staff needed to conduct the evaluations, an analysis of the 2016 ECERS data in order to report on initial quality, making final selections on child level data collection tools, work towards IRB approval, and drafting the parent and teacher consent documents.

The 2017-2018 lottery application included information for families on the evaluation, as well as a consent to participate, and/or be contacted in order to receive more information. The evaluation vendor used this data, obtained from RIDE to manage the list of participating families, as well as to follow up with families who had questions about the study prior to participation. Families were identified as being in the control versus intervention group based on the initial State Pre-K lottery application and corresponding consent. Child level, and classroom quality data began being collected fall 2017. For classroom quality, both CLASS and ECERS-R scores are being used and data is being collected in partnership with the Rhode Island Association or the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC) who conducts classroom quality assessments for the states QRIS and monitoring systems already. For child level data, Child Trends is using the Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary test, the Woodcock Johnson Letter-Word Identification test, Woodcock Johnson Applied Problems and the Head Shoulders Knees and Toes assessments. Child level data collection is occurring fall 2017, spring 2018 and again late fall 2018 when the children are in kindergarten. The final evaluation results will be made available winter 2019.

Consistent Access to Comprehensive Services

All state Pre-K programs are expected to ensure that families and Pre-K children have access to additional services they may need beyond the Pre-K educational program. This expectation is outlined within state Pre-K policies and in contract language. However, there are not uniform policies and procedures across Pre-K programs, resulting in inconsistent access in some areas. In some cases, for example, Head Start grantees utilize existing internal staff for these supports, or public schools may access their nurse. Additionally, some Pre-K providers report difficulty in identifying services which are available within the state since eligibility and availability can change. As a result, this area was prioritized for improvement within the state's grant

application. Currently within the State Pre-K program, there are areas for which clear policies and procedures have been implemented. These include: the requirement that all State Pre-K children be screened within 45 days of enrollment, grantees collaboration and connection to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) for special education services, and that programs support the development of knowledge and competencies needed to implement a comprehensive services system. During the 2016-2017 school year the state worked with its grantees in order to access a Child Outreach Report, called the Environment Report, which provides specific information on the outcome of developmental screenings for children. This "Environment Reports" allows districts to directly pull live data and provide this to grantees in regards to the status of screens, flags and referrals. .

In an effort to continue to broaden its Comprehensive Services work beyond developmental screening, RIDE contracted with a consultant to facilitate the development of a statewide online referral and tracking system. The consultant began by engaging in a series of focus groups during 2016, to get a better sense of what programs currently do, assess their needs in order to meet with requirement successfully, and to begin to vet a revised system. This feedback, allowed RIDE to work with the Department of Health to begin to draft a system. Two specific goals were established for the system 1). Enable early childhood program administrators to efficiently and effectively assess family needs, to refer to and monitor Pre-K children and their family members access to community-based services and resources (special education, early intervention, home visiting, mental health, health and social services), and 2). That practitioners can maximize use of technology to support access to resource information, and electronic referrals to services where possible. Strategies to meet these goals include: developing state-level guidance and policies for a comprehensive support services system, providing tools to support programs in addressing the policies, as well as the promotion and support in the utilization the online resource directory at DOH and United Way. Work during 2017 focused on broadening those who were involved in this work, to include pediatric primary care, pediatric dentistry, and family visiting professionals who had vested interest in a database and referral system. During fall 2017, RIDE partnered with the Department of Health to share a contract for the facilitation and development of the online system. Once contracts were in place, meetings with the facilitator, the DOH and the IT developer began. This work has continued to expand, to include additional system levels partners such as the Unified Social Services Director Group, made up of community agencies such as United Way, CAP, and Lifespan. Once complete, the comprehensive services system will allow programs to identify resources, make, receive and track referrals for things such as: food scarcity, family needs for diapers, clothing, car or seats, insurance assistance, help with paying utility bills, legal help with housing, immigration, or custody/guardianship issues etc. This system will also replace the individual practices of sub-grantees and ensure more consistent access to these services across all sub-grantees throughout the state. During the time the system has been in development, State Pre-K grantees have begun to write and implement Comprehensive Services Plans within their programs. These plans speak to how grantees work together within communities, and support staff, as well as families in identifying and accessing resources for comprehensive services. During the course of 2017 grantees submitted draft plans to the state for review and revision, and technical assistance was provided on implementation.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The 2016 state Pre-K expansion year was the largest yet, and during 2017 we continued work with some of the 2016 selected grantees. We learned that public schools more often experienced challenges in implementing the levels of quality required for the grant. The 2017 selected grantees, were all existing grantee agencies which added classrooms, and this made implementation for them somewhat easier. During 2016-2017 the state added more public school grantees than ever before. This brought with it new challenges in navigating teacher contracts, large internal systems to ensure that all involved understood the specific State Pre-K requirements. Public schools, in addition to our existing community based agencies and Head Starts, remain essential State Pre-K partners, however, there are nuances which must be worked through in order to implement the State Pre-K model with fidelity. For example, we found finding substitutes was more challenging for public schools, which made it difficult for their teachers to attend PDTA services. Some public schools also had to work with their teacher unions related to sharing classroom quality data from CLASS and ECERS, on the implementation of lesson plans and in participation in the evaluation.

During the transition from the 2016 to 2017 school year, we had a transition in staff who supported Teaching Strategies Gold use. While RIDE staff internally absorbed this work for a period of time, a consultant was brought on during 2017 to resume this work. However, this still required a period of transition and learning, as well as everyone becoming more familiar with the new platform Teaching Strategies released during 2017.

The state continued work in using formative assessment data to make ongoing referrals throughout the year, and in supporting further screening and team evaluation. This resulted in a total of 499 children who were referred to special education and of this 174 children in the state Pre-K communities being found eligible for special education services. During the 2018 calendar year, we are working on further enhancing reporting within the states KidsNet system to be able to filter this data specifically for state Pre-K children.

Conclusion

Rhode Island has been able to leverage its systems work under the RTT-ELC grant in order to utilize the existing systems of support for all state Pre-K grantees, as well as to build upon and continue work from lessons learned. During 2016 and 2017, the state was able to make further progress on services and supports for families and practitioners, which were made available to state Pre-K grantees.



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. 08/31/2020

Grantee State: RI

PR/Award #: S419B150033

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, 2017.

Rhode Island's Pre-K program is a mixed income model where some enrolled children are in families with incomes above 200% of poverty and are subsequently paid for using state dollars. The states PDG application targets were set using estimates that 20% of children selected via the lottery would be above 200% of poverty and therefore ineligible for federal PDG funding. The program has subsequently mixed federal and state dollars, and as a result, has been able to ensure mixed income classrooms. The program design, is built around evidence that mixed income classrooms are beneficial to all children enrolled, and that classroom should be representative of the broader community. The mixed income model will continue to be used as a philosophical foundation beyond the PDG grant. Rhode Island's enrollment goal for the 2015-2016 school year included 763 children, 2016-2017 included 1,008 children which was more than the anticipated 954 children, and 2017-2018 included 1,080 children which is the maximum number of children the program plans to serve under PDG. The state was able to expand faster than proposed in its original grant for the 2016-2017 year due to cost savings in program operations.

A substantial amount of preparation went into the start of the 2016 and 2017 school years, particularly related to discussing opportunities for new grantees. Prior to awards being made to grantees, state staff met with districts to explore their capacity and interest in implementing State Pre-K. We also worked closely with community childcare programs to explore space which could be utilized for classrooms in the catchment area. Updates were shared with the Department of Education Board, Early Learning Council, Children's Cabinet, and Director's Network among others. An expansion, such as the one we saw in 2016 required additional infrastructure development which continued into the 2017 school year. The state ensured that there were adequate professional development offerings available and that there were resources specific to those implementing Pre-K programs for the first time, as well as for the more seasoned providers. The expansion meant that there were many new individuals involved in implementing the program, which required a substantial amount of relationship building, as well as program and policy implementation support. This meant, not only working to build the capacity and understanding of direct service staff, but also behind the scenes registration and attendance officers, public school superintendents and school boards, and presidents/CEO's of community based organizations. There were regular meetings with many district administrators, RIDE school facilities staff, McKinney Vento staff, and food program personnel to ensure that program requirements were being met.

The 2017 year, included the addition of four new classrooms, for a total of 72 additional slots, all with existing grantees. This made the ramp up for the fall of 2017 significantly easier than the year before as all of these grantees have implemented State Pre-K before, and were familiar with the programs requirements and grant procedures. The additional classrooms were awarded to:

- Child Inc, Warwick (Child Inc is a long time Pre-K grantee but the use of this site in Warwick is new) (18

children)

- Pawtucket Public Schools (18 children)
- Central Falls Public schools (18 children)
- Children's Friend- Berkshire (18 children)

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). States should include detailed information on ALL structural elements.

The Rhode Island State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Program has two eligibility requirements. Children must be 4 years of age by September 1 of the relevant school year (making them eligible to attend Kindergarten in the following school year) and must reside in a community where State Pre-K is offered. Since the RI State Pre-K Program is not yet funded to support universal access for all eligible four-year-old children, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) developed a statewide recruitment plan, regional community plans implemented by grantees, and a child application lottery system to randomly select children from eligible communities to fill State Pre-K seats. The recruitment processes seeks to engage all families, including families of children with disabilities, children experiencing homelessness and those involved in child welfare, in entering child lottery applications. To ensure families of children with disabilities are recruited, RIDE coordinates recruitment efforts with eligible community school districts, the RI Section 619 State Coordinator, the RI Special Education Advisory Committee, and community organizations that support families of children with disabilities, (i.e. the Rhode Island Parent Information Network). RIDE works diligently statewide to share the message that high quality Pre-K benefits all children, and shares associated ACF and ED resources reinforcing this message via its social media streams. For the 2016 school year, 12% of the children were identified with an IEP. For the children starting the 2017 school year, the State Pre-K enrollment percentage of eligible children with disabilities is (95 of 1,008) 9.4%. The RI statewide average for four-year-olds of 8.11%, which is higher than the last available national average (FY12) of children with disabilities which is 6.4%.

During the 2017 year, RIDE continued its support to state Pre-K grantees on best practices in early childhood special education. During 2017 a professional development offering titled "Supporting Children with Disabilities with Screening, Referral and Service Delivery" was provided to all state Pre-K grantees. The agenda including the following elements: what children with disabilities need, knowing your students, child outreach screening, the referral process and provision of special education services- Itinerant Early Childhood System (IECS). During this offering we shared a newly available report through the state KidsNet System called an Environment Reports, which grantees are required to obtain from the school district and use for tracking referrals to special education. During this event, we also recruited for participants who were interested in attending the PD offerings "The Itinerant Early Childhood Special Education Service Delivery Model" (offered twice) and "Intro to the Itinerant Early Childhood Special Education Service Delivery Model (IECSE) for General EC Teachers" (also offered twice). The "Intro" course was a two-session course on the roles of special educators and general education teachers, an introduction and rationale to the model, and information on alignment with existing high quality early learning programs. The other course was developed for special educators and therapists to take a deeper look at the model and practices. These courses require a commitment from schools and programs in that the administrator must sign up to attend with their teacher, as well as to participate in the technical assistance services in order to implement the model with fidelity. Participants committed to receiving at least 1½ years of targeted and individualized technical assistance to bridge the gap between theory and practice and to support the implementation of quality inclusive practices. The training and technical assistance helped to support efforts to ensure that young children with disabilities are able to access and actively participate in general early childhood environments. This work allowed the state to move forward its Itinerant

Early Childhood Special Education services ensure that young children with disabilities are able to access and actively participate in general early childhood environments by embedding the necessary support, service, and intervention within the daily classroom activities. There were a total of 11 general education State Pre-K teachers who participated in the two-day session, and one program administrator who participated in the special educator session. Of the 11 state Pre-K communities, this far three have committed to implementing the model fully- West Warwick, Woonsocket and the state's largest community of Providence. Additionally, during the 2016-2017 school year, the 619 Coordinator, in partnership with several trainers and consultants within the state, continued work conducting The Inclusive Classroom Profile. Five State Pre-K grantees participated in the pilot. The Profile was used as a quality improvement tool in order to further support high quality inclusion experiences for children in the program.

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

In February 2017, the state released another RFP with the goal of awarding 4 additional classrooms to reach its projected program growth goal of 60 classrooms. A total of 14 agencies submitted applications requesting a total of 20 classrooms, 8 of which were re-compete classrooms and 12 of which were newly requested classrooms. A total of four agencies were awarded the four classrooms, and all 8 re-compete classrooms were re-awarded. This built off the states previous expansion where in February of 2016, the state posted its Request for Proposals to operate additional state Pre-K classrooms. The state was looking to add an additional 18 classrooms, serving 454 children. In response to the RFP, a total of 22 agencies submitted applications requesting a total of 47 classrooms. The review resulted in a total of 30 grantees implementing 56 classrooms for the 2016 year, which was the states largest expansion year.

Once awarded, sub-grantees then began the process of recruiting children for enrollment. Beginning in April and extending through June 2017, RIDE led, managed and monitored the initial implementation of an online child lottery application system. This oversight included monitoring the efforts of sub-grantees to recruit and enroll hard-to-reach families within eligible communities. Families were recruited to enter applications for eligible children online or by submitting hard copy applications at any of the Pre-K sub-grantees in their community. On July 7th, 2017, the child lottery was held, producing lists of selected children and waitlists for each sub-grantee. This year's lottery was delayed by several days because of a delay in a final state budget being approved. However, once the budget was approved and the lottery could be pulled, sub-grantees then took their enrollment information and implemented required Pre-K lottery enrollment procedures; including age, residency, and income verification, to finalize their enrollment lists. As sub-grantees moved through this process, if families declined the opportunity to enroll their children, sub-grantees worked through wait-lists in order to confirm and enroll the next child on the list, all the while communicating with RIDE these updates. RIDE in turn, worked very closely with the states Head Start grantees and the Region 1 ACF office to maximize enrollment across both programs in cases when Pre-K was full, but more children needed care and learning arrangements.

Rhode Island's recruitment and enrollment strategies have proven broadly effective in past years, but this year's lottery also highlighted areas for improvement. The fact that wait lists had been exhausted, and yet demographics indicated that not all children were being served within a community presented an opportunity to think through additional opportunities to strengthen recruitment. We used this information to work on strengthening existing statewide collaborations, as well as to gather information on why particular families who may have been eligible, did not proceed with enrollment. Early in the year, state specialists worked with Kids Count, the states leading policy and advocacy organization, and internal RIDE staff to better understand potential barriers to applying and enrolling. The team surveyed grantees on topics such as transportation, language barriers and to analyze data including birth rates, school enrollment rates etc. We identified that transportation was not as significantly a perceived barrier to applying as we had originally thought, as reported by grantees. We have however begun to work through barriers, which may have led parents to decline a slot once initially offered it. Some of these enhancements within the states lottery system are anticipated for the 2018-2019 lottery.

This was also the first year that the lottery system accounted for the selection of multiples. Families were able to apply for more than one child within a single application so that when one was selected through the random lottery, both children were selected for the same program. This was also the first year that programs could indicate their preference for a program in rank order, if there were multiple program choices in a given community.

Additionally, changes we made during the selection and contracting with grantees assisted us with being better able to serve applications in selected communities where application numbers were high, and to shift seats where wait lists were consistently exhausted. For example, we shifted one classroom from West Warwick to Warwick to better accommodate demand, and all new classrooms were awarded in communities where there were consistently longer wait lists.

There were several exciting events which brought attention to early care and education in the state during 2016. In the spring 2016 Governor Raimondo held an Early Learning Summit which brought together stakeholders from across the state to discuss the states accomplishments and investments in early learning. Additionally, Kids Count in collaboration with the Governor's Office held a press conference at one of the State Pre-K grantee sites where legislators could tour the program and learn more about the importance of high quality early learning. The Governor Office has consistently been speaking about and supporting State Pre-K as a strategy in the state's Third Grade Reading Plan. The Third Grade Reading Plan was launched in fall 2017 and addresses core action steps to support 75% of third-graders reading at grade level by 2025. Governor Raimondo's plan focusses on four specific and complementary strategies aimed at doubling the state's third grade reading proficiency level in eight years. The strategies include:

- School Readiness- Ensuring all children are ready to learn in school
- School Success- Providing all children with high-quality literacy instruction in and out of school
- Safety Net Services- Effectively serving young children at high-risk with state-wide screening, referral and response systems
- Community Engagement- Engage family and community members within a year-round campaign to prepare their children for school and success in school.

State Pre-K is a stated goal under School Success with an ongoing hope to continue expansion through 2025, based on future state budget allocations.

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 2017-18 school year.

Using a combination of state and federal PDG funds, Rhode Island’s state Pre-K program expanded, from 56 classrooms in the 2015-2016 year serving 1,008 to 60 classrooms in the 2016-2017 year serving 1,080 children. The total number of sub-grantees for the 2016-2017 reporting period is outlined below:

Community

of classrooms SY 16-17 Number of Children % of Total Children

Central Falls 4, 54, 5.3%

Cranston 3, 36, 3.5%

East Providence 8, 144, 14.2%

Johnston 1, 18, 1.7%

Newport 3, 36, 3.5%

North Providence 1, 18, 1.7%

Pawtucket 5, 90, 8.9%

Providence 18, 324, 32.14%

Warwick 2, 36, 2.3%

West Warwick 4, 54, 5.3%

Woonsocket 7, 126, 12.5%

Rhode Island 56, 1008

Community

of classrooms SY 17-18 Number of Children % of Total Children

Central Falls 5, 90, 8.3%

Cranston 3, 54, 5%

East Providence 8, 144, 13.3%

Johnston 1, 18, 1.6%

Newport 3, 54, 5%

North Providence 1, 18, 1.6%

Pawtucket 6, 108, 10%

Providence 20, 360, 33.33%

Warwick 3, 54, 5%

West Warwick 3, 54, 5%

Woonsocket 7, 126, 11.6%

Rhode Island 60, 1080

During the start of the 2017 school year, the state served an additional 72 children, for a total of 1,080 children. This brought the state up to its fully anticipated number of children being served for the Program through the remainder of PDG.

We have found that word of mouth has helped spread the word about the program among families. New families relocating to the state of RI seem to be familiar with State Pre-K from their previous states and call the department to learn more. The state has also worked closely with practitioners working with families to share information about the program. Pediatricians, Early Intervention providers, social workers, foster care workers, the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (QRIS grantee), and the states 211, just to name a few, share information about the program and eligibility criteria with families. Rhode Island has a strong, and small, early childhood network which helps with continuity across the state, and the consistent sharing of information with families. Additionally, we maintain a list of families interested in applying for the following school year using a brief SurveyMonkey families can access on the RIDE website. When the lottery opens, RIDE uses this to notify families that they may apply. During the 2016 and 2017 school year, grantees were further encouraged during communities of practice to coordinate recruitment efforts and leverage contacts when in the same community. RIDE partnered by offering feedback on community plans, ensuring district Robo calls were made, leveraging its social media and state agency contacts as well.

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 3 APR, grantees will provide disaggregated data on the school readiness of the children enrolled and served by the grant. This may include information collected about the children enrolled and received services by the grant during the 2016-17 preschool year. States may provide data from a sample of children (e.g., a sample being used for any evaluation).

In the Year 3 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.

Rhode Island defines school readiness according to the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS) which outline expectations for what children should know, understand and be able to do at 60 months, when they transition into Kindergarten. The RIELDS outline the nine key knowledge and skill areas (Domains), as well as the specific Learning Goals for children at the end of Pre-K. These 9 domains of school readiness which are: Physical Health and Motor, Social and Emotional, Language, Literacy, Cognitive, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Creative Arts. The RIELDS, are aligned with the Rhode Island adopted Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts/Literacy & Mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards and recently developed SEL Standards. Additionally, RIDE believes that kindergarten readiness is not just about the readiness of children, it is also about the readiness of schools to receive all children. In Rhode Island, the only requirement to participating in kindergarten is that they must be 5 on or before September 1st.

Rhode Island completed its participation in the K-3 Assessment Consortium led by North Carolina shortly after the ends of its RTT-ELC grant. During the 2016-2017 school year the state conducted feedback sessions (during March and April 2017) on the supports needed to gather and analyze data in the five areas of learning and development: approaches to learning, cognition, language and communication, physical/motor, and social-emotional development for each grade level. In 2016, forty-one Rhode Island K-3 teachers volunteered to

participate in the K-3 Formative Assessment Field Test Project. The K-3 Formative Assessment System drew on many different kinds of evidence (observations, conversations, work samples, and tasks) from many different sources to shed light on students' learning progress. During this field test year teachers were required to assess students in the fall and winter of the school year. All the teachers as well as administrators received training from the Center for Learning and Development of SRI Education, a partner of the North Carolina Consortium.

In addition, the state used information from the Kindergarten Entry Profile Implementation Plan conducted by The Policy Equity Group. One of the biggest take-aways from the report was the need to acknowledge that the KEP was part of a larger context, which must focus on implementing developmentally appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment. As a result, the state used funding from the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge to work with EDC to develop an approach that began with the state's first ever kindergarten conference this past September and continued with piloting an interdisciplinary, Common Core-aligned kindergarten curriculum developed by Boston Public Schools (BPS) in twenty-one classrooms across the state. This pilot project provided opportunities for Kindergarten teachers in participating schools to take part in professional development led by experienced coaches from BPS's Early Childhood Department. These teachers also received school-based coaching through the Center for Early Learning Professionals through December 2016. RIDE was also able to secure some additional funding outside PDG to support the continuation of this work through the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

Given that results from the K-3 Assessment Consortium feedback sessions indicated a degree of modification would need to be made to the tool for ongoing use in Rhode Island, and that the Governor's budget has not funded this work, the state is currently using Teaching Strategies Gold data to evaluate progress made on school readiness indicators. During 2017 RIDE established a Master Price Agreement with Teaching Strategies, who was the only vendor who responded to the state's Request for Information for a K-3 formative assessment tool. The state has used Teaching Strategies Gold for State Pre-K since 2009. Under the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant, the state began working with Teaching Strategies to align its 2013 Early Learning and Development Standards with the tool. An alignment document has been finalized for use by the field in 2016, and was shared and used in PD/TA activities. During 2016, RIDE removed the requirement for teachers to obtain reliability on the tool, primarily because results demonstrated that this requirement didn't yield meaningful impacts on formative assessment skills. Instead, during 2016 and 2017 RIDE continued to provide intensive monitoring, and PD/TA services on formative assessment. RIDE worked with Teaching Strategies to make the transition to the new online platform fall of 2017, and has contracted with a new consultant to support programs use of the tool. RIDE is cautious in using this data to concretely analyze children's school readiness, because the ongoing development of formative assessment skills remains a key goal in the State Pre-K program although significant progress has been made. Careful interpretation is required when using TSG data to measure children's progress in being ready for kindergarten within the state because TSG is highly dependent on the user's familiarity and expertise with the tool. It is for this reason that the state will continue to provide its model of intensive monitoring, PD and TA, particularly for new grantees and first time users. RIDE continues to support fidelity of the tool through monitoring both on and off site, ongoing community of practice meetings and through the use of two online professional development offerings developed in 2016, offered through the state's PD/TA provider, the Center for Early Learning Professionals. Session 1 is titled "Assessment in Early Childhood Settings" and Session 2 is titled "Formative Assessment in Early Childhood Settings". These courses were developed closely with RIDE and are available to all professionals within the state.

In looking at the spring 2017 data, data from TSG on children's readiness is as follows:

State Pre-K Spring 2017

K Readiness Data

Domain Range % Average %

Social and Emotional

Below Widely Held Expectations

2.8-100

3.9

Social and Emotional
Meeting Widely Held Expectations
37.5-100
96.1

Physical
Below Widely Held Expectations
7.9-100
1.6

Physical
Meeting Widely Held Expectations
33.3-100
98.4

Language
Below Widely Held Expectations
2.8-100
5.6

Language
Meeting Widely Held Expectations
33.3-100
94.4

Cognitive
Below Widely Held Expectations
5-100
2.3

Cognitive
Meeting Widely Held Expectations
37.5-100
97.7

Literacy
Below Widely Held Expectations
11-100
2.4

Literacy
Meeting Widely Held Expectations
37.5-100
97.6

Math
Below Widely Held Expectations
11.1-100
9.8

Math
Meeting Widely Held Expectations
10.4-100
90.2

**State Pre-K Spring 2017
K Readiness Data**

Domain White Black Asian Hispanic 2 or more races English Learners Children with Disabilities
S/E Below WHE 5 5 4 5 3 19 8

S/E Meeting WHE 95 95 96 95 97 81 92

Physical Below WHE 2 1 1 2 0 0 5

Physical Meeting WHE 98 99 99 98 100 100 95

Language Below WHE 6 8 8 8 2 16 10

Language Meeting WHE 94 92 92 92 98 84 90

Cognitive Below WHE 6 4 3 5 5 17 5

Cognitive Meeting WHE 94 96 97 95 95 83 95

Literacy Below WHE

4
3
8
7
0
13
12

Literacy Meeting WHE

96
97
92
93
100
87
88

Math Below WHE

5
7
9
10
0
10
7

Math Meeting WHE

95
93
91
90
100
90
93

****No data available for Native Hawaiian, American Indian or Alaskan Native**

In the GPRA data table we have reported that 970 children were ready for kindergarten. This total represents the total number of children who across dimensions met widely held expectations at 60 months.

Longitudinal Data System

In addition to the above, using RTT-ELC funds, the state has developed a longitudinal integrated data system, which tracks children at birth who are born in a Rhode Island Hospital, or through their pediatricians office when they begin receiving well child visits in the state. This allows the state to track children across services and throughout their school education. Upon entry into either State Pre-K or Kindergarten, all children are assigned a state unique identifier, or SASID, which allows the state to connect children to its State Pre-K intervention and through to graduation. This data is being used by the Children's Cabinet, the Governors Third Grade Reading team, as well as researchers at Brown University to track long-term outcomes.

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.

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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.

Rhode Island's 2016 efforts to ensure quality focused on 1) implementing and continuing to improve the coordinated state monitoring process, 2) supporting programs on use of the states integrated data system, called the Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS) for the purposes of applying for CECE approval, and 3) redesigning, based on previous feedback and evaluation results, a revised PD/TA plan.

The CECE regulations are the program expectations which State Pre-K programs are required to meet within their first year of Pre-K operation. These regulations meet or exceed national accreditation standards and benchmarks for high-quality Pre-K. The Annual CECE Approval process is a progressive approval process and contains the following components: written application, facilities visit, objective classroom observations using ECERS and CLASS, and an on-site verification visit. The process includes comprehensive review of current policies and procedures that address: Physical Facilities; Health, Safety, and Nutrition; Enrollment and Staffing; Staff Qualifications and Ongoing Professional Development; Administration; Curriculum; Child Assessment; and Family Engagement. In addition, CECE Approved classrooms must achieve a minimum of an average score of 5 on the ECERS-R in order to receive approval, a State Pre-K contractual deliverable. CLASS assessments are also conducted, although the state does not currently require a benchmark score for CECE approval or as part of the State Pre-K contract. The CECE Approval process results in comprehensive monitoring of Pre-K program operations at both a program/school and classroom level. As a result, the Standards contribute to not only classroom quality improvements but to overall program improvements, even for non-state Pre-K classrooms.

Once selected as a state Pre-K sub-grantee, all Pre-K Programs engage in a program-level continuous quality improvement process. As outlined in CECE regulations, every state Pre-K Program must engage in a comprehensive self-assessment process "to determine its compliance with the structural and educational program standards contained within the RIDE CECE Standards for Preschool Program approval, as well as any other standards and regulations governing the program and the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and families. This assessment shall include a review and analysis of program-wide child assessment information that reveals patterns and trends. The process shall involve families and staff" (RIDE CECE Standard 5.14).

In 2016 and 2017, new sub-grantees worked over the spring to complete their applications for approval. New grantees for the 2016-2017 school year began their applications during the summer months and through early fall 2016, those awarded summer 2017 began that summer with applications due late fall 2017. All used the integrated data system, ECEDS, to manage and maintain their applications for approval. As part of the CECE application process, facilities and objective observational assessments (ECERS and CLASS) were conducted in each new classroom, as well as for any grantees where there was turnover of the lead teaching staff. Sub-grantees used this data to develop and submit action plans delineating their plans to address ECERS and CLASS priority area findings. Throughout the CECE Approval process, program information was shared with the Pre-K

staff specialist to ensure all Pre-K quality benchmarks were being met, as well as to provide additional support when needed. The CECE Approval process continues for these programs with onsite verification visits, and if needed, repeated quality observational measures. RIDE's Early Childhood Coordinator, oversees and manage this application and approval process. Additionally, as part of the CECE approval process RIDE will conduct onsite monitoring of sub grantees.

In addition to CECE program regulations, state Pre-K sub-grantees are required to comply with additional expectations specific to the implementation of a state Pre-K classroom. State Pre-K policies delineate those additional expectations and cover the following areas: child enrollment, attendance, comprehensive services and interventions, developmental screening, grants and contracting, budget development and fiscal monitoring, technical assistance and professional development participation, kindergarten transition and participation in program evaluation. The ECEDS data system was also used to monitor and track the additionally layered on State Pre-K requirements. During the fall of 2016 revised monitoring policies and protocols were implemented. Implementation of the new monitoring plan highlighted opportunities where additional grantee guidance would be beneficial. As a result, state Pre-K staff developed a series of guidance materials, which began to be distributed to programs fall 2017. Additionally, State Pre-K policy specific topics were discussed during the kick-off and wrap up, for example suspension and expulsion and implicit bias, comprehensive services, staff support, recruitment etc.

RIDE has historically provided intensive technical assistance to all programs during their first year in the state Pre-K Program. The primary purpose of the technical assistance was to focus on supporting programs in successfully implementing the State Pre-K policies and CECE Program Regulations, and supporting improvement in areas identified through program evaluation. The state continued its relationship during 2016-2017 with Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) Center for Early Learning Professionals to provide professional development and technical assistance (PDTA) services to all State Pre-K sub-grantees. The state used available state Pre-K program data including child developmental screening data, formative assessment data, classroom quality observational measures data and program monitoring data, to inform its continuous quality improvement (QI) process. This analysis led to the development of the 2016-2017 school year state Pre-K program Quality Improvement (QI) goals and associated measures. Program- and teacher-level QI goals target the following areas: child assessment systems and formative assessment practices, coordination of comprehensive services for State Pre-K children and families in need, provision of data-informed RI Early Learning and Development Standards-based curriculum which emphasizes early teaching of social emotional competencies, measurable child outcomes, supporting access to and differentiation of children for children with special needs, achieving CECE approval.

Once the goals and measures were identified, EDC implemented these goals as part of their work plan, as well as aligned their evaluation to these goals accordingly. With the Program QI Plan information, EDC's TA consultants began site visits to conduct individual needs assessments with Pre-K Program sub-grantees. During these initial visits, program- and classroom-level improvement plans were aligned with the State Pre-K Program QI plan and action steps were identified to address all goals. With all improvement plans in place, TA consultation continued with monthly technical assistance visits, revising and updating goals based on the availability of new data. The monthly visits included review and planning related to the required State Pre-K/CECE application, approval and monitoring process. EDC provided an evaluation of their services, aligned to these QI goals for the 2016-2017 year. State Pre-K staff meet monthly with EDC to monitor each State Pre-K Program sub-grantee's ongoing activities, as well as to formulate responsive PDTA activities. Thus far, responsive PDTA activities have included: the development of both small and large group communities of practice meetings for teachers and teacher assistants, as well as for education coordinators and administrators, a peer mentor model which continues to be used this year, in addition to on-site technical assistance. Additionally, programs are assigned mentors, which allow new state Pre-K grantees to seek peer support and learning opportunities from more experienced program leaders and previous grantees. We have also built into the schedule a regular RIDE Update, which allows state staff to share pertinent updates directly with grantees.

Additional program support is being provided through consultants with specific expertise. In response to needs articulated in the community, several new early learning and development standards courses were developed for those working in State Pre-K classrooms, as well as those with state teaching certification. These courses included: "RIELDS for Certified Educators", "RIELDS for Certified Administrators", and "Pre-K to K Transition

Standards” course. These courses have also been developed to further promote collaboration between Pre-K and K teachers in order to foster stronger transitions and deeper understanding of each other's roles. Resources from the states Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant allowed these courses to be designed by December 2016, and implemented summer and fall 2017. At the time of this report, each of these courses has been offered once to grantees and external stakeholders.

Rhode Island remains committed to evaluating its state Pre-K Program to determine the impact on child outcomes and program quality. In 2014, the state worked with the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) to develop a plan for external evaluation using a randomized control trial (RCT) design. This design uses the “gold standard” in research to garner the true effects of the state Pre-K. This evaluation will provide Rhode Island with robust program quality and child outcome data to inform revisions to Pre-K Program policies or practices and quality improvement areas and supports needed. During the 2016 year, the state released an RFP for evaluation vendor and selected Child Trends. Working with Child Trends, RIDE finalized its evaluation plan the fall of 2016, and subsequently Child Trends began work to obtain IRB approval and begin implementation design. The evaluation plan's components are: (1) Classroom Quality Study, (2) Longitudinal Child Outcomes Study, and (3) Cost Study. Year 1 activities include evaluation staff reviewing State Pre-K written program standards, monitoring systems, and quality systems to assess their clarity, objectivity and ease of measurement. Additionally, evaluators conducted an analysis of the 2016 ECERS data in order to report on initial quality make final selections on child level data collection tools, and work towards IRB approval, and ensuring data collection procedures and forms were finalized for use in 2017. Classroom quality and child level data collection began fall 2017, with the Child Trends team traveling to Rhode Island to provide training and support to the in-state data collection team. Most of the data assessors are being trained through a partnership with the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children, and supervised jointly by Child Trends.

In order to further support leadership development within the state, and alignment between Pre-K and the upper grades, RIDE utilized Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge funds to develop a Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Education Leadership for Child Care Administrators, Education Coordinators, and Principals. The program intends to provide content in order to support an understanding of the developmental and learning needs of young children, the pivotal roles of family and community in early learning, and effective strategies for strengthening teaching and learning. This Certificate model design was completed in December 2016. It includes a total of 18 credits, and requirements to complete the following courses: ECL 501 Early Childhood Development: Theory and Research, ECL 502 Leadership Strategies: Early Childhood Education, ECL 503 Early Childhood Curriculum: Leading Improvement 1, ECL 504 Family/Community Partnerships: Early Childhood Leadership, ECL 505 Early Childhood Curriculum: Leading Improvement 2, and ECL 506 Supervision of Early Childhood Teachers. Due to some administration changed at Rhode Island College the anticipated cohort start date for the program will be fall 2018.

During the 2016-2017 school year, RIDE continued its work aligning early learning with K-12, and enhancing the availability of high quality instructional materials. For example, during 2017 RIDE staff worked on the development of a set of social and emotional learning standards for use in K-12, aligned to the RIELDS. RIDE had staff from the early learning team participate on the development team, so as to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment. A set of Standards were developed which reflected the continuation of RIELDS goals.

During 2017 RIDE engaged in another Request for Information (RFI) for the purpose of reviewing and adding additional curricula options to its alignment report. The state received a total of 7 submissions, which included updated publications of previous reviewed curricula, as well as new submissions. RIDE engaged a team of staff as well as educators in the review and scoring of the submissions. The findings were subsequently published in an updated 2017 report on the RIDE website. Additionally, during 2017 RIDE also contracted with a consultant to do a review and alignment to the Boston Public Schools K-1 curricula. The curricula has received significant national and international attention, and was the basis for work in supporting the states kindergarten teachers with instructional practices which were developmentally appropriate. In order to measure the curricula against the same previously established standards used in the previous curricula reviews, the consultant used the same templates and documents included in the RFI. This work is currently underway and scoring of the curricula will occur in 2018.

RIDE also convened a group of stakeholders during 2017 to develop a series of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) early learning guidance. While the state's plan only spoke to the required provisions within the law, this guidance speaks to the opportunities as well as provides guidance on the early learning provisions of the law. As part of this work, a development team from across child care, Head Start, public schools and state agencies came together to develop a four part series of guidance. This guidance includes an overview of the law and the early learning provisions, a series of evidenced based interventions (including State Pre-K) for which Title funding can be used (the federal degree of evidence document was used in the creation), an alignment to the states program standards and Head Start standards section 1302, and Pre-K to K transition guidance. These tools were added to a new page on the RIDE website during 2017, and were shared at the fall 2017 Early Learning Council meeting.

The Governors Third Grade R

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.

As one of the newer states to develop a state Pre-K Program, Rhode Island was able to learn from the experiences of states which had implemented Pre-K before Rhode Island launched its Pre-K Program in 2009. The resounding message of these Pre-K pioneers was that it was easier to increase access than to increase quality. This wisdom and the significant research evidence that only high-quality programs produce child outcomes were key factors in the state's decision to implement a Pre-K design that prioritized and supported quality structural requirements. Thus, Rhode Island's Pre-K Program model meets all of the criteria outlined in the Federal Definition of a High Quality Preschool Program. Rhode Island selects all of its Pre-K Program sub-grantees through a competitive Request for Proposals process targeted to the highest need communities in the State. This ensures that Pre-K sub-grantees are programs/schools best positioned to meet and maintain the high-quality requirements of RI's Pre-K model.

Additionally, Rhode Island was able to leverage its structural quality elements developed under the RTT-ELC grant. This includes its 2013 Early Learning and Development Standards, revised Program Standards, State Longitudinal Data System, family engagement resources, quality improvement grant dollars, facilities supports, and professional development and technical assistance services, college scholarships, and comprehensive assessment Systems. RTT-ELC funds were used to enhance and augment key areas within the system such as prepared aspiring as well as participating State Pre-K programs to send teachers to school, repair hazardous playgrounds, purchase technology to participate in the states online systems. The grant allowed the State Pre-K program to participate in a pilot of the early childhood mental health system, called Success. The Success project was implemented by Bradley Hospital and was developed and refined under the RTT-ELC grant. The SUCCESS project now serves as a key grantee, supporting State Pre-K children, teachers and families with a variety of social and emotional needs.

A comprehensive system of programmatic monitoring is used to ensure compliance with the contracted deliverables, state Pre-K policies and CECE Approval regulations. This system of monitoring begins with the sub-grantee contract, which includes required assurances and specified deliverables. Sub-grantees are awarded contracts for a period of three years; however, the state reserves the right to defund a sub-grantee for non-performance with regard to either programmatic or fiscal requirements. Any defunded programs will be re-competed in the annual RFP process used to select additional classrooms. Additionally, at the end of each three-year grant cycle, sub-grantees are required to re-compete, regardless of past performance, so as to ensure the state's ongoing ability to select the highest quality classrooms for participation in the state Pre-K program. Once selected as specified in sub-grantees contracts, the sub-grantee is required to "Implement RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) standards provisionally or fully approved program for a minimum of 180 days for at least 6 hours per day. This includes: submitting an application by the start of the school year, completing the approval process and maintaining all program-level and classroom-level standards as specified in the 2013 RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Programs Standards for Approval, including the specific staffing qualifications as identified in this RFP." RIDE CECE program standards detail comprehensive expectations for high-quality educational programming and align with PDG requirements. The approval process includes analysis of program level documents; onsite visits to assess facilities, classroom environment, teacher-child interactions, and classroom level compliance with CECE standards. In the initial approval year, it is possible for a program to receive three to four onsite visits. Approvals are granted for a maximum of three years, but annual renewal requires the submission of updated documents and assurances that classroom quality and compliance with CECE standards are maintained. In approval years two and three, an on-site monitoring visit will be conducted to verify that compliance with CECE standards continues. Additionally, document review and on-site monitoring will be conducted to ensure compliance with state Pre-K policies, which extend beyond CECE standards. Examples of this include policies regarding the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD for formative child assessment, child enrollment and attendance, participation in state Pre-K program evaluation and on-going technical assistance. During the 2015 grant year, these two systems of programmatic monitoring, CECE and state Pre-K, were first aligned and coordinated to reduce any burden for sub-grantees while ensuring that compliance with programmatic expectations is maintained. This alignment was re-visited and further enhanced for fall 2016 and 2017. At this time, of the 56 state Pre-K classrooms,

programs have obtained the following:

Full CECE approval - 46

Provisional Approval - 8

Probationary Approval - 2

Programs may be in a provisional or probationary status if they have had lead teacher turnover, or are working on updating program documentation. When lead teachers turn over, programs are placed in probationary status until new classroom quality assessments are conducted that meet the minimum score thresholds. There are also deliverables, which are due throughout the year. When programs need to make any modification, they are changed to provisional until the updated documents have been submitted. Additionally we have 5 new classrooms that are first year applicants and will complete the approval process in the spring of 2017.

The summary below outlines how the state monitors each required element:

High staff qualifications, including a teacher with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in any field with a State-approved alternate pathway, which may include coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood, and teaching assistants with appropriate credentials: Required in contracting and as criteria for CECE Approval, regulations specify: Teacher: BA with RI Certification in Early Childhood Education Teacher Assistant: minimum of 12 credits in Early Childhood Education. All programs are all also required to have an Education Coordinator who is also a certified Early Childhood Educator (CECE 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

High-quality professional development for all staff: Required as criteria for CECE Approval, regulations specify: The program shall assure that each teacher/teacher assistant/Education Coordinator shall have an individual professional development plan to complete at least 20 hours of professional development related to the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies appropriate to his/her position. This plan shall be developed and updated annually as part of each staff person's annual performance evaluation. (CECE 4.1, 4.2, 4.3) Additionally, the state has contracted with a professional development partner to tailor specific support to Pre-K sub-grantees.

A child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1: Required in contracting and as criteria for CECE Approval: regulations specify: Staff: child ratio of 1:9 (CECE 3.4) A class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications as outlined in paragraph (a) of this definition: Required in contracting and as criteria for CECE Approval, regulations specify: Class size of no more than 18 with at least one qualified teacher in each classroom (CECE 3.4 and 3.5)

A full-day program: Required in contracting: Contracts specify Pre-K programs must be 6 hour each day, 180 days each year - with coordinated wraparound child care

Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities: Required as criteria for CECE Approval, regulations specify: The program shall welcome children and families of all abilities, modify the program, make reasonable accommodations, and collaborate with key partners to support all children. The program shall have a written plan which describes the process for supporting all children including, but not limited to, those with developmental delays and disabilities, mental health diagnosis and behavioral challenges. (CECE 5.12, 5.13) For children requiring special education services, early childhood educators and special education providers shall work collaboratively, and in partnership with families, in supporting successful participation in inclusive environments and in ensuring that each partner has access to the necessary information and supports. (CECE 7.13)

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: Required as criteria for CECE Approval: Program-level and classroom-level standards for Curriculum (6.1 - 6.23) encompass all components of the federal definition (CECE 6.1-6.22)

Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities: Required as criteria for CECE Approval, regulations specify: The program shall welcome children and families of all abilities, modify the program, make reasonable accommodations, and collaborate with key partners to support all children. The program shall have a written plan which describes the process for supporting all children including, but not limited to, those with developmental delays and disabilities, mental

health diagnosis and behavioral challenges. (CECE 5.12, 5.13). Teachers shall use child assessment information to: Identify children's strengths, learning styles and developmental levels; Inform classroom instruction, make sound decisions about individual and group curriculum content, inform teaching approaches, guide personal interactions, and inform the design of the children's learning environment; Identify children who might benefit from additional or increased supports and/or special services; Document and implement a plan for each child that supports his or her inclusion and success; and, Share information on each child's progress with families and other authorized parties. (CECE 7.12)

Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff: Scored as a competitive component in State Pre-K selection, also monitored during state budget approval during contracting, as outlined in state Pre-K policies.

Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement and evaluate child outcomes of those participating in state Pre-K.

On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development: Required in State Pre-K policies, which specify, at a minimum: Must participate in food program, provide wrap around child care, ensure screening, and work with LEAs.

Evidence-based health and safety standards: Required as criteria for CECE Approval: regulations specify: All CECE approved programs are required to comply with either DCYF child care licensing regulations or, if located in a public or private PK-12 school, with RIDE Basic Education Program (BEP) Regulations, G--14-4 "Ensuring a Safe and Healthy Physical Environment," in addition to CECE Program standards which build upon the core approvals - DCYF or BEP to ensure consistency across settings.

As the above demonstrates, progress was made in both expanding the capacity of programs to implement high quality classrooms and programs, refining the states system of monitoring and program standards implementation, as well as the opportunities for leveraging these new programs and resources for broader use across the state.

Selection Criteria (D)(4) from NIA

Describe the number and percent of Eligible Children served and the cost per slot.

Rhode Island's Preschool Development Grant (PDG) goal for the 2016-2017 school year was to add 396 additional preschool classrooms using federal funding from the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) resulting in a total of 56 RI Pre-Kindergarten classrooms funded with state and federal funds. As a result of per classroom amounts being lower than budgeted, RI was able to fund additional preschool classrooms for a total of 1,008 children, up from the proposed amount of slots as 954. This total exceeds the target set in Year 2 in the state's application. For the 2017-2018, Year 3, school year, the goal was to add 4 new classrooms, for a total of 72 slots and 60 classrooms. The estimated cost per slot in the state's application was \$13,889. Actual cost per child is estimated at \$10,167. The per-classroom budgeted amount in the state's application reflected a maximum classroom budget of \$190,000, plus \$10,000 for professional development supports, which allowed for salaries for teachers with experience. Actual classroom budgets for sub-grantees were, on average, \$180,000, and ranged from \$173,000 to \$190,000. Some classrooms at the lower end of the budget scale have newer teachers or in-kind space. Over the course of the grant, the state expects classroom costs to increase as teacher salaries increase.

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 Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) has established processes for selecting, contracting, monitoring, and working collaboratively with its Pre-K sub-grantees in order to ensure that each sub-grantee is effectively implementing the state Pre-K program. The State's role is well-defined and extends beyond the provision of funds. Specifically, the State's plan for partnering with sub-grantees includes 1) ensuring the effective start-up and implementation of state Pre-K classrooms, and 2) working collaboratively with sub-grantees to coordinate with other state and local systems, and to ensure strong partnerships in order to provide comprehensive professional-, family- and program-level services.

Effective start-up and implementation of state Pre-K classrooms

In January 2017, RIDE released a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) that communicated State Pre-K Program funding policies within its program selection criteria and competitive process. In February, RIDE selected programs in high-need communities based on their ability to demonstrate that proposed Pre-K classrooms meet high-quality program standards. Once selection was made, RIDE managed sub-grantee contracting and budgeting, child recruitment and enrollment, and supported sub-grantees in opening the FY17/18 Pre-K school year. All activities are briefly described next.

From April - July, with budgeting completed, and contracting in process, RIDE, in coordination with State Pre-K sub-grantees, managed and implemented the state child lottery. State- and program-level outreach activities included: initial implementation of an online child lottery application system which was available in English and Spanish, and coordinated recruitment efforts with eligible community school districts, the RI Section 619 State Coordinator, the RI Special Education Advisory Committee, as well as community organizations that support families of children with disabilities, homeless families, families whose primary language is not English. Sub-grantee outreach also focused on community businesses including laundry mats, convenience stores, and churches.

Early in July, to support sub-grantees' successful and efficient enrollment activities, RIDE staff established and provided an updated series of implementation guidance for child enrollment and as well as income verification policies and procedures. In July and August, State Pre-K sub-grantees commenced with the required enrollment and income verification procedures. This process proceeded with ongoing communication via email and phone calls between the State Pre-K specialist and the State Pre-K sub-grantees throughout the summer months. Regular communication encouraged accurate program level verification, timely selection and fulfilling of slots as well as ensuring that program makeup demographics were maintained.

In July and August 2017, with the support of the RIDE CECE Specialist, all newly selected and existing FY16 State Pre-K program sub-grantees actively began the process of applying for Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Approval. Using the self-assessment information, sub-grantees reviewed and revised their program quality improvement plans, program policy narratives, began purchasing classroom materials and equipment, and, as necessary, hiring qualified staff. Throughout the summer months, RIDE CECE and State Pre-K Specialists monitored all sub-grantees' progress in completing CECE approval requirements and in completing contractual deliverables related to child lottery recruitment, child enrollment, family income verification and program preparation for the opening of the school year in September 2017. Work also focused specifically on child assessments, data sharing, and targeted professional development. In preparation for the FY17 school year, RIDE contracted with, and funded all state Pre-K Program child assessment portfolios through Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG), additionally providing all contracts and policies describing the state and sub-grantee responsibilities for and access to state Pre-K Program- and child-level assessment data. The states PD/TA vendor EDC, provided an overview and orientation to the tool. Additionally, RIDE contracted with a consultant to provide deeper support with monitoring and technical assistance than the states PDTA vendor was able to provide. Following this professional development, ongoing technical assistance to sub-grantees was

implemented to support effective implementation of program assessment plans. This support helped to facilitate data collection and end entry use of TSG by the November 2017 checkpoint date. The technical assistance focused on Quality, Quality and Accuracy of the data in informing development and instruction decisions during the course of the year and across all checkpoint dates. In preparation for the required benchmark dates, EDC supported programs through what we called "Data Days", which is where TA staff would support program staff in reviewing their data, ensuring accuracy and completion. Data was also used to support program quality improvement work, and inform analysis of progress on goals within the State-level Program quality improvement plan.

Throughout the school-year, the State Pre-K Specialist supported new and existing State Pre-K sub-grantees in establishing strong partnerships and ensuring effective communication related to child referrals for special education with their local school districts and in relation to developmental screening with local Child Outreach providers. The State 619 Coordinator supported State Pre-K sub-grantees in maintaining and strengthening these coordinated systems of supports and services for families and children in need. The State 619 Coordinator also provided support and technical assistance to the State Pre-K sub-grantees when circumstances arose that required specific consultation. The 619 Coordinator routinely met with public school staff, and provided professional development through the states PD/TA provider. During this same time period RIDE facilitated and offered a series of Foundations for EI/ECSE courses. Two varied tracks were developed for educators, one was a short series which provided an overview of the itinerant model and expectations for embedded, in classroom special education services and was designed for general educators, including those teaching in State Pre-K. The other session was developed for special education staff and provided a deeper look at the itinerant model as well as supported implementation strategies. The offering of this course further supported the State Pre-K programs goals to have coordinated support between EI/Child Outreach agencies and early learning programs.

RIDE continues to work on supporting State Pre-K grantee awareness of and access to a comprehensive set of supports and interventions, and to ensure the programs are best equipped to support the diversity of learners attending programs. In response, RIDE continues to maintain strong relationships with Bradley Hospital, the states early childhood mental health provider, the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Child Welfare, as well as numerous family shelters. RIDE continues the development of its Comprehensive Services referral system in collaboration with the Department of Health and anticipates launching an online referral and tracking system during 2018. The timelines had been pushed back because the work is being coordinated and funded through RIDE, in collaboration with DOH, and DOH contracted had been delayed. RIDE funds are paying for the facilitation of the work, and DOH funds are paying for the IT development. As of fall 2017, an IT developer had been contracted and the facilitator began weekly development meetings with the design team. During this period, RIDE has conducted extensive work with grantees on the development of their capacities and competencies related to supporting a Comprehensive Services System. Staff have attended several professional development sessions, worked with their TA providers on the development of their plans, and began the implement new internal protocols and policies to screen and refer families. Grantees were also encouraged to collaborate within their immediate communities so as to ensure alignment across regions.

RIDE has utilized a multitude of nationally published resources in the development of tools for the field. One example of this, is the state's development of Every Student Succeeds Act Guidance documents. The Guidance includes a set of four documents which cover the following areas: 1. Opportunities related to early learning within ESSA, 2. Evidenced based interventions, including the degrees of evidence, for which title finding could be used (State Pre-K is included in this), 3. Pre-K to K transition guidance, and 4. An alignment between the states program standards and the Head Start Performance Standards.

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).

Overview: With help from the RTT-ELC grant, Rhode Island made significant progress on implementing an aligned birth through third grade system. These initiatives ensure that there is a common framework and shared understanding of the learning and development of children B-3rd grade, and how the knowledge and skills of the workforce and the quality of early learning programs work collectively to support improved child outcomes. This work has ensured that state Pre-K programs, regardless of their type (e.g. child care, Head Start, public preschool), participate within this system. The state's efforts will be explained in greater detail below.

Transitions for Programs Serving Children B-5: Under RTT-ELC, a significant amount of progress was made to create alignment within the B-5 system. Learning expectations for children ages B-5 (RIELDS) were finalized, related professional development support was revised, new opportunities with greater differentiation were rolled out, and access was expanded. Expectations for workforce knowledge and competencies were developed for multiple roles in the early learning system. The WKC now provide a framework for alignment of professional development and technical assistance activities available throughout the state. Regulations and quality standards guiding early learning programs were aligned to create a cohesive pathway toward increased program quality.

Rhode Island developed an Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS) which integrates data from multiple state agencies, community early learning programs, and the early learning workforce to assist the state in answering critical policy questions about early learning programs, the early learning workforce, and children's access to supports, services, and programs. The Workforce Registry and Program Portal were rolled out winter 2016, which allowed both individual users to create accounts, as well as form programs to enter and maintain the data for the family search as well as for their licensing, Bright Stars and CECE applications. The DCYF child care licensing application was released and programs were able to, for the first time, submit their licensing renewal electronically. Additionally, during the fall of 2016 the CECE application function was released which allowed State Pre-K programs to apply for CECE approval electronically. Additionally, the Center for Early Learning Professionals had a technology grant to support both the provision of computers and associated technology (scanners etc.) in order to support programs accessing the online systems, as well as technical assistance in completing Program Portals and staff Workforce Registries. Full use of the integrated data system is now fully operational among the states Pre-K programs, and all use the system for applying for program approval.

The states three public institutes of higher education, including the Community College of Rhode Island, The University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College, completed integration of the state's Early Learning and Development Standards into their programs of study. This allowed opportunities for program enhancements in order to ensure the Early Learning and Development Standards were fully incorporated. Additionally, graduating classes moving forward will obtain a RI Department of Education professional certificate on the Standards. This certificate, was previously only obtainable by attending PD, and now is embedded within the programs of study. The certificate is a requirement in the states QRIS. For those who have already graduated and obtained teacher certification in the state, two expedited pathways were developed. These were titled "RIELDS for Certified Educators" and "RIELDS for Certified Administrators". Additionally, a Pre-K to K transition course was developed for Pre-K and K teachers to better understand the alignment between the Early Learning and Development Standards, Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards. During the 2016 and 2017 school year, these courses were implemented for the field, including State Pre-K educators. Additionally, RIDE worked with Rhode Island College on the completion and approval of a graduate leadership certificate designed for those interested in early childhood leadership, or serving in public school k-12 settings interested in learning more about early learning.

The Department of Education also partnered with the lead agency for IDEA Part C, to develop and implement a training series on the RIELDS for Early Intervention providers. A specified curriculum and hybrid platform was developed to allow Early Intervention agency communities of practice the opportunity to learn more about typical child development and developmentally appropriate differentiation. Additionally, a partnership with the

Department of Health was also formed in order to integrate use of the RIELDS into two home visiting programs, Healthy Families America Growing Great Kids and Parents as Teachers. These nationally recognized curricula were aligned to the states Early Learning and Development Standards and these resources are now being used and available online. Through the use of aligned curricula we communicate shared expectations for children's learning and development across the state, and across programs.

For families, two initiatives were designed to impact all children regardless of access to formal early learning environments. These included a set of resources and parent trainings for families on children's development and learning. Work was done to ensure these resources are available where parents live, work and play. RIDE supported the states children's museum in developing a series of resources aligned to the Standards, in the alignment of exhibit spaces, and the development of PD offerings for educators. Funds were used to support the development of a series of family bags aligned to the Standards which families could use to support learning at home. The bags included copies of the Fun Family Activity Cards, books and manipulatives. These Fun Family Activities and Family Bags are currently being used across a variety of settings, including within early learning programs, at the Providence Children's Museum, within several locally development family visiting programs and within libraries across the state. These resources are also available as a tool for families in order to prevent summer learning loss and are used at several summer specific events statewide.

During RTT-ELC, a developmental screening campaign targeted to families of children B-5 was implemented and strategies to increase rates of developmental screening were enhanced and expanded. These resources continue to exist and are available to programs online. Within State Pre-K, all children enrolled must receive a developmental screening within 45 days of enrollment. State Pre-K grantees, are required to connect with their district child outreach team in order to ensure timely screening, as well as to per the parent's consent, participate on the IEP team. A report within the states KidsNet system has been created specifically for State Pre-K to yield results of the screenings. Grantees are required to work with the district and families to ensure that re-screens and follow up appointments happen within a timely manner. Results of screenings and referrals are reported and monitored as a State Pre-K deliverable.

In accordance with the state's high quality program and professional standards, state Pre- K programs are required to operate within the states early learning system, to meet these standards, and utilize these supports in order to ensure their curriculum, assessment and family engagement practices align with best practices and state Standards, that their staff use competencies in developing professional development goals, and that staff attend the states approved professional development offerings. Program level documents are read by state staff, and evaluated according to an established set of rubrics to ensure effective use of these system elements and developed resources. In events where the alignment and/or use of these tools is not demonstrated, programs receive feedback and are subsequently asked to go back and work with their TA provider to revise their documents.

Rhode Island has ongoing goals to support and increase the number of programs that are high quality. One of these goals has centered around increasing the number of programs participating in BrightStars, the state TQRIS and in receiving CECE Approval. In 2011, only 93 programs were participating in the state's QRIS. As of December 2016, 707 programs were participating, and in 2017 this number increased to 715.

Transitions for programs Serving Children from K-3: The second component of creating an aligned Birth through Third Grade continuum involves sustaining the impacts of the B-5 system, and encouraging a seamless transition into the K-3 system. Rhode Island's plan for making progress includes aligning expectations, policies, and practices in key areas, including effective early childhood formative assessment practices within the B-5 system that align with expectations for K-3 formative assessment initiatives; the development of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that aligns with early learning and development standards and CCSS; and the connection of the Early Care and Education Data System to the Statewide Longitudinal Data system to link information about children, teachers, and programs B-5 with K-12 data.

In 2016, Rhode Island developed and released a set of on-line training modules, in collaboration with the states PDTA vendor, the Center for Early Learning Professionals. The modules were aligned with the state's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Educators and with training modules developed for use across the field. There are two series to the set, Series I is titled "Assessment in Early Childhood Settings" and is comprised of three modules - Early Childhood Assessment Overview, Linking Assessment to Curriculum and Instruction, and Types of Assessments and Their Purposes. The series presents Rhode Island's vision for quality child assessment practices in all early childhood education (ECE) settings. Series II is titled "Formative Assessment in Early Childhood Settings", and is comprised of six modules designed to help early childhood educators understand

and implement the formative assessment process. A total of 6 hours of professional development credit is available for completion of these courses.

During 2017, RIDE sponsored a community wide formative assessment dialogue in an effort to debrief the recent KEA pilot implementation, discuss the field's use of purchasable tools such as Teaching Strategies Gold, and review the goals and objectives related to ensuring that all formative assessment efforts Birth through Grade 3 have a cohesive message.

Rhode Island continued to participate in the K-3 Assessment Consortium led by North Carolina. In 2016, forty-one Rhode Island K-3 teachers volunteered to participate in the K-3 Formative Assessment Field Test Project. The K-3 Formative Assessment System drew on many different kinds of evidence (observations, conversations, work samples, and tasks) from many different sources to shed light on students' learning progress. During the field test year teachers were required to assess students in the fall and winter blocks of the school year. All the teachers as well as administrators received training from the Center for Learning and Development and SRI Education, a partner of the North Carolina Consortium. With teachers participating across grade K-3, there were feedback sessions during March-April 2017 where participants discussed supports needed to gather and analyze data in the five areas of learning and development: approaches to learning, cognition, language and communication, physical/motor, and social-emotional development for each grade level. In addition, the state used information from the Kindergarten Entry Profile Implementation Plan conducted by The Policy Equity Group.

One of the biggest learnings from this work was the need to acknowledge that the KEP was part of a larger context, which must focus on implementing developmentally appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment. As a result, the state used funding from the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge to work with EDC to develop an approach that began with the state's first ever kindergarten conference this September 2016 and 2017 and continued with piloting an interdisciplinary, Common-Core aligned kindergarten curriculum developed by Boston Public School (BPS). In the 2015-2016 school year, 88% of Rhode Island kindergartners statewide and 100% of kindergartners in the four core cities were in full-day kindergarten. As of the 2015-2016 school year, 31 of the 35 elementary school districts and all of the public charter elementary schools in Rhode Island offer universal access to full-day kindergarten programs, and upon the start of the 2016-2017 school year 33 school districts participate. This pilot project provided opportunities for Kindergarten teachers in participating schools to take part in professional development led by experienced coaches from BPS's Early Childhood Department. These teachers also received school-based coaching through the Education Development Center (EDC) Center for Early Learning Professionals through the project's completion. These districts worked closely on the implementation of aligned and developmentally appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Work during the year focused on supporting enhanced leadership as well as increased opportunities for educators working in K-8. The development of both the RI Early Learning and Development Standards Pre-K to K course as well as the Graduate Certificate for Administrators, Education Coordinators and Principals are intended to bring together professionals working in the birth through 5, and K through 8 settings. A total of 31 educators participated in the Pre-K to K Standards Alignment course and participants came from a varying array of backgrounds and included community based child care teachers, public school teachers, State Pre-K and public school leaders. Additionally, the Graduate Certificate for Administrators, Education Coordinators and Principals was completed in 2016 and Rhode Island College began to work on recruitment for the program in 2017.

During 2016 the Math Science Partnership (MSP) grant focused on Pre-K through 3 use of Standards in the development and implementation of curriculum. This initiative attempted to increase the capacity of the state's largest public school to deliver math content in a developmentally appropriate way. This work led to an increased interest in ongoing curriculum work at the K-12 level. As a result, during 2017, the state worked on enhancing its work around curriculum across the field. A

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 3 Target* differs from the *Year 3 Actual*.

RI has fully committed to its state match for all years of the PDG funding. In state fiscal year 2016, \$1,000,000, in fiscal year 2017, \$1,210,000, and in fiscal year 2018 \$1,080,000 in State funds were allocated through the education funding formula for the specific purpose of the expansion of the state Pre-K program. These funds continued the state's planned expansion of State Pre-K, as proposed in the PDG grant. These funds were combined with the federal grant funds to add additional classrooms and to pay for enrollment of children selected via the lottery whose family income is over 200% of poverty. RI will continue to advocate for additional state funding for the Pre-K program so that all classrooms can be sustained when the federal funding ends.

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.

The state is working to continue ensuring a more seamless progression of supports for those in state Pre-K by requiring and supporting grantees to fully participate in the system. The State Pre-K model aims to be a demonstration of an exemplar model, which is highly integrated and connected across all state agencies, and systems. Expectations for Rhode Island Pre-K programs responsibilities in this area are specified in state Pre-K policies and within Pre-K contract language. State Pre-K policy states: *Since the state Pre-K program exists within the state and local social support systems for RI families, Pre-K program staff are responsible for supporting and implementing effective transitions for children in and out of the Pre-K, provide access to/coordination of before and after care if needed, and engaging in community collaboration with social service agencies or other relevant organizations (school districts, community mental health providers, health centers). State Pre-K administrators are responsible for building community linkages and for actively coordinating Pre-K family supports with other professionals when needed.* Pre-K contract language requires that programs *develop and maintain collaborative relationships with community partners and seek resources as needed to ensure full support of children and families experiencing crisis and/or special health care needs and to fully include children with disabilities and/or special health care needs.* Pre-K monitoring is used to ensure that sub-grantees are meeting these expectations. Funds for state Pre-K are allocated for the educational program children attend and are not sufficient to maintain a high-quality educational program and directly provide access to supports and interventions outside the scope of general educational interventions. Instead, it is the expectation that programs will develop collaborative partnerships with options available in the community. During grant year 2016, existing and new grantees were supported to coordinate, and ensure access to minimally the following components: before and after school care, full day kindergarten, developmental screening and early childhood special education, and mental health consultation. State Pre-K policies require that all sub-grantees make before and after school care available to children enrolled in Pre-K or develop collaborative

partnerships with agencies to provide such care as needed by enrolled families. During 2017, state Pre-K grantees were further supported in the development of Competencies, Systems of Staff Support and in the creation of internal policies and protocols related to Comprehensive Services. During 2-16 and 2016 several professional development offerings were held supporting grantees in understanding the latest research on the topics and in developing Comprehensive Services Plans. These plans are reviewed as part of the state monitoring system.

Despite these policies, the state is aware that Pre-K grantees awareness of and access to a comprehensive set of supports and interventions is variable and that it can be difficult to reliably connect families to a wider variety of services, even when they exist within the same organization. Often times, grantees who also manage Head Start, will use their existing internal systems of supports by offering these supports “in-kind” to state Pre-K. For community based and public school programs, these connections are often more variable. As the states PDG application spoke to, the state has begun work with the Department of Health on building an electronic resource and referral system to be piloted with State Pre-K, and potentially be available statewide for all programs. The previously developed conceptual design, allowed RIDE the opportunity to conduct a series of community focus groups in order to elicit feedback on the conceptualized system. The group defined the existing Health Directory resources which would provide a focused list of resources to make referrals to. The Department of Health and RIDE are partnering in establishing a pilot with a selected vendor to build the online referral and tracking mechanism using these resources. These agencies have engaged in a series of planning calls to outline the desired functionality. This portion of the project was slightly delayed due to the decision to change vendors. In order for RIDE to continue, it needed to wait until Health finalized its contract with the vendor which will occurred in 2017. In the meantime, RIDE has been working to strengthen its Pre-K policy guidance for programs in regards to comprehensive services, as well as to formalize the questionnaire programs will administer to families to evaluate needs for services.

Another well-established collaboration within the state Pre-K program is the connection to Child Outreach developmental screening programs administered by the local school districts. This year, state Pre-K programs were required to ensure that all enrolled children were screened by October 31st, or within 45 days of school entry for children who join the program after standard enrollment. The screening covers five areas: vision, hearing, speech/language, general development, and social and emotional development. Child Outreach screening programs use standardized screening tools and follow state protocols regarding re-screening, screening of English Language learners, and referral to early childhood special education. As of December 2015, all children enrolled in state Pre-K had completed screening with 221 (N=594) requiring rescreening and 66 resulting in referral to early childhood special education. Additionally, state staff support collaborations between Pre-K classrooms and district special education services to ensure that to the maximum extent possible that identified special education services are integrated into the child's Pre-K experience within the Pre-K classroom.

Rhode Island's early childhood mental health consultation program is now being managed and funded by the state's Department of Human Services. This model is called SUCCESS, Supporting Children's Competencies in Emotional and Social Skills, and consists of intervention level services provided directly to children and families in early care and education settings in coordination with promotion and prevention level services supporting high-quality educational practices provided by the Center for Early Learning Professionals. Essentially, the foundational supports such as related to schedules, environment, and differentiation are provided by the Center, and the needs of children and families at the top of the pyramid are provided by SUCCESS. Services offered, include program and classroom level assessment, including conversations with program staff and children's caregivers. The data results in feedback and recommendations to program staff and families regarding consultation findings and leads to the development of collaborative action plans. Follow-up supports to integrate consultation recommendations, include: supporting staff to assess, plan for, and intervene with

challenging classroom behavior, helping families get connected to community supports and services, and classroom and program level consultation to enhance the child care center's capacities to respond to children's social, emotional, and behavioral health needs.

The state is also supporting strong transitions to kindergarten. In the 2015-2016 school year, 88% of Rhode Island kindergartners statewide and 100% of kindergartners in the four core cities were in full-day kindergarten. As of the 2015-2016 school year, 31 of the 35 elementary school districts and all of the public charter elementary schools in Rhode Island offer universal access to full-day kindergarten programs, and upon the start of the 2016-2017 school year 33 school districts participate. The Governor has established the required that by 2017 all public schools must offer full day kindergarten. Work under RTT-ELC supported these districts in focusing on instructional quality through work in partnership with Boston Public Schools to implement their evidenced based, developmentally appropriate curricula. Educators received professional development and coaching through December 2016, as well as were supported to purchase materials required to implement the curricula moving forward. This work, will help ensure instructional alignment and consistent experiences for children between Pre-K and K.

RIDE has and will continued its efforts to ensure a continuous and consistent high quality early learning opportunities, across the diversity of settings in which State Pre-K is offered. The State Pre-K program brought to light opportunities for coordinated recruitment with Head Start, home visiting, child care, and social services. The result of this was a letter signed by both RIDE, and the states Head Start Association, and supported by the Head Start Collaboration Director, Kids Count as well as the states grantees. This effort solidified our efforts related to data sharing and coordinated recruitment.

During 2017 RIDE staff served on the development team working towards the creation of an infant and toddler credential. The state is receiving Technical Assistance from its Region 1 Head Start Education Specialist in the facilitation of this work. RIDE, is working with the Department of Human Services as well as numerous community stakeholders in this effort.

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.

RRhode Island's existing state Pre-K program meets the definition of High-Quality Preschool Program. Thus, 100% of the federal grant award has been used to increase the overall number of new Pre-K slots in the state. The state investment in state fiscal year 2017 was \$7,983,871, an increase of \$4,033,871 from fiscal year 2016. Without federal Expansion grant funds, Rhode Island would have had the capacity to enroll up to 486 children. Instead, in school year 2016-2017, there are 56 classrooms serving 1,008 children. In the 2017-2018 school year, there are 60 classrooms funding total of 1,080 classrooms.

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, 2017 through December 31, 2017.

2. Please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State's Preschool Development Grant budget in the upcoming fiscal year (January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018).

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.

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, 2017 through December 31, 2017.