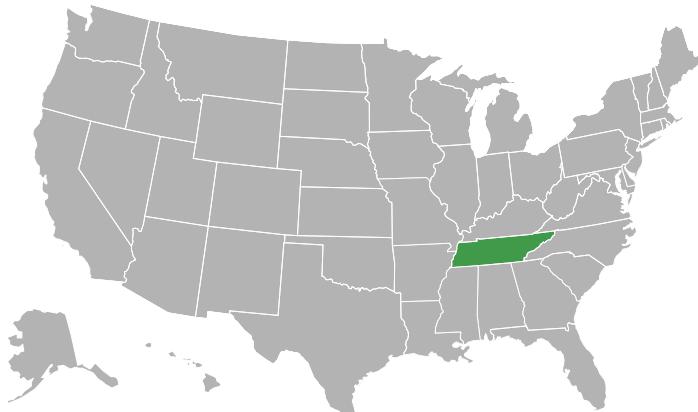


# PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

## FY2017 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

### Tennessee



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 #:	S419B150026	2. Grantee Federal Information Processing Code: 47
3. Project Title:	Preschool Development Grant Expansion	
4. Grantee Name:	Tennessee Department of Education	
5. Grantee Address:	710 James Robertson Parkway 11th floor AJ Tower	
City:	Nashville	State: Tennessee Zip: 37243
6. Project Director Name:	Dr. Elizabeth Alves	
Title:	Assistant Commissioner, Office of Early Learning and Literacy	
Phone #:	(615) 837-5272	Ext.: _____ Fax #: _____
Email Address:	elizabeth.alves@tn.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	\$17,735,048.00	\$12,844,329.00
b. Current Budget Period	\$17,441,347.00	\$9,823,679.00
c. Entire Project Period <i>(For Final Performance Reports only)</i>		

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

- a. Are you claiming indirect costs under this grant?  Yes  No
- b. If yes, do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal Government?  Yes  No
- c. If yes, provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Approving Federal agency:  ED  Other Specify other: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Rate: (Final Performance Reports only)  Provisional  Final  Other Specify other: \_\_\_\_\_
- d. For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?

### 10. Performance Measures Status

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



# U.S. Department of Education

## PDG Annual Performance Report

### Executive Summary

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

Grantee State: TN

PR/Award #: S419B150026

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

#### Overview of Progress:

In 2017, Tennessee's federal Preschool Development Grant-Expansion (PDG-E) funds supported local educational agencies in Memphis/Shelby County and Nashville/Davidson County in the expansion and improvement of pre-K programs and services. In Memphis/Shelby County 120 new seats were added in 2017 for a total of 1000 during the three years of the grant. In Nashville/Davidson County, 440 new seats added in the first two years of the grant were sustained in year three. In summary, Tennessee has added a total of 1440 new seats in 72 new classrooms during the three year grant period. The successful expansion and enhancement of pre-K programs, combined with the implementation experiences over the first two years of the grant, have resulted in continued progress in increasing access to high quality classrooms for income eligible children and improving the quality of existing classrooms in each community. Over 2400 children have benefited from these quality improvements. Additionally, the grant has allowed the state to strengthen its infrastructure to support high quality pre-K, not only in the grant supported communities but across all state funded pre-K programs as well.

#### State's Goals and Objectives:

- To significantly increase pre-K access for eligible children in high need communities of Memphis and Nashville
- To strengthen quality through upgrading existing pre-K seats in both communities to include all elements of high quality preschool programs, with an emphasis on providing Comprehensive Services to existing classrooms, implementing a teacher coaching model and supporting high quality professional development
- To strengthen alignment of the birth to third grade continuum
- To build Tennessee's pre-K infrastructure, particularly in the use of data to measure the impact of program improvements
- To support and expand the local communities' infrastructure for future sustainability

The two subgrantees serve students in the two largest urban districts in the state, with grant implementation reflecting the unique needs of each community. Both subgrantees have expanded classrooms in high need areas and both have successfully enrolled eligible children in expansion seats and improved existing seats. However, each subgrantee has tailored improvements in ways that meet the local needs of teachers, children, families and communities. The following provides an overview of each subgrantee's progress on meeting the goals of the grant in year three and initial plans for sustaining the grant's goals and objectives after the grant period.

#### Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS)

During year three, the federal Preschool Development Grant-Expansion (PDG-E) continues to play an integral role in transforming early childhood education for children and families in Davidson County. Utilizing PDG-E funds, MNPS has put an emphasis on continuing to strengthen the quality of existing classrooms and

supporting the new expansion classrooms.

MNPS supports high quality classroom instruction through implementation of a district wide constructivist curriculum, providing materials and furnishings to support developmentally appropriate practices. Additionally, the district offers a tiered approach in the use of practice-based coaching to support reflective practice, guidance for shared and integrated reading, a strategy to reduce transition times, and a plan to support pre-K teachers and other teachers to provide individualized and differentiated instruction for children with disabilities and for English Learners (EL). MNPS has also established a priority for teachers to create environments that support the social-emotional needs of its youngest learners in all classrooms. Not only has the district emphasized the teacher's professional learning and classroom practice, but in year three the opportunities for professional learning for administrators has been increased as well. The district has increased support for families and addressed attendance issues. PDG-E funding has allowed MNPS to create effective systems to implement and support high quality pre-K instruction and establish clear expectations, which continue to positively impact principals, teachers, families, and students in grades pre-K through third grade. Specific successes include:

### **Increased Access in High Need Areas**

MNPS set a goal to add 440 new seats and to sustain the operation of these classrooms through the grant period and beyond. In years one and two, MNPS met this grant goal by opening an Early Learning Center, two community sites, and 13 classrooms in elementary schools. In year three, 20 of these classrooms have been maintained in the original sites serving eligible children. However, due to changing demographics in the community, it was necessary to move two classrooms to a new elementary school site in year three to ensure availability for PDG-E eligible children.

### **Improve Existing Classrooms**

MNPS used PDG-E funds to improve over 2400 seats by providing evidenced-based, developmentally appropriate professional development, coaching support for all district classrooms, and comprehensive services for eligible children and families across the district. MNPS has 187 pre-K teachers who, through PDG-E, have benefited from numerous **professional development** opportunities to strengthen the quality of pre-K instruction across the district. All pre-K teachers have participated in a minimum of 24 hours of training, and 187 Educational Assistants received 12 hours of training. Numerous trainings have included curricular topics, disproportionality and equity issues, literacy, teaching strategies, and student/teacher interactions.

**Coaching and Leadership Development** has been supported by instructional coaches and Multi-Classroom Leaders (MCL) trained in new coaching structures including My Teaching Partner, Making the Most of Classroom Interactions and Professional Learning Communities. Classrooms have been tiered according to need and coaches set action plans and goals with all pre-K teachers utilizing these coaching practices and reflective coaching techniques. Teachers have monthly goals based on observations (such as ECERS, CLASS, or TPOT), and coaches meet with teachers to monitor progress and use data to inform practice.

**Comprehensive Services** have been supported by the Family Engagement Coordinator and six pre-K Family Engagement Specialists (FES), identifying schools by tiers and creating a monthly pacing guide to ensure that all schools receive monthly workshops that relate to skills that children are learning in school. Trainings focused on academic and social-emotional needs to ensure strong foundations for Kindergarten. Workshops formats also changed, reducing the time to 30 minutes instead of an hour and offering hands on experiences to enable families to practice activities at school and then reinforce them at home with their child. Feedback from families has been tremendous, helping them feel more equipped and empowered to better support their young learners with academic and developmental skills. In the fall of 2017, 284 workshops/events were held for families with 4,460 participants.

In year three the MNPS pre-K Leadership team strengthened the **birth to third grade continuum** by providing four Early Learning Institutes for principals and administrators. The Early Learning Institutes built principal capacity to understand how to support staff and families in early learning classrooms. Administrators were trained on early learning best practices, such as reducing transition times, quality environments, social emotional learning, and reducing chronic absenteeism. 75% of principals in pre-k -fourth grade attended the Summer Institute.

At the classroom level, Heggerty Phonological Awareness training was provided to the district's pre-K teachers and pre-K coaches to ensure that all pre-K students receive foundational literacy skills instruction. The district's Literacy Teacher Development Specialists (LTDS) were then trained on the Heggerty Phonological Awareness Curriculum and have begun to expand the program into Kindergarten classrooms to ensure **strong transitions**.

### **Shelby County Consortium (SCC)**

The Shelby County Consortium, established for the PDG-E grant, includes Shelby County Schools (SCS) serving the city of Memphis, Bartlett City Schools and Millington Municipal Schools, serving suburbs of Memphis, and the Achievement School District (ASD). In year three of the grant, Bartlett City Schools, who did not have enough eligible children to open a new expansion classroom, left the consortium.

During year three, the remaining districts continued to strengthen the quality of their individual programs through professional development and use of data-based decision making. Using Peabody Research Institute (PRI) Year One and Two Grant Evaluation Reports and district and state observations such as CLASS and ECERS, the Consortium encouraged teachers and staff to increase the use of positive classroom management techniques, and to restructure the classroom daily schedule to increase center time and outdoor play and decrease transitions and whole group teacher directed learning. The districts collaborated on professional development for teachers and staff, and most importantly, worked together with local advocacy groups to develop a sustainability plan for Shelby County, not only for the PDG-E expansion and improvement sites but for the entire community. Some successes include:

#### **Increased Access in High Need Areas**

In the grant, the SCC's goal was to add 1000 new seats and maintain the operation of those classrooms during the grant and beyond. In year one and two, SCC added 880 seats to increase access to high quality pre-K in under-served, high need areas of Shelby County. In year three, the SCC worked together to determine where the final expansion sites should be placed, based on the number of eligible children on wait lists, areas of community need and sites that had appropriate pre-K classroom. This year, 120 new seats (6 classrooms) were added to meet the grant goal of 1000 new seats.

#### **Improve Existing Classrooms**

The SCC has used PDG-E funds to improve 700 seats by providing evidenced-based **professional development**, coaching support for teachers, and comprehensive services for eligible children and families across the district. All SCC professional development activities ensure that teachers, teaching assistants, coaches, advisors and administrators acquire the skills that are needed to support the development of children in early childhood classrooms. In collaboration with the TDOE and individually, the consortium districts have provided training to meet the needs of individual teachers and districts on a variety of topics related to curriculum, instruction and assessment, and other related topics to ensure that all teachers acquire the skills that are needed to support the development of the whole child.

SCS uses professional learning communities and one on one coaching to review student data and design instructional strategies to improve academic performance in the areas of early literacy and numeracy. Also in SCS, teacher assistants that do not hold a Child Development Associate (CDA) degree or beyond are enrolled in a CDA course through Southwest TN Community College. The cohort meets monthly for twelve months with a certified CDA college professor. In addition, new teachers meet monthly to learn from veteran teachers, advisors, and principals verse in early childhood pedagogy.

All Consortium districts developed a core team of administrators, teachers and advisors to attend the Early Learning Model (ELM) Student Growth Portfolio training sessions that were provided by TDOE. The information received during the trainings was used to create a **train the trainer model**. These teacher leaders were utilized to facilitate portfolio sessions to teachers in grades pre-K and kindergarten. The growth portfolio is being implemented in all PDG-E classrooms this school year.

All of the districts have coaches, advisors or monitors that support quality practices in classrooms to improve overall instruction for all students. They provide observation feedback and support for academic and behavior

challenges in the classroom.

### **Comprehensive Services**

The SCC districts provide comprehensive services for all expansion classrooms and the SCS community partner sites. All SCS classrooms, some of the ASD charter classrooms, and Millington Municipal Schools contract with the non-profit organization Porter-Leath to provide comprehensive services to the PDG student and families. Porter-Leath helps meet the needs of low-income children and families across Shelby County through a variety of programs each year. Through their partnerships with the pre-K and Head Start programs they are able to connect with families and children early to meet their health, developmental, and social needs. The list of comprehensive services provided is extensive and includes screenings for vision, dental, speech/language, hearing, blood lead (testing done by a registered nurse), mental health, and developmental screeners through the use of the Brigance tool. Through a family needs survey given to each family during registration, community resources are identified and linked to each family. Each classroom is assigned a Family Service advocate who works with families directly through the practice and implementation of social work case management.

To strengthen the **birth to third grade continuum**, Shelby County Schools continued the collaboration with Porter Leath's state-of-the-art preschool and teacher training institute that offers a continuum of early childhood education, from prenatal to age five. SCS partners with Porter Leath to assist parents of children enrolled in their Early Head Start program with smooth transitions into the pre-K program. The Early Childhood Division and Porter Leath also partner with the Student Services Division to ensure support for families with students transitioning from pre-K to Kindergarten.

Professional development has been implemented to develop a learning progression plan, align the curriculum maps, and plan professional learning opportunities for teachers in grades pre-K through 2nd grade. The pre-K plan exposes students to foundational literacy skills that will be reinforced and further developed in kindergarten through third grade.

The ASD has implemented multiple transition activities for pre-K children and families as well as working with parents to prepare them for kindergarten transitions. Prior to promotion, kindergarteners are paired with pre-K children as reading buddies for read aloud visits in kindergarten and parents are allowed to visit in kindergarten classrooms as well. Pre-K and kindergarten teachers hold collaborative meetings to share pre-K student achievement data with kindergarten teachers and to provide feedback on student achievement data for previously enrolled pre-K students to improve instructional practices across grade levels.

Millington Municipal has aligned pre-k activities with regular school activities, such as parent nights, curriculum nights, parent/teacher conferences and other extra-curricular activities. Pre-k teachers and assistants also participate in school level professional development that focuses on instructional strategies and data to increase student achievement.

### **PDG-E Evaluation**

Peabody Research Institute (PRI) is contracted to conduct a study of the effectiveness of PDG-E with the goal to better understand how the structural improvements the districts are putting in place affect outcomes for pre-K children. Data is being collected annually and reported to districts to support continuous improvement efforts. Additionally, Tennessee implemented a Kindergarten Entry Inventory in all PDG-E districts and a pilot of 13 additional districts across the state this past fall. The KEI kindergarten readiness data is reported in GPRA 1 (c).

### **State Infrastructure and Improving Quality**

In year three, work within the PDG-E programs, the PRI evaluation and the districts' experiences have informed the department's work. Working in parallel with the PDG-E, the TDOE Division of Early Learning and Literacy has developed a quality definition for pre-k that addresses program quality, instructional quality and continuous improvement. Using this definition, the department has developed and implemented the second phase of the Early Learning Model (ELM) training statewide for pre-k/k district teams, including administrators and teachers. Topics have included student growth portfolios, early learning principals and developmental science, TNELDS and developmentally appropriate practice. ELM will continue into year four of the grant and PDG-E will further inform its development.

An additional goal for year three was to strengthen subgrantee monitoring and fiscal oversight of the grant. Last spring, a fiscal manager was hired to support the budgetary and financial monitoring of both the subgrantees. In year three the state revised the Subrecipient Monitoring document to have a clear timeline and expectations of monitoring for years three and four. The state also developed a tool that documents all 12 Quality Indicators and classroom visits in all 72 expansion classrooms. Finally, in an effort to improve quality as a priority, the education consultants are conducting follow up ECERs visits in spring 2018 to monitor implementation of the action plans developed by teachers and coaches.

### **Successes, Challenges and Next Steps**

Tennessee has successfully expanded to 1440 PDG-E seats in year three of the grant. Our goal, as stated in the grant application, is for districts to implement high quality programs for all eligible children. Access, developmentally appropriate professional development, coaching, comprehensive services and the PRI evaluation are all helping the districts meet these high quality components. In year three, we have strengthened the systems to evaluate and monitor the success of implementing a grant at this scale.

While there are many successes to date, work remains at both the state and district level. Both are working together to address each of the challenges moving forward and toward sustainability of high quality practices. Access continues to be an area of focus to ensure that eligible children are being served as Tennessee's two largest cities continue to grow and change. The accuracy of district enrollment reporting is another area for improvement and will enable the state to monitor enrollment patterns and trends throughout the year. The development of sustainability plans in each subgrantee community is another significant next step. And finally, encouraging districts to promote, support, and monitor developmentally appropriate instructional practices in all pre-K classrooms is a key focus area to ensure that all pre-K students enter Kindergarten prepared to grow and thrive.

Finally, the supplemental PDG funding will enable the state to evaluate all PDG-E and state funded pre-K classrooms across the state using the CLASS tool to determine areas of need. An Early Childhood Summit is also being planned, and will enable the PDG-E districts and the state to share successes and challenges of the grant with pre-K leaders from across the state in an effort to spread and sustain the learning and best practices acquired through the grant.



**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:

TN

PR/Award #:

S419B150026

**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.

Tennessee was successful in meeting the goal of increasing the number of eligible children served in high quality preschool programs as proposed in the grant application. In the fall of 2017, the final 120 seats were opened in 6 new classrooms. With these new seats and the 880 seats added in year one and year two of the grant, there are now a total of 1000 new seats available for eligible children in the Shelby County Consortium. Together with the 440 seats added by MNPS in year one and year two of the grant, Tennessee has exceeded the Preschool Development Grant application goal of 1400 seats by 40 seats or two additional classrooms. Of the 1440 new seats added in both subgrantee districts, 1337 seats (92.8%) were serving eligible students as of December 1, 2017, exceeding the goal of 90%.

As large, metropolitan areas, both subgrantees have a demonstrated need for high quality preschool seats that exceeds the current number of available seats. However, population growth, high mobility rates and other factors often impact enrollment and the districts' ability to serve the targeted student population. In some instances the lack of available classroom space in areas of high need has resulted in preschool site location outside of the targeted high need area which may negatively impact enrollment. This occurred in MNPS due to the tremendous growth that Nashville is experiencing. Two classrooms that were opened in the fall of 2015 did not have enough early registration of eligible children to be a viable location. The classrooms were subsequently moved to another location, which has space and a need for eligible seats. Enrollment in Shelby County Schools changes from day-to-day and is monitored using the Child Plus data base. Enrollment screenings by staff take place every Friday to review attendance and contact parents on the waitlist in an effort to fill empty seats. These facts, along with the eligibility data suggests the need for greater examination of enrollment patterns and increased recruitment efforts, which both subgrantees will continue to address in their implementation plans for year four of the grant. For example, in the 2018-19 school year, MNPS will begin blending and braiding seats within PDG-E enhanced (VPK & local) classrooms. This approach will provide greater access and economic diversity within classrooms. Blending and braiding also will assist in the enrollment of PDG-E qualified seats. Students who meet the 200 % poverty guidelines eligibility will be the first to be placed in the PDG-E seats. Blending and braiding will create a larger pool of eligible students that will be available to fill PDG-E classrooms across the city.

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

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

Tennessee continues to strengthen its stance for supporting and ensuring children with disabilities access to high quality early childhood programs that support the goals identified on their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Since the inception of our state funded Voluntary Pre-K Program, we have encouraged the enrollment of children with disabilities and districts have been asked to demonstrate efforts to enroll approximately 10 percent of students with IEPs for priority enrollment as part of the state's competitive funding process. This is also the expectation for the PDG funded classrooms. As such, our IDEA 619 preschool coordinator and his staff work tirelessly to ensure children are included in general education classrooms and that these programs meet the needs of all children. In 2017 this effort has intensified with the 619 staff working with individual districts to improve inclusion efforts and support teachers and administrators in professional development and setting up inclusive pre-K classrooms.

The percent of children with IEPs served in the grant funded classrooms is 6.7% which exceeds the national average of 6.4%.

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

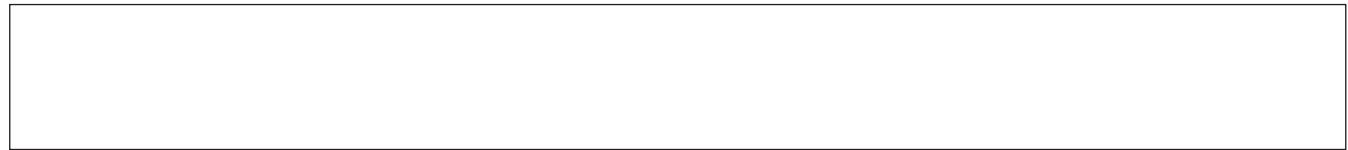
During the three years of the grant, 72 classrooms have been opened to serve 1440 students. Of those 1440 seats, 1337 or 92.8% of them are serving eligible children in 2017. With the addition of these 1337 eligible children to the 18,107 eligible children served in Voluntary Pre-K, Tennessee is now serving approximately 23.4% of the state's four year old population. In addition to the new expansion classrooms, 234 existing classrooms are receiving improvements, including professional development, instructional coaching support, materials, furnishings and comprehensive student supports.

Moving forward, both subgrantees are focused on recruitment efforts to fill all available seats and increase the enrollment of students with IEPs. Robust recruitment plans continue to be refined, and include strategies and systems such as:

- Further development and management of the data system for student assignment, systems for selecting eligible applicants and acceptance notifications that occur earlier in the registration process
- Review of enrollment reports which identify enrollment counts, vacancy counts and wait list counts. This weekly review allows the team to identify in a timely and efficient manner the sites and classroom that have vacancies. Applicants on the waiting list are offered the opportunity to enroll at the site with a vacancy. The Pre-K Department, Student Assignment and the Family Information Center partner together to email or call families to quickly offer vacant seats to applicants and their families.
- The English Language Department provides support and assistance to eligible English Language Learners to apply and accept seats.
- The Communications department provides clear communication on the steps to apply, accept and enroll in pre-K using multiple media types to inform the community. These include school websites, local newspapers, school signs at major intersections, and flyers in various establishments across the district, community meetings, and canvassing neighborhoods
- The Extended Care department provides information on extended learning opportunities and locations for pre-K students as registration is occurring
- The Family Information Centers assist in providing information to families and assists in the registration and acceptance process.
- Development of a recruitment and selection calendar that outlines enrollment dates, acceptance dates and dates for accessing roster, waitlist and vacancy reports
- Collaboration with community childcare and local Head Start grantees to seek out eligible students for all programs

**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.

The fall enrollment for the state Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program for 2017 is 18,107 which represents approximately 21.8% of 4 year olds in the state. This is a decrease from the 2016 when VPK served 18,615 students, and reflects the state's shift to a competitive grant funding model focused on quality indicators. Similar to the work with PDG, Tennessee has strengthened expectations, requirements, and monitoring for VPK to ensure that grant recipients serve income eligible four year olds in classrooms that implement high quality instructional practices. During the 2017 application and funding cycle, 18 under enrolled classrooms were not funded, and these resources were re-purposed for statewide curriculum purchases. With a greater emphasis on quality and as districts demonstrate their ability to meet higher expectations, these classrooms will be redeployed.



**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.

In March 2017, Tennessee entered into a contract with WestEd for the use of the DRDP-K as Tennessee's Kindergarten Entry Inventory (KEI). The KEI measures the five domains of school readiness: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional, Language and Literacy, Math Cognition and Physical Development. The KEI is intended to be administered in the first six to eight weeks of Kindergarten.

During the fall 2017 administration, the KEI was administered for the first time in all PDG districts, and 13 additional pilot districts across the state, with more than 17,000 Kindergarten students. The state is planning for statewide implementation in fall 2018.

In preparation for the fall administration, the state provided in depth, two-day training and stipends for all Kindergarten teachers. Over 998 teachers participated in this summer training. Staff from WestEd provided the training and additional on site support throughout the administration process. Training was also provided for principals, coaches and district leaders. Follow up activities have included surveys and focus groups to gather information for continuous improvement, and plans are underway to strengthen teachers' observational skills, classroom structures and systems that support observation, understanding of the KEI tool, and how to effectively use the data to accelerate student growth.

Upon completion of the KEI, individual student and classroom reports were available at the school level. Districts also had the ability to view school reports and aggregate and analyze all data. WestEd prepared state level reports that provided aggregate scores for the participating districts, broken down by student subgroups, and by district and domain. Since this was our state's first year of implementation, the standards setting process for Tennessee will occur this summer. In the absence of Tennessee specific cut scores, school readiness data was determined based on cut scores from California where the KEI was developed and normed.

Tennessee's definition of "school readiness" currently reflects the expected performance levels of students at the beginning of Kindergarten as measured along the developmental continuum of the KEI for the five domains of school readiness. Following the summer standards setting process, Tennessee's definition will reflect the expectations of Tennessee educators in alignment with our Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards and K-12 Academic Standards.

As Tennessee moves towards statewide implementation of the KEI and refines its definition of school readiness, data from the KEI will be used to differentiate instruction for students and accelerate student growth. Additionally, as Kindergarten teachers grow in their ability to effectively use the KEI tool, it is anticipated that instructional practices will improve and reflect more developmentally appropriate instruction. Furthermore, teachers' understanding of the KEI data will enhance the development of student growth portfolios used for annual evaluation and strengthen Response to Instruction and Intervention practices.

From the fall 2017 data, we know that approximately 10,300 of the 17,500 kindergarten students who were assessed were not enrolled in any public TN pre-K in 2016-17. Approximately 3,800 students were enrolled in a non-PDG pre-K school, and 3,400 were enrolled in a PDG pre-K school. Kindergarten readiness (proficient in 3 or more domains as determined by CA cut scores) was highest among students from PDG schools:

	Total KEI Tested	% Kindergarten Ready
<b>Non-preK</b>	10,307	15%
<b>Other pre-K</b>	3791	19%
<b>PDG pre-K</b>	3385	24%

Among PDG participants, kindergarten readiness was lowest for Sped and EL students:

	Total KEI Tested	% Kindergarten Ready
<b>Male</b>	1767	21%
<b>Female</b>	1618	28%
<b>Sped</b>	441	10%
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	1066	24%
<b>English Learner</b>	347	13%
<b>Black</b>	1911	25%
<b>Hispanic</b>	693	19%
<b>White</b>	663	27%
<b>Other</b>	118	31%

These data establish our baseline and will be disaggregated to determine patterns and trends in student performance that can be used for continuous improvement.

***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.**

## **Section A: Part B - Selection Criteria**

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

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

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

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

The State has used funds received over the grant period for the following purposes: 1) to provide instructional support for quality enhancements; 2) to monitor grant implementation and develop statewide processes for monitoring; 3) to develop data systems for monitoring and analysis; 4) to ensure appropriate use of funds; and 5) to conduct a robust evaluation that informs continuous improvement efforts.

In the third year of implementation, Tennessee has focused time and effort on monitoring activities, as well as supporting and consulting with our Subgrantees to fully implement PDG objectives. Technical assistance from partners such as CEELO, the Alliance for Early Success, the Ounce of Prevention and other states has informed these efforts as we further develop and implement our plan to increase quality across our Subgrantee classrooms and our state's voluntary pre-K program.

A description of our progress and next steps on each of the structural elements Tennessee is strengthening are as follows:

#### **(a) Enhancing or expanding Early Learning and Development Standards -**

The Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards (TN ELDS) were originally adopted by the Tennessee State Board of Education in August 2012. In August 2017, the state proposed a set of revisions to ensure strong transitions between Pre-K and Kindergarten and greater alignment with the new Tennessee Academic Standards for Kindergarten that were adopted in 2016. The newly revised TN ELDS were officially approved in January 2018. Training on these new standards will occur this spring as part of the Early Learning Model (ELM) training series that is provided to districts across the state.

#### **(b) Implementing Program Standards consistent with a High-Quality Preschool Program -**

The program standards in Tennessee are aligned with new, more rigorous Pre-K Guidelines and Compliance Standards (including health and safety) that were adopted in 2017. These standards are evaluated twice each year through onsite visits conducted by TDOE Program Evaluators.

#### **(c) Supporting programs in meeting the needs of children with disabilities and English learners, including in workforce development -**

The Subgrantees are focused on providing an inclusive education for all children. The emphasis for this work is on professional development and coaching support for inclusive practice. MNPS has added an Exceptional Education coaching position to assist pre-K teachers and teachers in the K-grade 3 continuum to support inclusion, along with an English Language Learner coach to support teachers with language acquisition strategies. In Shelby County, PDG teachers work closely with preschool 619 teachers in order to increase inclusion rates in Pre-K classrooms when students are assigned to 619

classes. Additionally, one-on-one support from a specialist is also available to support teachers and students as needed in the classroom.

**(d) Conducting a needs assessment to determine the current availability of High-Quality Preschool Programs, including private and faith-based providers and Head Start programs -**

As part of the expansion planning for new classrooms, each Subgrantee conducted a needs assessment to determine the number of additional classroom seats that are needed by considering the current availability of seats, the number of kindergarten students and projected growth in high need communities. In order to ensure that classrooms are located in areas of high need, some of the expansion classrooms are located in community settings (child care centers) in order to provide greater access. There is a 92.8% utilization of these new slots with eligible children because of this strategic placement of classrooms.

**(e) Establishing or upgrading preschool teacher education and licensure requirements -**

Tennessee requires that all pre-K public school teachers hold a Bachelor's degree and Early Childhood Education certification, as specified in TCA § 49-6-104 (b)(2).

**(f) Improvements to teacher and administrator early education training programs and professional development -**

Tennessee is engaged in a comprehensive and strategic effort to provide high quality professional development for teachers, leaders, teaching assistants, and instructional coaches working in early childhood (defined as birth to grade 3). To date, this work has included: 1) Early Learning Model (ELM) Phase I and II training for leadership teams focused on indicators of quality for early childhood programs, 2) TEAM (the state's teacher evaluation model) recertification for early grades evaluators is required to focus on high quality early childhood and early literacy practices, 3) Pre-K/K Student Growth Portfolios are now a state requirement for all Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers as part of their annual evaluation and professional development on the portfolio process has been provided to teachers and leaders, 4) professional development focused on social and emotional development has been provided through Pyramid Model training, and 5) training opportunities on classroom assessment tools such as CLASS, ECERS and ELLCO.

**(g) Implementing a Statewide Longitudinal Data System to link preschool and elementary and secondary school data-**

A statewide student data system is already in place to link preschool data with elementary and secondary school data. The PDG data manager monitors pre-K enrollment data to ensure data accuracy from the Subgrantees. These improved practices have provided more accurate reporting of eligible children and other grant-required data. Additionally, these practices enable the state's research and evaluation team to conduct analyses that assess the impact of pre-K on later student outcomes.

**(h) A Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment System -**

Tennessee has developed a comprehensive early learning assessment system that includes measures that span from Pre-K to grade 3. The components include the following: 1) PRI assessments conducted in PDG districts that include a full assessment battery to benchmark progress and use for continuous improvement; 2) Kindergarten Entry Inventory (KEI) to assess kindergarten readiness at the beginning of the school year; 3) Student growth portfolios in pre-K and kindergarten (optional in grade 1) to measure teacher effectiveness in the early grades; 4) An optional second grade assessment, aligned to the state's grade 3-8 TNReady assessments, as an early indicator of student performance in ELA and math; and 5) State required TNReady assessments in English, math, science and social studies to assess students' mastery of grade level standards. PDG funds directly support the PRI assessments and support for the Kindergarten Entry Inventory.

**(i) Building preschool programs' capacity to engage parents in decisions about their children's education and development, help families build protective factors, and help parents support their children's**

**learning at home -**

The state of Tennessee has created a KidCentralTN website (<http://kidcentraltn.com/>) that provides resources and information for families about childhood development and services that are available to them. In addition each Subgrantee is using funds to enhance the comprehensive services that children and families receive. Included in these services are physical health screenings and referrals, family supports within the communities for aftercare, mental health services, basic needs (food and clothing as needed), sharing developmentally appropriate practices through connecting community partners (libraries, museums, zoos & parks), and implementing transition planning to and from pre-K to support children and families from one education system to another. These are described in more detail in "The progress the State has made in establishing High-Quality Preschool Programs" section. Within the state pre-K guidelines, family engagement is required. Additional parent teacher conferences are expected as well as home visiting.

**(j) Building State- and community-level support for High-Quality Preschool Programs through systemic linkages to other early learning programs and resources to support families, such as child health, mental health, family support, nutrition, child welfare, and adult education and training sectors -**

Tennessee has a Readiness Model that links families, children, schools and communities in a framework of support. Building off of our state funded pre-K model, each PDG district has a community advisory council to identify community needs and availability of resources. One example of this is the Mayor of Nashville's "High Quality Start for All" initiative designed to strengthen pre-K opportunities and access for all four year olds in Nashville. Similar to this effort, Seeding Success is a non-profit organization in Shelby County focused on creating strategic systems to support the cradle to career continuum by collectively bringing together a cross section of public and private organizations, governmental agencies, interventions, investments, policies, and accountability systems to intentionally disrupt the current causes and effects of systemic poverty. This comprehensive approach involves an investment in a high quality Early Childhood Education system that supports children and their families from prenatal to third grade by aligning early home visitation, quality childcare centers, and fully funded Pre-K in Shelby County. Additionally, a new statewide pre-K advocacy group called Tennesseans for Quality Early Education (TQEE) was established this year and is bringing together key stakeholders from across the state to lead policy efforts focused on early childhood issues. TDOE staff from the Office of Early Learning and the PDG educational consultants serve as members on these various councils.

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

In addition to the activities already highlighted, the state is engaged in several other initiatives to support the delivery of high-quality preschool programs for eligible children. A solicitation for pre-K curriculum was recently released and in the coming weeks, early childhood educators will review submitted materials for alignment with state standards and high quality instructional practices which will result in a list of state-approved curricula for use in pre-K classrooms. The state is also engaged in a statewide sampling of classroom quality using the CLASS assessment. This semester, 200 classrooms across the state are being assessed to establish a baseline measure of quality. Using funds from the PDG Supplemental Grant, plans are underway to assess every PDG and VPK classroom in the state next fall.

In another effort to highlight the importance of high quality early learning experiences, an Early Childhood Summit is being planned for this summer. Districts will have the opportunity to bring a team to engage in a full day of professional development, featuring several expert keynote speakers and breakout sessions designed to showcase best practices in the field. Finally, the state is also exploring opportunities to create a data management system that will house pre-K data from a variety of sources to be used for future analysis and evaluation.

## **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.

Tennessee's state funded Voluntary Pre-K program currently requires many of the structural elements identified in this section through state law T.C.A. 49-6-101 --110. As such, all PDG classrooms adhere to these same requirements. In addition, the following information is provided to demonstrate how all of the structural elements are met. When a structural element has been targeted by Tennessee using PDG funds a summary of Subgrantee activities are included. Also included is a brief description of how each element is monitored as a state focus in 2017-2018. All documentation is maintained by the TDOE Office of Early Learning.

- *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;*

In Tennessee, pre-K teachers are required to hold a bachelor's degree and teacher licensure in early childhood education. There are several different certifications that meet this requirement. Currently our licensure endorsements include a dual general education and special education license for birth through kindergarten, or a pre-K-3 grade license, in either general education or special education. Previously offered endorsements also cover licensure to teach pre-K-4 grade. Teacher assistants are required to hold a minimum of a Child Development Credential, if available. If not, the assistant must have a high school diploma and prior experience working in an early childhood classroom.

**Monitoring:** **This is required by state law.** Subgrantees provide all staff licensure and degree information to the state in the ePlan management system. This system is monitored by PDG educational consultants. Staff qualifications are checked annually by TDOE program evaluators.

- *High-quality professional development for all staff*

All staff are required to have 18 hours of professional development in their first year of hire, including child abuse reporting and personal safety, and 12 hours of professional development in subsequent years. All professional development must be related to early childhood development or education. With the passage of revised state Preschool Rules and Regulations, the required professional development hours will increase to 24 hours annually in year four of the grant.

**Monitoring:** **This is required by state law.** Subgrantees provide PDG educational consultants documentation of professional development provided to educational staff. Additionally, a record of staff (teacher and teaching assistants) professional development hours are maintained in a school binder that is checked annually by TDOE program evaluators.

**This structural element is a point of emphasis for TN PDG. A summary of Subgrantee activities follows:**

- Districts are committed to ensuring that educators are provided with ample opportunities to learn and develop, and that they have access to research-based practices that impact student outcomes
- Pre-K staff in several districts were provided with a comprehensive training for all new employees. MNPS again implemented a one day "Tying it all together" training to have all staff on the same page for the year focusing on health and safety, compliance, district policies, school year priorities and non-negotiables determined by evidenced based practices and data collected by Peabody Research Institute (PRI), and teacher/staff evaluations.
- All districts provided on-going trainings tailored to individual and district wide needs of teachers and staff. Some professional development topics have included (but are not limited to): Curriculum Training, ECERS, ELLCO, Developmentally Appropriate Practices, TN Early Learning Developmental Standards, Health and Safety Curriculum, Developing Lesson Plans, Individualizing, Screenings/

Assessments, Education Forms/Children Files, Child Supervision, Daily Observations, Pyramid Model (social and emotional development), Language and Literacy, Instructional Transitions, Constructivism, Comprehensive Services, Family Engagement, Building Strong Brains for Trauma Informed Practices for Educators and Inclusion Practices. All professional development activities were used to ensure that teachers, teaching assistants, coaches and administrators acquire the skills that are needed to support the development of the whole child in early childhood classrooms.

- Other staff development activities include job-embedded coaching, continuous improvement strategies focused on goal setting and areas of refinement identified through the state teacher evaluation process. One on one coaching and training occur as needed to individualize training options.
- MNPS had 187 Pre-K teachers who, through PDG, have benefitted from numerous professional development opportunities. All Pre-K teachers have participated in a minimum of 24 hours of training, resulting in over 4000 hours of training. A minimum of 187 Educational Assistants received 12 hours of training, resulting in over 2,000 hours of training.
- In Shelby County, teacher assistants that do not hold a Child Development Associate (CDA) degree or beyond are enrolled in a CDA course through Southwest TN Community College. The cohort meets monthly for 12 months with a certified CDA college professor.
- Also in Shelby County, new teachers met monthly to learn about highly effective pedagogical practices from veteran early childhood teachers, advisors, and principals.
- All Subgrantees participated in state provided ELM training in 2017.

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

Child-to-instructional staff ratios are 1 to 10 at all times, except during nap or rest time. This includes outdoor time or participation in any activity outside the classroom

Monitoring: **This is required by state law.** Child-to-instructional staff ratios are monitored by TDOE staff at least twice a year.

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

Class size capacity is 20 children. It requires at least one licensed and early childhood endorsed teacher.

Monitoring: **This is required by state law.** TDOE program evaluators and education consultants monitor capacity in classroom visits at least three times a year. The PDG data manager also conducts desktop monitoring of classroom enrollment.

- *A Full-Day program*

The pre-K day operates a minimum of 6 hours and may include a thirty minute nap time.

Monitoring: **This is required by state law.** TDOE program evaluators check schedules during classroom visits at least twice a year.

- *Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities*

Inclusion of children with disabilities is strongly encouraged. This is beyond the occasional visit of children with special needs to participate with their peers in outside activities or other planned special activities. Approximately 10% of children enrolled in our state funded pre-K program are children with IEPs. Accommodations are made to ensure full participation of all students. PDG classrooms are expected to serve at least 6.4% children with disabilities. If they are not meeting this expectation, Subgrantees must develop and submit a plan to improve inclusion rates.

Monitoring: PDG data manager monitors classroom enrollment and identifies the percentage of children with disabilities being served in PDG classrooms. Education consultants verify this information during classroom visits.

**This structural element is a point of emphasis for TN PDG. Each district has taken steps to include**

**and support children with disabilities to include children with disabilities in the PDG expansion classrooms. The following describe some of the activities and collaborations that have occurred in year three:**

- The Achievement School District has an established early childhood referral process with community agencies and surrounding districts. Operators conduct ongoing child find methods including: collaboration with local child care facilities and head start programs to provide information about the preschool referral process and aide with intervention strategies. As well, based on district assessment data, screening results and observations the teachers will make recommendation for interventions and/or referrals for ASD zoned students.
- In Shelby County Schools teachers have collaborated with 619 preschool teachers in order to have greater inclusion rates in Pre-K classrooms. Students from the 619 preschool classes visit the typical Pre-K classes to engage in activities including morning meeting, center time, and small group instruction as defined in the students' IEP.
- Through PDG funds, MNPS put additional systems in place to support inclusion. This includes employing an Exceptional Education coach who has provided trainings to support coaches, teachers and teaching assistants to implement strategies to provide differentiated instruction in the classroom. Through a continuum of services model, students with disabilities have been placed in general education settings all year with support of push in and/or pull out (if needed). This model is individualized for each student and there is a transition period for the student and family to ensure correct placement and services at the time of entry. MNPS has found this model to be highly successful as measured by student IEP goals and school wide social-emotional goals, and will be expanded for 2018-2019 school year.

- *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*

Classrooms are required to adhere to a scope of services specific to VPK as well as the State Board of Education's Early Childhood Policy which addresses the requirement to use a state approved comprehensive curriculum, to provide hands on learning experiences, to be culturally and linguistically responsive to all students and families and to connect learning activities to the state's early learning development standards for four year olds

Monitoring: Education consultants monitor Subgrantee curricula and document instructional practices during classroom observations.

**This structural element is a point of emphasis for TN PDG. A summary of Subgrantee activities follows:**

- The Shelby County Consortium currently utilizes the Opening the World of Learning (OWL) Comprehensive Curriculum. The OWL curriculum is comprehensive and aligned to the Tennessee academic state standards and TN-ELDS and includes research-based, field-tested content in oral language and literacy skills
- In both MNPS and the Shelby County Consortium several classrooms implement the Montessori curriculum and serve multi-age classrooms.
- In MNPS, PDG funding allowed the district to adopt and implement Creative Curriculum, which is aligned with the TN-ELDS. MNPS uses a constructivist approach to learning and has incorporated additional evidenced-based literacy and math supports that are also aligned with TN-ELDS. The grant has allowed the district to provide professional development in Creative Curriculum and fidelity of implementation, along with Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment.

- *Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities*

Across Subgrantees, children receive a variety of individualized learning experiences to foster social, intellectual, physical and emotional growth. Children participate in indoor and outdoor play and are introduced to the concepts of literacy, language, science, social studies, math etc. They are encouraged

to express their feelings, develop self-confidence and their ability to get along with others. Additional materials and resources have been purchased to ensure that all students have access to high quality instructional materials.

Teachers receive professional development on strategies for organizing classrooms, classroom management and for leading effective small groups to promote independent student learning.

Monitoring: Education consultants monitor Subgrantee curricula and document instructional practices during classroom observations.

- *Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff*

Teachers hired by the school district are compensated using the same pay scale and have the same rights as any other K-12 teacher.

Monitoring: Each Subgrantee school district publically publishes its salary scale.

- *Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement*

The TDOE contracts with the Peabody Research Institute using a portion of its administrative funds for a comprehensive program evaluation. Results are shared with Subgrantees annually to inform continuous improvement efforts.

Monitoring: TDOE collaborates with PRI staff to support data collection throughout the year. Educational consultants schedule the annual meeting to report evaluation findings and support district planning for 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*

Funding from this grant was awarded to Subgrantees to provide access to comprehensive services that were not already in place were not already in place prior to the grant. These services include assessments of students, as well as providing health, mental health, and counseling to families as requested or necessary.

Monitoring: Data documenting the provision of comprehensive services and family engagement activities is submitted by Subgrantees on a quarterly basis. Education consultants review this documentation during quarterly visits.

**This structural element is a point of emphasis for TN PDG. Tennessee's plan for improving existing classrooms includes the provision of comprehensive services to enhance family engagement, increase family involvement, and help families access resources within the communities where they live. Each Subgrantee has implemented a variety of comprehensive services ranging from health screenings to parent education workshops to helping families find basic needs in their communities. The following are descriptions of some services provided through grant funding:**

**Shelby County Consortium:**

- In order to better serve children and meet their needs, the SCC has contracted with the non-profit organization Porter-Leath to provide services to children and families. The following screenings are provided for all eligible pre-K children:
  - Speech/language screenings
  - Mental health screenings - providers address the social/emotional needs of children while also providing strategies for parents and teachers to better meet the needs of pre-K children.
  - Dental health screenings
  - Nutrition consulting services

- Vision screenings
- Blood lead screenings conducted by registered nurses
- Rehabilitation services
- Hearing screenings
- Developmental screenings
- Other community partnerships in Shelby County include Lebonheur, Christ Community Health Services, University of Memphis School of Nursing, Memphis and Shelby County Health Department, Le Bonheur L.E.A.D, and Southern College of Optometry,
- Contracted family service staff develop family partnership goals with parents that will help to identify the need for resource and referral within the community. This information is tracked to determine goal attainment for families and to ensure that pre-K staff are meeting the needs of families as identified in their family partnership goals. Family engagement and family/community services can include: individualized meetings with each incoming family; Family Enrichment Center with spaces to meet and talk, computers for parents to use for job searches, and books on child development; classes on parenting, curriculum, and other topics; AmeriCorps VISTA providing volunteers, mentors, and community service opportunities; before and after care for families who enroll (a below-market fee applies or scholarships are available as needed); and Family Service Advocate assigned to each classroom.
- Parents play an active role in all aspects of the program. Through their involvement and other training and activities, parents also have the opportunity to gain skills and secure employment. A case management approach assists families in assessing their own needs, identifying and securing services and building upon their individual strengths. A variety of community resources are available to families, in addition to crisis intervention and emergency assistance. During the enrollment process, each family is introduced to an assessment analysis that identifies the needs of the family (ex. education, employment, housing, transportation, etc.) and creates strategies and time-frames relative to the goals. Family Service Workers work closely with community agencies as advocates to the parents and to the Early Childhood programs. Mental health professionals work with staff and parents to increase awareness of the special problems of children and provide a link to mental health resources. Referrals are submitted to the Mental Health unit and a team of staff work collaborative to establish a Mental Health Plan that meets the needs of the child.

#### **MNPS**

- During year three, with the support of PDG-E funds, MNPS continued to contract with, Well Child, and Conexion Americas to implement specialized comprehensive services to Pre-K students. In addition, MNPS Family Engagement Specialist and Social Workers continued to engage and support families.
- During year three, MNPS provided vision and hearing screenings for all Pre-K students. Well Child is prioritizing screening students who are located in schools who are receiving PDG-E funding first.
- In year three the Family Engagement Coordinator and six Pre-K Family Engagement Specialists (FES) made changes in their strategy and approach this year including identifying schools by tiers and creating a monthly pacing guide to ensure that all of tier 2 and 3 schools were receiving monthly workshops. Workshops changed as well; FES staff shortened workshops to 30 minutes instead of an hour and made the format entirely hands on so that families could fully experience practicing activities at school and then reinforcing them at home with their child. The feedback from families has been tremendous in that these changes have helped them feel more equipped and empowered to better support their young learners with academic and developmental skills. These changes have increased the numbers of workshops held and the number of parents attending. In the 2016-2017 school year three32 workshops/ events were held with 5,298 participants. In fall of 2017 (half of a school year) 284 workshops/ events were held with 4,460 participants.

- Last year Pre-Kindergarten's chronic absence data showed 28.3% of Pre-K students were chronically absent. The Pre-Kindergarten Leadership staff has implemented a number of strategies to address this area of concern. This year families signed an Attendance Agreement outlining specific attendance expectations. Teachers were trained to implement specific strategies to monitor, support and report families showing signs of chronic absenteeism. FES provided workshops that included information on the importance of having your child at school and provided personalized support to families. Using funds from the Preschool Development Grant an Attendance Specialist was hired to pull reports, analyze data, and communicate with families that have 3 and 5 days of unexcused absences. Families with 3 unexcused absences are reported to the Social Worker, so that the social worker can provide any needed support to families. In addition to seeking support from the Social Worker, families with five unexcused absences must work with the teacher to develop an attendance plan. Reports are shared with the Pre-Kindergarten Leadership Team to discuss any needed support the team can provide to the school site or family. Articles are written in the monthly Pre-Kindergarten Newsletters provided for school staff (teachers, educational assistants and administrators) and in the monthly Pre-Kindergarten Family Newsletters provided to families. Data reported over the 1st semester shows some significant improvement each month in the number of families with unexcused absences. In 2016-2017, Pre-Kindergarten ended the year with 28.3% of all Pre-K students reaching Chronic Absenteeism. As of January 2018, only 19% of all Pre-K students have reached Chronic Absenteeism, which is a 9.3% decrease in chronic absenteeism at the mid-year point.
- In year three, the PDG social workers have been reassigned to the K-12 social work department within MNPS. This was to allow the pre- K roles to become sustainable at the end of the grant, when the department will become a pre-K-12 department. In the first semester of the 2017-2018 school year, social workers assisted 48 families across the PDG expansion classrooms.

• *Evidence-based health and safety standards*

State School Board Rules 0520-2-01-.01 --.16 provide evidence based health and safety standards with which all schools must be in compliance. TDOE program evaluators are required to make a minimum of two onsite monitoring visits per year

**Monitoring: This is required by state law.** TDOE program evaluators make one announced and one unannounced visit to all classrooms during a school year. All documentation and corrective actions are maintained by the office of early learning.

### Selection Criteria (D)(4) from NIA

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

The actual number of eligible children served in new preschool slots for year three in the Shelby County Consortium was 921 (out of 1000 new slots) or 92.1% usage. Each of the new slots in the Shelby County Consortium costs \$7622. The total new preschool slots in the Shelby County Consortium in years one through three equals 1000. The final 120 were opened in year three. Shelby County Consortium has improved 660 slots in year three of the grant. Each of the improved slots in the Shelby County Consortium costs \$1248 per slot.

The actual number of eligible children served in new preschool slots for year three in MNPS Early Learning Centers is 130(out of 140 new slots) or 93% usage. Each new slot in the Early Learning Center costs \$11031 per slot. The actual number of eligible children served in new preschool slots for year three in MNPS site based is 286 (out of a 300 new slots) or 95% usage. Each new slot at a site based costs \$7905. The total new preschool slots added in MNPS equal 440. The actual number eligible children served in improved preschool slots for year three in MNPS is 2074 at cost of \$1531 per slot. The difference between the actual numbers and target numbers in MNPS are attributed to the district diversity goal to ensure racial, ethnic, cultural and socio-

economic diversity in classrooms across the district, including pre-K. As such, some students enrolled in grant funded enhanced preschool classrooms may not meet the eligibility requirements documented in this grant.

### **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 Tennessee Department of Education has partnered with each of the Subgrantees to build strong relationships and open communication. The state developed a scope of work document in an effort to help districts track their progress and to allow the state to monitor progress bi-annually for grant compliance (see attached document in Grads360). The scope of work document, completed annually, requires districts to describe and detail implementation plans for each activity funded through the grant, provide an evaluation strategy and identify outcome goals for each activity. The scope of work document is linked to a budget document that identifies the costs of the activities. The scope of work is approved by the state before funding is released and then monitored through the year for compliance. For year three the monitoring protocol was strengthened to require more detail of specific services provided by the grant funding and actual data of families and children served. Monitoring of the scope of work occurred quarterly for year three.

Subgrantees submitted budgets and an electronic scope of work for approval in the state's ePlan system in order to access grant funds. The ePlan system assists the state in desktop monitoring throughout the year. Districts document teaching assignments, teacher certification, budget changes, and teacher action plans that are required by the state. Once approved, Subgrantees can access funds to meet all proposed grant activities. Educational consultants provided technical assistance to complete this process and monitor ePlan regularly for changes. Consultants also maintain weekly contact with each districts' pre-K coordinating team, and conduct in person district team meetings quarterly in both MNPS and the Shelby County Consortium.

#### **Progress by Topic**

##### **Establishment of roles and responsibilities of the State and Subgrantee toward implementing the State's plan;**

In order to maximize efficiency and integration of the expansion program with existing state and local preschool programs, the roles and responsibilities associated with the implementation of this project plan closely follow those associated with implementation of the statewide Voluntary Pre-K program (VPK). Through these existing VPK roles and responsibilities, Tennessee has made clear its preference for local control and local accountability in carrying out the state's vision for early childhood education. Because of that preference, local communities are able to develop their own priorities around early childhood education, build coalitions, and engage stakeholders to ensure local priorities are met and plan for sustainability. In the process Shelby County Consortium and MNPS have developed and are moving toward ambitious goals of their own, taking a leading role in moving towards high-quality preschool for every child in their communities. Because both Subgrantees already have significant experience administering VPK programs and both recently committed and allocated new funding to their preschool programs, the state elected to delegate the allocation of new preschool classrooms and seats to local decision makers. Both Subgrantees have established their own committees to review applications for funding and allocated classrooms according to agreed-upon criteria. The state continues to provide program administration, monitoring, oversight, and technical assistance through the use of the eplan system, quarterly meeting with district coordinators, professional development for staff and classroom observations by state consultants

##### **Increasing organizational capacity and infrastructure of the Subgrantee to provide High-Quality Preschool Programs, either directly or indirectly through an Early Learning Provider(s);**

Tennessee's Office of Early Learning (OEL), currently administers the VPK program. Its responsibilities include developing program requirements and expectations, reviewing competitive grant applications, determining levels of funding, program administration, monitoring, data collection, technical assistance, training, and family literacy and health consultations. OEL is responsible for data collection and filing of all state and federal

progress reports for all programs.

In the spirit of local ownership, both Shelby County Consortium and MNPS have carried out the expansion program through slightly different methods. The differentiated strategies take into account their existing education and early childhood infrastructures, the different stakeholders in each community, and the local investments in quality already underway in those communities. The state, through the Office of Early Learning, oversees all grant funds; distributes expansion funds to Early Learning Providers according to the recommendations of each Subgrantee; collects and compiles all required student and classroom data to fulfill state, federal, and grant requirements; establishes standards for the responsible use of grant funds; and ensures that all Early Learning Programs receiving expansion funding are meeting those standards.

**Ensuring that each Subgrantee minimizes local administrative costs;**

Each Subgrantee submitted a budget including a line item for administrative costs. These budgets were reviewed and approved by the TDOE. Amendments must be made if changes in any line exceeds 15% or more of the original budget. The state's electronic system is set up so that funds cannot be drawn down if line item amounts do not align with the requests for payment. Amendments are encouraged to be held no more than twice during the grant period, approximately six months after the grant period begins and two to three months prior to the end of the grant period. In year 3, MNPS applied and was approved for an amendment to use carryover funds to purchase furnishings and materials to improve all classrooms and support the effective use of the new curriculum. None of the other Subgrantees submitted amendments to their original budget.

**Monitoring Early Learning Providers to ensure they are delivering High-Quality Preschool Programs;**

The TDOE already monitors preschool programs operated by school districts and works with the Department of Human Services and the Subgrantees to ensure classrooms located in DHS facilities meet the highest rating for quality as defined by the Stars Quality Rating and State Report Card. Monitors and providers are already well-versed in these quality metrics and stakeholders already had a clear set of expectations.

Classrooms are monitored twice a year by program evaluators unless further observations are necessary due to non-compliance of state rules and regulations. In year 3 Educational Consultants have observed in the majority of new expansion classrooms. Each visit is documented and shared with the Subgrantees. Suggestions are provided as needed to classroom teachers and coaches. ECERS-R was used in the fall of 2017 to observe in the 5 new Shelby County Schools locations and any classroom with a new teacher or a classroom that was moved to a new location within the building. A total of 18 ECERS observations were completed in the Shelby County Consortium. All classrooms complete an action plan following the observation. All classrooms that receive a score less than 2.5 will be observed using ECERS-R again in Spring 2018. ECERS-R was completed in 10 MNPS PDG-E classrooms. All classrooms complete an action plan following the observation.

**Coordination of plans related to assessments, data sharing, instructional tools, family engagement, cross-sector and comprehensive services efforts, professional development, and workforce and leadership development;**

Each school district has identified one or two point people through which all communication regarding the grant is channeled and they are responsible for coordinating the activities of their district. Some of the responsibilities of these people include establishing terms regarding data sharing and tackling roadblocks to enhance the interoperability of data systems. This is done in conjunction with the input from their district's Office of Research, Assessment & Evaluation and the state and local data management offices. In addition, these individuals are responsible for structuring data sharing agreements with comprehensive community service providers to assess the quality of services and impact on student learning. They also collaboratively design summer professional development and trainings to be offered by the state and Subgrantees. Finally, they are responsible for aggregating, reviewing, and providing input on family engagement strategies based on findings from the annual family satisfaction survey.

**Delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children who may be in need of additional supports, such as:**

- Children with disabilities or developmental delays***
- English learners***

- ***Children who reside on "Indian lands"***
- ***Migrant children***
- ***Homeless children***
- ***Children in the child welfare system***
- ***Children who reside in rural or tribal areas***
- ***Children from military families***
- ***Other children as identified by the State***

The data found in Table A.3(a) and Table A.3(b) identifies the very diverse population being served in our expansion preschool classrooms. Because the grant districts are located in very urban settings this accounts for the lack of any children from migrant families or those who reside on Indian lands. Additionally, since these Subgrantees are located in large urban cities, they have access to many resources to meet the diverse needs of their population and the comprehensive services provided by the grant assists families in accessing these resources. MNPS has highest number of English language learners of the Subgrantees. As part of the grant they are supporting an English Language Learner coach to support teachers working with these dual language learners.

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

The Subgrantees are required to document their process for enrollment and registration as well as provide documentation of family engagement activities and opportunities. Each district has many strategies already in place to reach families who might otherwise be overlooked. Both Subgrantees employ strategies such as translation services, and family engagement specialists who conduct workshops and formal outreach. Shelby County offers a community celebration fair focused on preschool students where families can receive a variety of information about preschool, health and dental services, and other types of family support. MNPS offers the Parent Ambassador Program, started by the Mayor's office and Metro Schools which pairs immigrant families with host families in Nashville.

#### **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).

Early Foundations and Literacy is a key priority in Tennessee's state strategic plan and last year the TDOE created a new division to lead this work focused on the birth to third grade continuum. This year, a number of key strategies have been implemented to strengthen instruction and alignment between grades to ensure continuous growth and learning through seamless transitions for students. TDOE partnered with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to strengthen early learning opportunities for children in public and private childcare settings. Building on new rules and regulations adopted last year that require all childcare workers to have a minimum of six hours of professional development on early literacy, the DOE and DHS identified 200 classrooms to participate in a pilot during the 2017-18 school year, whereby the required professional development is provided by the DOE (linked to the state's K-3 reading initiative) and supported with coaching activities throughout the year. Additionally, participating classrooms received books and materials provided by the state's Books from Birth program.

The DOE has also been intentional in its efforts to improve the quality of instruction in its state-funded Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program. Using the findings from the Vanderbilt study of pre-K efficacy, the state's funding application was significantly revised to focus on structural, programmatic, and instructional indicators

of high quality. Funds were awarded to districts that demonstrated strong efforts to recruit and serve the targeted student population, implement strong instructional practices including appropriate use of time during the day, and provide teachers and teaching assistants with strong professional development and classroom supports. A tiered system of support was also put in place for districts that demonstrated need based on their application. This support has included intensive professional development and coaching for instructional leaders.

Professional development was provided to all districts statewide through Early Learning Model Phase II training. These sessions have focused on developmentally appropriate, rigorous instructional practices to support and accelerate student learning.

A student growth portfolio in pre-K and K was implemented statewide this year. This portfolio represents a collection of student work as evidence that demonstrates student growth over the course of a year, and will constitute the 35% growth measure that is part of a teacher's annual summative evaluation score. This work is strategically structured to focus teachers' instructional practices on ensuring individual growth for all children towards mastery of the grade level standards, and provide opportunities for reflective practice and job-embedded professional development throughout the year.

The Kindergarten Entry Inventory was implemented in all PDG districts and additional pilot districts statewide. The information from the KEI will serve as a baseline indicator of kindergarten readiness and will be used for instructional decision making.

The state's Read to be Ready literacy campaign is focused on improving K-3 literacy instruction across the state and is anchored in research-based practices that build students' reading, listening, speaking, thinking and writing skills.

In addition to the work being led by the TDOE, all Subgrantees have strived to implement proposed continuum goals listed in the PDG application. Much of their work has been built on the foundation of collaboration across the continuum and providing opportunities for professional development for administrators and staff across age and grade levels.

## **1. Transitions for Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age Five**

- a) How your efforts expanded families' choices or activities that facilitated or improved families' access to programs and supports in their own communities;

As mentioned previously, the placement of expansion classrooms has been driven by a purposeful process that identifies community need for the targeted student population. This has resulted in greater access to high quality pre-K in both MNPS and the Shelby County Consortium.

Additionally, both Subgrantees are focused on providing access to comprehensive services. In MNPS all Pre-K Sites provide access to health screenings and family engagement support. Family Involvement Specialists and Family Advocates support families of children attending schools in some of the most culturally diverse areas of the city to assist them with understanding availability of and access to resources for them and their children. In the Shelby County Consortium school districts, Porter Leath provides comprehensive services such as health screenings and family support to all families in the expansion classrooms, as well as previously existing classrooms that did not have these services available. Services are diverse to meet the needs of the families. Both Subgrantees offer an open registration so that families can register and identify the top 3-5 schools they are interested in having their child attend.

- (b) How the State is working to ensure that High-Quality Preschool Programs will not diminish services or increase costs to families for other programs serving children from birth through age five?

Each of the Subgrantees has a demonstrated community need for additional preschool seats. Since Tennessee's plan for providing new high quality preschool seats was entirely funded with newly committed resources, there is an assumption that families who participate in this program were not currently receiving any of these services and therefore there should not be any negative impact on any existing services. Subgrantees work in collaboration with community partners and Head Start grantees to determine areas of need across their districts and to locate new preschool seats.

The following are examples of collaboration and training activities that have occurred in year two by the

Subgrantees in birth through age five program activities:

- Shelby County Schools established a collaboration with Porter-Leath on the opening of a state-of-the-art preschool and teacher training institute that will establish a continuum of early childhood education, from prenatal to age 5 and promote excellence for young children and their families.
- Shelby County Schools partners with Porter Leath to assist those parents enrolled in their Early Head Start program in transitioning into the Pre-K program smoothly.
- The Shelby County Schools Early Childhood Division and Porter Leath also partner with the Student Services Division to ensure families with students transitioning from Pre-K to Kindergarten know all of the necessary requirements for Kindergarten entry and are provided resources when needed.
- During year two and three, MNPS and NAAEYC collaborated, through a contract with Scholastic, to provide a full day training for community providers, placing emphasis on infants and toddlers. This training will strengthen the alignment from birth through Pre-K.
- During year three MNPS is collaborating with the local Head Start grantee to support children with IEPs in the Head Start program who will transition into MNPS kindergarten.
- MNPS Family Involvement Specialists (FIS) supported the birth to third grade alignment by inviting community agencies and childcare programs in their area to participate in trainings that were planned for the district pre-K teachers and families.

## **2. Transitions for Programs Serving Children from Kindergarten to Grade 3**

- (a) How the State will ensure that Eligible Children are well-prepared for kindergarten;

As previously noted, Tennessee is engaged in a number of statewide pre-K improvement efforts designed to improve teaching and learning. The KEI will provide important insights about students' readiness for kindergarten that can be linked to their pre-K classroom. Observed patterns and trends will help to inform future professional development. In addition, the state is also using PRI data to specifically address identified needs in PDG classrooms. Individual student information gathered from PRI assessments is also being collected to track student progress into kindergarten and across the grades. Student growth portfolios will also provide information about teacher effectiveness. This data will be assessed this summer and used to identify needed supports. This information can be compared to evaluation scores on ECERS-R and CLASS observations to assist us with an understanding of the teacher's style of interaction with the students, as well as the level of quality of the classroom environment.

- (b) Efforts and activities to sustain the educational and developmental gains of Eligible Children:

A focus on the birth to grade three continuum has heightened statewide awareness of the need to align instruction across the grades to address individual learning needs and ensure sustained student growth. A key state strategy is the implementation of a comprehensive system of assessments in the early grades that includes the student growth portfolio in pre-K and kindergarten, the KEI, an optional first grade portfolio, an optional second grade ELA and math assessment and required state assessments (TNReady) beginning in grade 3. This system of assessments has created new data points for teachers and leaders in the early grades to assess student learning and identify areas for improvement. This work has also increased collaboration between pre-K and kindergarten teachers due to the implementation of the student growth portfolios. As both groups of teachers are learning to be purposeful and intentional in their instruction to maximize student growth, there has been increased communication and collaboration. In addition, the KEI is providing kindergarten teachers with invaluable information about what students know and are able to do at the beginning of the year, and follow up professional development is focused on helping them use the data to differentiate instruction and accelerate growth. Early Learning Model training is also supporting collaboration among early grades teachers by including them as part of the districts' leadership teams.

- (c) Additional steps taken to build upon or align programs:

This year, Tennessee revised its early learning standards (TN ELDS) to more closely align with kindergarten standards. This alignment will facilitate better communication and transition between the grades, and ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten. Additionally, the TDOE is collaborating with DHS to improve instructional opportunities for children prior to pre-K, and to explore ways to more strategically align systems and processes

for the monitoring of these programs.

(d) Family engagement strategies.

Tennessee offers many resources to help families become involved in their child's learning at home and at school. The Imagination Library, sometimes called the Governor's Books from Birth program, offer one free book a month to every child in Tennessee, from the month the child is born until he turns five. Many of the books offer suggestions on questions or comments to make with children about the book. The First Lady of Tennessee developed a program called Read for Twenty which encourages families to read to their children at least 20 minutes a day. A state sponsored website, KidsCentralTN.org, offers resources to families focused on education, development and health. The new Read to Be Ready initiative also provides a link for connecting the community to support children's love and engagement in reading.

The following are additional examples of collaboration and training activities that have occurred in year three by the Subgrantees in Kindergarten through third grade:

- MNPS Pre-K Leadership team provided four Early Learning Institutes for principals and Administrators. The Early Learning Institutes built capacity of principals to understand how they can support staff and families in early learning classrooms through training on early learning best practices, such as reducing transition times, quality environments, social emotional learning, and reducing chronic absenteeism.
- The Family Involvement Specialists (FIS) provided monthly trainings that not only impacted Pre-K students and families, but also the younger infant and toddler siblings within the home as well as older siblings. Trainings focused on academic foundational skills, Teaching Pyramid, best practices for families, emergent writing skills, creative arts, development of critical thinking skills in young children, Kindergarten readiness and summer learning loss.
- Subgrantees worked to align all pre-K activities with regular school activities, such as parent nights, curriculum nights, parent/teacher conferences and other extra-curricular activities. Pre-K teachers and assistants also participate in school level professional development that focuses on instructional strategies to increase student achievement.
- Ongoing professional development and professional learning communities were established across grade levels to develop learning progression plans, intentionally align curricula in pre-K that models the same instruction strategies as the district's K-3 curriculum to expose the students to foundational skills that will be reinforced and further developed in kindergarten through third grade.
- As social-emotional support for students in Pre-K classrooms, the Pyramid Model has traditionally been a professional development session led by the TDOE for Pre-K teachers. With the goal of strengthening the Pre-K through third grade continuum this year, a fall and a spring professional development session on the Pyramid Model was offered for K-2 educators and administrators.
- Several transition activities were planned by PreK and Kindergarten teachers, that included parents and opportunities for small group read aloud visits with kindergarten students reading to a Pre-K students (buddy reading) and visits kindergarten classrooms.
- Collaborative meetings between PreK and Kindergarten teachers were held to share currently enrolled student achievement data with kindergarten teachers and to provide feedback on student achievement data for previously enrolled PreK students to improve instructional practices.

## **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*.

There are no discrepancies to report on the state's year two target matching funds and the year two actual matching funds. The county commission classrooms operating within the Shelby County Consortium school districts continue to be funded and operated as originally defined in the grant application as local match. The MNPS Early Learning Centers also serve as local match as defined in the grant application. These centers have guided the districts' work and served as models, empowering the district to embed the constructivist approach in all pre-K classrooms, and establishing clear expectations, which have positively impacted principals, teachers, and students in grades pre-K through grade 3.

### **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.

Both MNPS and the school districts comprising the Shelby County Consortium are working diligently to not only provide a high quality pre-K program, but also strategies that can strength their program by looking at the experiences each student has prior to entering pre-K and the experiences they will have when entering the formal K-12 education system. In year three of the grant, all districts have supported and strengthened areas of professional development for administrators and staff, supports for student transitions, before/after care and/or comprehensive services for families in need. These activities will be evaluated through the subgrantee contract with Peabody Research Institute with a year-end family survey and through professional development completion surveys.

Administrators of pre-K-3 classrooms are learning more about what quality pre-K looks like and how K-3 teachers can differentiate and support children at the diverse levels of development they bring with them into the school system. This is being supported through administrator training at the district level. For example, an early childhood guidance document connected to the state teacher evaluation has been developed to provide administrators with "look fors" developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood classrooms. Pre-K -3 Administrators have also been involved in professional development on topics of early childhood development, social emotional development and early literacy.

MNPS has opened pre-K professional development when space is available to community childcare programs and community partners. In addition they are planning a Kindergarten registration fair to invite community partners, feeder schools, and other community services to aid families in the transition and registration for kindergarten. MNPS has collaborated with Head Start and community childcare programs to strengthen the continuum work along with assisting in increasing enrollment of eligible students. MNPS has been able to add more before/after care spaces for pre-K families at a reduced cost as part of the year two scope of work.

The Shelby County Consortium is intentionally aligning curricula in pre-K that models the same instructional strategies as the district's K-3 curriculum to expose the students to foundational skills that will be reinforced and further developed in kindergarten through third grade. One district is working with local community agencies, other school districts, and philanthropies to implement a Shelby County Early Childhood Plan that

includes awareness to parents regarding resources and services for children birth to third grade, collaboration with child care centers and pre-K programs, effective staff development, and quality comprehensive services.

For all of the Subgrantees, the provision of comprehensive services required in the grant plays a vital role to support children's educational success and strengthening the learning and development across the continuum.

**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.

A review of the spreadsheet submitted with our application, shows that over the four year grant period, 70% of our total grant request will create 1440 new state preschool program seats. As of 2017 all seats have been created as planned.

## 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.

There are no changes to the approved budget and total expenditures for the reporting year. Funding for year three was approved and allocated in June 2017 with the budget year following the state budget year of July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018. Expenditures (draw down by Subgrantees) continue to be monitored and are expected to be on target.

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).

At this time the state does not anticipate any substantive changes to our budget from the one submitted.

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.

The Tennessee department of education along with all of the Subgrantee districts remain focused on continued planning for high quality pre-K classrooms beyond the four year grant period. The department has included early foundations as a major piece of its strategic plan to ensure all students are postsecondary and career ready when graduating high school. The governor and the department of education and other child serving state departments continue to support the "Read to Be Ready" initiative which also focuses on supporting families', early care providers' and teachers' understanding of research based best practices to build the foundational skills important necessary for conventional reading and writing. There is also a renewed interest by private businesses, philanthropic organizations, chambers of commerce and even some legislators to invest in practices to ensure quality early learning experiences are available and that the department is working to hold all programs to high quality standards. All districts are actively seeking philanthropic and foundation grants to sustain high quality preschool programs. The Shelby County Consortium is partnering with People First (initiator of the Shelby County Early Childhood Plan) to pursue local government, organizations and philanthropic funds to sustain pre-K across Shelby County. Both districts are collaborating and leveraging Head Start funds to maintain and possibly expand access to high quality programs.

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.

The discrepancies in the proposed budget versus the actual expenditures are mainly due to fact that the state operates on a fiscal year instead of a calendar year. Activities described in the year three scope of work will continue through June 30, 2018. These include:

- Sustainability planning to maintain expansion classrooms and services provided across four years of the

grant.

- Professional development training for administrators and classroom staff;
- Regional Summit in each area of the state which are planned for June 2018;
- Continuation of classroom observations and collection of child assessment data for evaluation of progress of improving quality across districts;
- A family survey assessing effectiveness of comprehensive services for all subgrantees;
- Planning and development of year four scope of work by state and Subgrantees;
- Technical assistance including ongoing travel to visit classrooms, and other opportunities to learn from our technical assistance partners and other states;
- Salaries of staff in the department of education as well staff from Subgrantees and contractual agreements;
- Ongoing implementation of comprehensive services by Subgrantees.