

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202-5335



**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE**

Preschool Development Grants - Expansion

CFDA # 84.419B

PR/Award # S419B150034

Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT11769198

OMB No. 1810-0718, Expiration Date: 02/28/2015

Closing Date: Oct 24, 2014

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This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

(b)(4)

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify): <input type="text"/>
--	--	--

* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="10/23/2014"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	--

5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	---

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text"/>
---	---

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name:

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="52-6002033"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="1830714710000"/>
--	---

d. Address:

* Street1:
Street2:
* City:
County/Parish:
* State:
Province:
* Country:
* Zip / Postal Code:

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name: <input type="text" value="MD State Dept of Education"/>	Division Name: <input type="text" value="Early Childhood"/>
---	--

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix: * First Name:
Middle Name:
* Last Name:
Suffix:
Title:

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="410-767-0335"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text" value="410-333-6033"/>
---	---

* Email:

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

*** 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

*** 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

U.S. Department of Education

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.419

CFDA Title:

Preschool Development Grants

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-102314-002

* Title:

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE): Preschool Development Grants: Expansion Grants, CFDA Number: 84.419B

13. Competition Identification Number:

84 419B2015 1

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

[Add Attachment](#)

[Delete Attachment](#)

[View Attachment](#)

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Maryland will utilize grant funds to expand full day prekindergarten enrollment in both public schools and private provider settings.

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

[Add Attachments](#)

[Delete Attachments](#)

[View Attachments](#)

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**16. Congressional Districts Of:*** a. Applicant * b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:* a. Start Date: * b. End Date: **18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="60,000,001.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="60,000,001.00"/>

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?** a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review. c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)** Yes No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

 ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:Prefix: * First Name: Middle Name: * Last Name: Suffix: * Title: * Telephone Number: Fax Number: * Email: * Signature of Authorized Representative: * Date Signed:

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee- 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and, (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.
19. Will comply with the requirements of Section 106(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. 7104) which prohibits grant award recipients or a sub-recipient from (1) Engaging in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of time that the award is in effect (2) Procuring a commercial sex act during the period of time that the award is in effect or (3) Using forced labor in the performance of the award or subawards under the award.

<p>SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL</p> <p><input type="text" value="Nicelle Szczepaniak"/></p>	<p>TITLE</p> <p><input type="text" value="State Superintendent of Schools"/></p>
<p>APPLICANT ORGANIZATION</p> <p><input type="text" value="Maryland State Department of Education"/></p>	<p>DATE SUBMITTED</p> <p><input type="text" value="10/23/2014"/></p>

Standard Form 424B (Rev. 7-97) Back

DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352

Approved by OMB
0348-0046

1. * Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	2. * Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	3. * Report Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
--	--	--

4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:

Prime SubAwardee

* Name:

* Street 1: Street 2:

* City: State: Zip:

Congressional District, if known:

6. * Federal Department/Agency: <input type="text" value="N/A"/>	7. * Federal Program Name/Description: <input type="text" value="Elemental Development Grants"/> CFDA Number, if applicable: <input type="text" value="84.419"/>
--	---

8. Federal Action Number, if known: <input type="text"/>	9. Award Amount, if known: \$ <input type="text"/>
--	--

10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant:

Prefix * First Name Middle Name

* Last Name Suffix

* Street 1: Street 2:

* City: State: Zip:

b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a)

Prefix * First Name Middle Name

* Last Name Suffix

* Street 1: Street 2:

* City: State: Zip:

11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

* Signature:

* Name: Prefix * First Name Middle Name
 * Last Name Suffix

Title: Telephone No.: Date:

Federal Use Only:	Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)
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PR/Award # S419B150034

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc., from such access or participation in the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct

description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.

GEPA_REQUIREMENT.pdf

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

GEPA REQUIREMENT

The Maryland State Department of Education ensures equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. There are implicit and explicit processes and procedures to ensure equal access and treatment of project participants who are groups that have been underrepresented, based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. Some of the specific processes and procedures include:

- All prospective attendees are from schools and participation organizations that will have access to outreach materials, training supplements, etc. MSDE will make specific outreach efforts that target underrepresented populations in the training.
- All MSDE materials are available in alternative formats for special needs populations
- MSDE will provide technical expertise to ensure special needs and diverse populations are addressed through implementation
- The curriculum and instructional materials will be evaluated based on diversity and underrepresented populations.
- The schools targeted by the grant are low performing and located in poverty areas.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION

Maryland State Department of Education

* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Prefix: Dr. * First Name: Michelle Middle Name: M.

* Last Name: Towery Suffix:

* Title: State Superintendent of Schools

* SIGNATURE: Michelle Szczepaniak

* DATE: 10/23/2014

Abstract

The abstract narrative must not exceed one page and should use language that will be understood by a range of audiences. For all projects, include the project title (if applicable), goals, expected outcomes and contributions for research, policy, practice, etc. Include population to be served, as appropriate. For research applications, also include the following:

- Theoretical and conceptual background of the study (i.e., prior research that this investigation builds upon and that provides a compelling rationale for this study)
- Research issues, hypotheses and questions being addressed
- Study design including a brief description of the sample including sample size, methods, principals dependent, independent, and control variables, and the approach to data analysis.

[Note: For a non-electronic submission, include the name and address of your organization and the name, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for this project.]

You may now Close the Form

You have attached 1 file to this page, no more files may be added. To add a different file, you must first delete the existing file.

* Attachment:

Maryland State Department of Education

Preschool Development Grant – Expansion Grant

Project Abstract

Maryland's plan intends to expand and improve the quality of prekindergarten for (b)(4) four-year olds from families with household incomes at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG). During its first two years of the grant, Maryland will seek an expansion for (b)(4) four-year olds from families with 200% of poverty. In Year 3 and 4 of the grant, Maryland will appropriate State funds to enable the access to high quality prekindergarten for an additional (b)(4) four-year olds from families with incomes above 200% and below 300% of poverty.

This strategy is aligned with current State policy which expanded prekindergarten in school year 2014-15 for four-year olds to families with incomes at or below 300% of poverty for a new grant-funded prekindergarten expansion. Maryland's expansion as codified in the Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014, included a grant program for prekindergarten operated by local boards of education, and –for the first time- community-based programs such as child care, Head Start, and nursery schools, by incorporated prekindergarten into their daily schedules. It is viewed as the first step toward a gradual expansion toward universal access to prekindergarten for all four-year olds.

This Federally funded plan is a major building block of Maryland's efforts to expand prekindergarten across the State. The majority of policymakers agree that such an expansion improves learning opportunities for young children and enhances the school readiness skills on entering kindergarteners as measured by the State's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. It also remains a critical keystone in Maryland's education reform efforts, namely the reduction of the achievement gaps.

Project Narrative File(s)

* Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename:

To add more Project Narrative File attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

A. Executive Summary

The extent to which the State includes an ambitious and achievable plan for expanding access to High Quality Preschool Programs that clearly articulates how the plan proposed under each criterion in this section, when taken together, will

(1) build on the State's progress to date as demonstrated in Selection Criterion (B)

As outlined in Section B, Maryland's plan builds on the strength of its well-developed early childhood education infrastructure. There are three key components that make an expansion of prekindergarten for low-income children a good public and private investment:

Consolidated governance: By law since 2005, Maryland's early childhood education programs are all under auspices of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The creation of a Division of Early Childhood Development, alongside other divisions within the Department, such as Special Education/Early Intervention Services, Instruction and Assessment, Effective Educator/Teacher Certification, and Student and Family Support Services (which houses Title 1) provide an ideal springboard for not only consistent policies for services birth to kindergarten, but for aligning policies and practices for a modern P-20 education system. Thus, high quality prekindergarten is a critical lynchpin in supporting education reform in the areas of school readiness, achievement gaps, and rigorous curricular standards and practices that prepare students for the 21st century.

Long-standing prekindergarten track record: Maryland's State Board of Education established a prekindergarten program in public schools as early as 1980. Since then, high quality prekindergarten has been provided as the Extended Elementary Education Program (EEEP) until 2007, and then as a prekindergarten system at all 24 local school districts providing, minimally, to all economically disadvantaged four-year olds access to a half-day prekindergarten education program for the 180 days of the year. In 2014, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014 with the stated goal to execute a long-standing recommendation by a Task Force for universal access to publicly funded prekindergarten for all four-year olds. Maryland's plan builds on the Prekindergarten Expansion model by creating a mixed service delivery of an early

education program in quality community-based early learning providers such as child care, Head Start, and nursery schools in addition to public schools.

Successful implementation of Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge(RTT-ELC) grant: Through the RTT-ELC, Maryland created two critical elements that will enhance Maryland's plan for expanding prekindergarten – a robust TQRIS and well-developed early childhood comprehensive assessment system. Since the inception in July 2013 of Maryland EXCELS, the State's TQRIS, early learning providers registered with the system at a rate 3-times higher than expected. Such a response, especially among child care providers, speaks for a yearning to offer quality early education within a climate of high expectations. Such expectations are being articulated by a focus on improving the school readiness skills of preschoolers as they matriculate into kindergarten and start their school career. Thus, the Maryland prekindergarten expansion plan continues its long-standing process of measuring school readiness skills, thereby informing early learning providers about the effectiveness of their programs.

(2)Provide voluntary, High Quality Preschool Programs for eligible children through subgrants to each subgrantee in two or more High-Need Communities.

Maryland's long-term goal is universal access to high quality prekindergarten for all four-year olds. While public schools provide such access to economically disadvantaged four-year olds, defined as those whose families' household income is at or below 185% of poverty or Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), Maryland's Prekindergarten Expansion Act extended the access to community-based programs for income levels at 300% of poverty. Maryland's four-year plan for this grant devises strategies of identifying and recruiting four-year olds at 200% of poverty into prekindergarten slots at public schools and community-based programs, and, in the last two years of the grant, by raising the income eligibility for the grant-funded subgrantees to 300% of poverty through matching state funds.

The scope of Maryland's plan is statewide, thereby including many high-need communities in all regions of the State, but with a special emphasis on high-need

communities in Baltimore City, especially by expanding the highly effective Judy Center comprehensive services model.

The plan uses communities with schools that have a 65% FARM rate as the cut-off for determining prioritized needs, but it also intends to recruit income eligible four-year olds into high quality prekindergarten by using four additional needs assessment criteria:

- Elementary schools in school improvement, i.e., Focus or Priority schools;
- Subgrantees in jurisdictions with the highest number of income eligible four-year olds who are not enrolled in prekindergarten;
- Subgrantees in jurisdictions with high numbers of low-income and Hispanic four-year olds enrolled in informal care arrangements;
- Subgrantees that provide specialized services for income-eligible four-year olds who are medically fragile or need therapeutic nursery services.

Casting such a wide net for identifying and recruiting income eligible four-year olds ensures that a significant higher number of families of four-year old children in high-need communities across the State have better options in accessing high quality prekindergarten.

(3) Increase the number and percentage of Eligible Children served in High-Quality Preschool Programs during each year of the grant period through the creation of new, and the improvement of existing State Preschool Program slots.

Maryland's plan projects the expansion of 1,210 new slots and 1,601 improved slots during the first year of the grant, i.e., all subgrantees that receive grant funds will be in operation by September 1, 2015. In Years 3 and 4 of the grant, i.e., SFY18 and SFY19, Federal funds will be matched with State funds to expand access to an estimated total of (b)(4) four-year olds whose families' income is at 300% of poverty, thereby creating consistency regarding income eligibility among all State and Federal grant-funded subgrantees. In addition, equity will be served by adjusting the rate per slot of State-funded subgrantees to match the Federally funded rate. In FY 15, Maryland uses a rate of \$(b)(4) for a full-day slot whereas Maryland's Federal expansion plan proposes \$(b)(4) per slot.

Based on the total enrollment of four-year olds in Maryland's prekindergarten, by Year 4 of the grant the increase of new expanded slots will be 8% above the total prekindergarten enrollment in 2013-14. In addition, the State matching funds will boost eligibility guidelines for families to 300%.

(4)Have all the characteristics specified in the definition of High Quality Preschool programs.

Maryland's plan is defined by the overarching strategy of aligning the range of structural quality features across a mixed service delivery by requiring that all subgrantees meet the High Quality Preschool criteria espoused by this grant. Maryland's plan exceeds the staff qualification criteria by requiring all lead teachers in grant-funded prekindergarten to hold a State teaching certificate in early childhood education.

Maryland has established policies by regulation and State law that define the quality of publicly funded prekindergarten. Based on the grant program under the Prekindergarten Expansion Act, the Maryland plan adopted the following eligibility for subgrantees: Prekindergarten operated by local boards of education and compliance with the State's prekindergarten regulations;

Community-based programs that are either:

- Published at Level 5, the highest level, in Maryland EXCELS; or
- State or nationally accredited as a program of quality; or
- Certified by MSDE as a nursery school.

The rationale for subgrantee eligibility among community-based programs is based on the MSDE's accountability principles when using public funds, which call for reducing the risk of failure among programs that have demonstrated continuous program improvement, stability of program quality, and have the capacity to meet the Expansion Grant's criteria of High Quality Preschool programs.

(5)Set expectations for the school readiness of children upon kindergarten entry.

Maryland's plan includes the use of a newly developed Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) as part of the RTT-ELC funded Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System. The KRA, first implemented in school year 2014-15, replaces the long-standing legacy Kindergarten Assessment of the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR). The KRA baseline for 2014-15 will be available in March 2015. The first cohort of four-year olds in prekindergarten funded under this grant will be assessed on the KRA in school year 2016-17, thereby setting the benchmarks for all and subgroups of prekindergarteners funded by this grant.

(6) Be supported by a broad group of stakeholders, including Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and State and local early learning councils.

Maryland's plan includes letters of support by the following:

- Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Councils;
- 24 local early childhood advisory councils; and
- Local school systems participating in the grant.

Letters of commitment for private sponsorship of the grant include:

- Baltimore Community Foundation and the Campaign for Grade Level Reading;
- Literacy Lab;
- College of Education at the University of Maryland – College Park.

(7) Allocate funds between

- (a) Activities to build and enhance State Preschool Program infrastructure using no more than five percent of its Federal grant funds received over the grant period on State-level infrastructure including, but not limited to, monitoring and evaluation and other quality enhancing activities that improve the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children.**

Maryland's plan includes the following grant funded infrastructure enhancements:

- Four FTEs responsible for providing technical assistance regarding program operation and monitoring of grant-funded State Preschool Programs to ensure high fidelity of implementation with respect to meeting the High-Quality Preschool criteria of this grant;
- Vendor to assist in the identification and recruitment of income-eligible four-year olds;
- Program evaluation, including a parent satisfaction survey, on the effectiveness of the grant-funded programs in terms of implementation and outcomes as measured by the KRA and long-term measures through grade 3;
- Assignment of five full-time early literacy Reading Corps tutors at five Judy Centers in Baltimore City;
- Graduation of 30 candidates receiving State teacher certification through the Maryland Alternative Approved Preparation Program conducted by The New Teacher Project.
- Modification, hosting, and maintenance of the online KRA regarding the expansion of publicly funded prekindergarten slots from community-based subgrantees.
- General administrative and business costs related to the implementation of the grant.

(b) Subgrants to Early Learning Providers to implement voluntary, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children in two or more High-Need Communities, including how it will

- a. Provide High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children no later than the end of year one of the grant period;**
- b. Subgrant at least 95% of its Federal grant funds to its Subgrantees over the grant period; and**

- c. Support each Subgrantee in culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach and communication efforts in order to ensure that all families, including those who are isolated or otherwise hard to reach, are informed of the opportunity and encouraged to enroll their children in available programs.**

Maryland's plan requires that all subgrantees will operate grant-funded prekindergarten by September 1, 2015.

It provides funding for 95% of its Federal grant per year to its subgrantees as follows:

Community-based early learning providers:...	\$5,785,728
Prekindergarten at LEAs:	\$ 6,154,272
Prekindergarten at Judy Centers:...	\$2,310,000

Maryland's plan includes a vendor, solicited with grant funds, to identify and recruit income-eligible four-year olds from the following MSDE run data bases:

- Child Care Subsidy data management system;
- MMSR data base regarding income-eligible and Hispanic four-year olds in informal care;
- Prekindergarten waitlists with local school systems; and
- Other such as Medicaid data base.

In addition, subgrantees, namely the Judy Centers and their partners in selected jurisdictions, will assist in identifying families with income-eligible four-year olds.

B. Commitment to State Preschool Programs

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to develop or enhance the State Preschool Program infrastructure and its capacity to both deliver and increase access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children, as evidenced by—

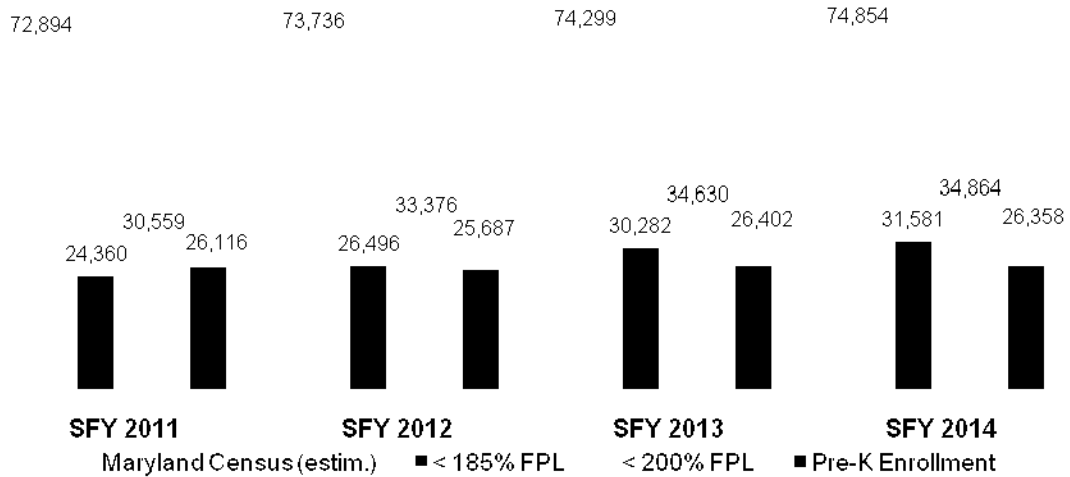
(1) State Early Learning and Development Standards;

As part of the implementation of Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant, Maryland revised its early learning standards to closely align with the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards K-12. They are comprised of Guidelines for children birth to four (named *Health Beginnings-Supporting Development and Learning from Birth Through Three Years of Age*) and the Prekindergarten component of the Maryland K-12 standards for the content areas English Language Arts/Language & Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Development. In addition, Maryland developed Social Foundations standards which encompass social and emotional development, approaches to learning, and executive functioning skills for Preschool-3 through Kindergarten. These Standards define the curricular resources used in publicly funded prekindergarten, including the ones funded under this grant. (See Appendix, Evidence, Section B.1.)

(2) *The State's financial investment, if any, and the estimated number and percentage of children, including if known, the estimated number and percentage of Eligible Children, served in State Preschool Programs over the last four years;*

By law, all four-year olds from families with household incomes of 185% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines have access to a prekindergarten slot. Local school systems, by regulation, may enroll additional four-year olds who exhibit school readiness needs if there are vacancies. A portion of the additional prekindergarten students may be eligible under the eligibility of 200% of FPG under this grant. The table below shows the number of four-year old prekindergarten students enrolled and the State's estimated funding for prekindergarten for the last four school years.

**MSDE Division of Early Childhood Development
Maryland 4 Year Olds: SFY 2011 - SFY 2014**



(3) *Enacted and pending legislation, policies, or practices that demonstrate the State's current and future commitment to increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children;*

Maryland’s State Board of Education established prekindergarten for four-year olds in public schools in 1980 and maintained governance of the programs ever since. The operation of prekindergarten is governed by local boards of education and regulated by the Maryland State Board of Education. Since 2007, all four-year olds from families with household incomes of 185% of FPG can access prekindergarten slots. However, the General Assembly did not provide for a dedicated fund source for prekindergarten. Local boards of education must use local, State and Federal education funds to cover the operation of prekindergarten. Local school systems must include prekindergarten classrooms in their facilities plans to ensure that all eligible four-year olds have access to prekindergarten slots regardless of their residencies. This amounts to prekindergarten classrooms in almost 80% of all elementary schools in the State. In 2006, a Task Force on Universal Preschool Education recommended the accessibility to prekindergarten for all four-year olds. The recommendation became law in 2014 in the form of the *Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014* which expanded the provision of prekindergarten

not only in public schools but also at community-based programs such as child care, Head Start, and nursery schools as long as the regulatory standards promulgated for public school prekindergarten are enforced in the same way. The regulations require the provision of a prekindergarten teacher who holds State teacher certification in early childhood education, the implementation of a preschool curriculum, standard student-teacher ratios, and inclusion practices for children with disabilities. The law provided for an appropriation of \$(b)(4) in FY15 as the first step toward expanding access to prekindergarten for all four-year olds. (See Appendix, Evidence B.3.)

(4) The quality of existing State Preschool Programs, as evidenced by policies and program data that demonstrate the State's commitment to the components of a High-Quality Preschool Program; compliance with Program Standards; and support for program monitoring and improvement, which may be accomplished through the use of a TQRIS;

The State's prekindergarten regulations (COMAR 13A.06.03) defines eligibility, site selection, and local school system responsibilities. The scope of the regulations extends to three-year olds, as well. The operation is defined by half-day or full-day programming for 5 days and, at a minimum, 180 days per year. The staffing must include a teacher who possesses a current State teaching certificate in early childhood education and a para-professional with a high school diploma or a CDA. Under the No Child Left Behind policies, paraprofessionals in Title I prekindergarten programs must either obtain an AA degree or pass PRAXIS I. The prekindergarten curriculum must align with the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS). In terms of program monitoring and improvement, the local school system must analyze the Department-approved kindergarten assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the school system's prekindergarten program and provide information to MSDE in its annual Master Plan. The plan includes strategies and activities in how the early learning programs will be improved to indicate progress on prekindergarten program goals. In practice, each local school system analyzes its jurisdiction's Kindergarten Assessment information for all those kindergarteners who matriculated from publicly funded prekindergarten. The data can be analyzed for subgroups of students and their results on various domains of learning such as Language &

Literacy or Mathematics. In 2013-14, 83% of all kindergarteners transitioning from prekindergarten were assessed as fully ready for kindergarten. (Maryland introduced a newly developed Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in school year 2014-15.)

Local school systems may also partner with early childhood programs which are not operated by local boards of education as long as those programs meet the qualifications as a “qualified vendor,” i.e., maintain State or national program accreditation and have the capacity to meet the State’s prekindergarten regulations. State accreditation refers to a process of self-appraisal, program improvement, and independent validation for prekindergarten (aside from Kindergarten, child care centers, and Head Start) by using the *MSDE Standards for Implementing Quality Early Childhood Programs*.

Based on this governance structure, the Maryland General Assembly passed a law that extends access to prekindergarten not only within the local school systems but also to the “qualified vendors.” The new legislation included additional criteria for the “qualified vendor” such as holding a certificate of approval by MSDE as a nursery school or being published at Level 5, the highest level of quality in Maryland EXCELS, which is the State’s TQRIS. The new Prekindergarten Expansion Act also gives MSDE the authority to issue grant funds directly to the “qualified vendors”, as long as the awarded community-based programs maintain the level of quality espoused by the law and regulations. Thus, Maryland proposes to exceed the teacher qualifications as defined by this grant program. Instead of defining “high staff qualifications, including a teacher with a bachelor’s degree,” Maryland’s teachers in prekindergarten programs funded by this grant will possess current State teacher certification in early childhood education as required by law.

- (5) ***The State's coordination of preschool programs and services, in partnership with its Early Learning Advisory Council, with other State and Federal resources that may be used to serve preschool-aged children, including, if applicable, programs and services supported by title I of the ESEA, part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);***

The legislatively mandated Maryland State Early Childhood Advisory Council (“Council”), chaired by the State Superintendent of Schools, is formally charged with monitoring the implementation of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant. The Council fully endorses the expansion of prekindergarten to high quality programs. Given the school readiness gap for children with disabilities and English learners (EL), the Council is particularly keen on supporting children with special learning needs through the expanded prekindergarten program. The consolidated governance of early childhood education in Maryland is particularly conducive to a close working relationship with MSDE’s divisions of special education/early intervention services and student, family, and school support services, responsible for compliance with subtitle VII-B of the McKenney-Vento Act. While homeless children already have access to prekindergarten at any point in time during the school year, Maryland intends to require that “qualified vendors” with prekindergarten extend such critical access to homeless children when needed. In addition, MSDE will introduce, for the 2015 legislative session, amendments to the existing Council law to include representation from MSDE’s Office of Title I and the Education for the Homeless community. (see Appendix, Evidence B.5.)

The coordination of prekindergarten with Head Start and the State’s Child Care Subsidy Program occurs at “qualified vendor” sites. Nationally or State accredited Head Start programs or those published at Level 5 of Maryland EXCELS are eligible to receive the State’s prekindergarten funds, and will, therefore, be eligible to receive Federal prekindergarten expansion funds. The coordination of “qualified vendors” offering publicly funded prekindergarten with child care subsidy (capped at 176% of FPG) for the remainder of the child care day and the summer months will be facilitated through an agreement in the MOU between MSDE and the subgrantees. MSDE intends to streamline the administrative process regarding eligibility for child care subsidy and remove any administrative barriers which could be a disincentive for low income families to access grant-funded prekindergarten sites.

(6) ***The State's role in promoting coordination of preschool programs and services at the State and local levels with other sectors that support the early learning and***

development of children, including child health, mental health, family support, nutrition, child welfare, and adult education and training sectors.

The Judy Centers, Maryland's signature model for promoting the coordination of preschool programs with comprehensive services, are designed to address disadvantaged young children's readiness for school as early as infancy. Established through formal agreements between a Title 1 school and its early childhood partners serving the attendance area of the school (i.e., child care, Head Start, Part C and Sec 619 programs, as well as family literacy, library, health, social services) Judy Centers, operated by local school systems, succeeded in narrowing or eliminating the school readiness gap for low-income children and English learners.

MSDE also provides funding for the following unique statewide programs that are charged to serve in high-need communities:

- Family Support Centers (i.e., a family literacy program, home-visiting, and parent education classes in 26 communities across the State); and
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (i.e., support services young children with behavioral challenges enrolled in licensed child care programs).

Maryland also intends to expand the Judy Centers under this grant by establishing so-called satellites which extend the Judy Center services to another Title 1 school in proximity of the Judy Center site. The Council is also concerned about having adequate access to prekindergarten for children with severe medically fragile and mental health needs. Maryland intends to create new slots and improved quality slots with specialized programs for medically fragile children and therapeutic nurseries.

C. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs.

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to ensure program quality, including a description of how the State will—

Use no more than 5% of the funds received over the grant period for State Preschool Program infrastructure and quality improvements at the State level:

Maryland has a well-developed infrastructure to support the expansion of prekindergarten. For the past three years, Maryland boosted its early childhood education system through the implementation of the RTT-ELC which set the stage for being in lockstep with the major education reform efforts underway for K-12.

(a) Enhancing or expanding Early Learning and Development Standards

The four-year olds enrolled in the expanded prekindergarten program will benefit from Maryland’s revised early learning standards in terms of content and scope. As part of the RTT-ELC, Maryland expanded the scope from Birth-5 to Birth - Grade 3. The new Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS), based on the Common Core State Standards, informed the revisions in terms of the content for Prek and its alignment with K-12. The standards also incorporated Maryland’s *Healthy Beginnings* guidelines for Birth to Four. Thus, Maryland’s standards are comprised of the following for Birth to Grade 3:

Birth to Age 4	Prekindergarten	Kindergarten to Grade 3
Personal and Social Development	Social Foundation	Social Foundation (K only)
Physical Development	Physical Development and Health	Physical Development and Health (Physical Education (K-3))
Language Development	Language & Literacy	English Language Arts
Cognition and General Knowledge	Mathematics	Mathematics
	Science	Science
	Social Studies	Social Studies
	The Arts	The Arts
<u>Source:</u> Healthy Beginnings: Supporting Development and Learning from Birth through Three Years of Age	Source: Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards	

Will these strategies be included in the State's plan for this grant? Yes

Will five percent of the grant amount be used for this activity? No

(b) Implementing Program Standards consistent with High Quality Preschool Program

While the program standards for public school prekindergarten are defined by the State's Prekindergarten regulations, the programs standards for early learning providers (i.e., community-based programs) are defined by Maryland EXCELS, the State's TQRIS which has five levels of quality, Level 5 being the highest. The high quality criteria on Level 5 include completed program accreditation by MSDE or a nationally accrediting organization. A third set of quality program standards is defined by the education program in nursery school certified by MSDE (COMAR 13A.17.14). These program standards comprise the eligibility for participation as a subgrantee under this grant. Eligible prekindergarten subgrantees must be either:

- Operated by a local boards of education and in compliance with prekindergarten regulations; or
- published at Level 5 of Maryland EXCELS, or
- accredited by MSDE or a national accrediting organization recognized by MSDE; or
- certified by MSDE as a non-public nursery school...

Maryland EXCELS provides program standards for public prekindergarten and licensed child care centers that are based on nationally recognized indicators of quality in five areas:

- Licensing Compliance/School Approval;
- Staff/Teacher Qualifications and Professional Development;
- Accreditation/Environmental Rating Scales;
- Developmentally Appropriate Learning and Practice /Child Assessment; and
- Administrative Policies and Practices.

Maryland EXCELS validation process ensures that programs are implementing activities consistent with high-quality preschool programs by:

- On-site monitoring of published programs to view evidence of implementation regarding the standards of Maryland EXCELS;
- Providing technical support for areas identified in need of improvement as a result of monitoring visits;
- Incorporating a Continuous Quality Improvement framework in all aspects of the TQRIS;
- Requiring programs to create and implement Program Improvement Plans at the higher levels of Maryland EXCELS (i.e., Levels 3, 4 and 5), and to include school readiness goals and objectives aligned with jurisdictional data on Maryland’s Kindergarten Readiness Assessment;
- Providing multiple layers of program support for participating programs in meeting high-quality preschool standards within the TQRIS. The types of support come from three primary sources offered online, by phone and through on-site visits:
 - Child Care Resource and Referral Staff (i.e., capacity building through the Early Childhood Breakthrough Center);
 - Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education Program Coordinators; and
 - MSDE Quality Assurance Specialists.

The table below depicts the alignment of Maryland’s program standards with the grant’s criteria defining High Quality Preschool

Grant Criteria	Maryland EXCELS (Level 5)	State of National Program Accreditation	MSDE Certified Nursery Schools	LEA Prekindergarten
Teacher Qualifications	Credentialing Level 4+	A.A. degree	B.A. degree	B.A. degree and teacher certification
PD for staff	Training in accordance with Credentialing 4+ and 12 hours per year	Defined by accreditation standard	Continuous PD	LEA PD activities for 12 Continuing PD credits

