

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



**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE**

Preschool Development Grants - Development

CFDA # 84.419A

PR/Award # S419A150008

Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT11761034

OMB No. 1810-0717, Expiration Date: 02/28/2015

Closing Date: Oct 15, 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.).

Non Responsive

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"/>
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* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="10/14/2014"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text" value="NA"/>
--	---

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

State Use Only:

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

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name: <input type="text" value="Mississippi Department of Education"/>	
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="64-6000758"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="8093996940000"/>

d. Address:

* Street1: <input type="text" value="359 North West Street"/>
Street2: <input type="text"/>
* City: <input type="text" value="Jackson"/>
County/Parish: <input type="text" value="Hinds"/>
* State: <input type="text" value="MS: Mississippi"/>
Province: <input type="text"/>
* Country: <input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>
* Zip/Postal Code: <input type="text" value="39201-1502"/>

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name: <input type="text" value="Office of Elementary Education"/>	Division Name: <input type="text"/>
--	-------------------------------------

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

Prefix: <input type="text" value="Mr."/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Nathan"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Oakley"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	
Title: <input type="text" value="Director of Elementary Education"/>	
Organizational Affiliation: <input type="text" value="Mississippi Department of Education"/>	
* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="601-359-2586"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text" value="601-359-2040"/>
* Email: <input type="text" value="noakley@doe.k12.ms.us"/>	

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:

S4.419

CFDA Title:

Preschool Development Grants

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-081814-001

* Title:

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE): Preschool Development Grants: Development Grants CFDA Number: S4.419A

13. Competition Identification Number:

S4 419A2015 1

Title:

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

[Add Attachment](#)

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

Mississippi's Preschool Development Grant Application

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

[Add 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.

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date:

* b. End Date:

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="60,000,000.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="(b)(4)"/>
* d. Local	
* e. Other	
* f. Program Income	
* g. TOTAL	

*** 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

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.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL <input type="text" value="Nathan Oakley"/>	TITLE <input type="text" value="Director of Elementary Education"/>
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION <input type="text" value="Mississippi Department of Education"/>	DATE SUBMITTED <input type="text" value="10/14/2014"/>

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: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prime <input type="checkbox"/> SubAwardee * Name: Mississippi Department of Education * Street 1: 559 North West Street Street 2: * City: Jackson State: MS: Mississippi Zip: 39201 Congressional District, if known: MS-002		
6. * Federal Department/Agency: United States Department of Education	7. * Federal Program Name/Description: Elementary Development Grants CFDA Number, if applicable: 84.409	
8. Federal Action Number, if known: 	9. Award Amount, if known: \$	
10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant: Prefix: * First Name: N/A Middle Name: * Last Name: N/A Suffix: * Street 1: N/A Street 2: * City: N/A State: MS: Mississippi Zip: b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a) Prefix: * First Name: N/A Middle Name: * Last Name: N/A Suffix: * Street 1: N/A Street 2: * City: N/A State: MS: Mississippi 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: Nathan Oakley * Name: Prefix: * First Name: Nathan Middle Name: * Last Name: Oakley Suffix: Title: Director of Elementary Education Telephone No.: 601-597-6586 Date: 10/14/2014		
Federal Use Only:		Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)

PR/Award # S419A150008

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-Statement.pdf

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427 Requirements

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) has a nondiscrimination policy, and will take actions outlined below, to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, the Federally-assisted Preschool Development Grant for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. The MDE is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, national origin, or veteran's status in employment or provision of services.

Each preschool collaborative funded under this grant will identify a director who is responsible for developing partnerships with local service providers to help parents access relevant services, including enrolling their children in the preK program. Directors will especially target hard-to-reach families, such as migrant, homeless, English learners, children in the child welfare system, children in rural or tribal areas, and military families to encourage their participation. For their family engagement duties, these directors will receive support from MDE's Family Engagement Coordinator.

Furthermore, each preK teacher will attend a meeting with Kindergarten teachers to discuss the transition of each child to Kindergarten, including any special services provided to each child.

Providers will facilitate opportunities for a child's family to talk with Kindergarten staff about the special needs of their child and/or details about special meals, transportation, and special services available.

A teaching strategies document is under development to provide guidance for supporting children at a range of developmental levels, including suggested adaptations, accommodations, and modifications for children with disabilities and supports for instructing English Language Learners. A range of assessment strategies that incorporate developmentally appropriate and authentic assessment practices will also be provided, guiding early childhood educators to use observations and performance-based tasks to determine mastery of the standard.

With support from both the MDE Office of Federal Programs and the Office of Special Education, the Office of Early Childhood Education will ensure equitable access to programs for all students.

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

Mississippi Department of Education

* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Prefix: Mr. * First Name: Nathan Middle Name:

* Last Name: Oakley Suffix:

* Title: Director of Elementary Education

* SIGNATURE: Nathan Oakley

* DATE: 10/14/2014

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:

Mississippi's application proposes tripling the number of children in the state's high-quality preK program; improving the quality of preK educators through training and professional development; increasing the number of highly qualified preK educators and ensuring comparable pay; developing greater state capacity for implementing program standards; implementing a comprehensive early learning assessment system; providing families of eligible children access to services essential to engagement; and strengthening the coordination programs serving children birth through third grade. MDE's objectives are as follows: **Objective 1: Revise the current teacher requirements.** **Activities:** (1) Convene Early Childhood Education Task Force to establish a list of essential knowledge and skills, (2) Submit recommendations to Licensure Commission for approval and (3) Upon approval, provide guidance to all teacher preparation programs. **Objective 2: Develop and adopt a process for approving coursework based on standards aligned with the approved list of knowledge and skills.** **Activities:** (1) Utilize the task force-created list of essential knowledge and skills, (2) Develop and adopt an official coursework review process. (3) Develop a list of pre-approved courses at each Mississippi college or university. **Objective 3: Develop and adopt a process for approving training programs.** **Activities** (1) Adopt a process for approving training programs, (2) Approve training programs that meet the standards, (3) Work with the Early Years Network to approve the PreK Credential, (4) Create a Teacher Summer Institute. **Objective 4: Examine whether to promote, amend, or eliminate any preK license as well as whether and how to encourage one or more universities to offer the B-K program.** **Activities:** (1) Conduct a needs assessment, (2) Convene Task Force to analyze results and make a recommendation, (3) Partner with higher education officials to determine the feasibility degree programs that support license. **Objective 5: Develop and implement a professional development plan for collaboratives.** **Activities:** (1) Collaborate with the Early Years Network to determine professional development needs, (2) Create a professional development plan for preK teachers, (3) Hire regional coaches. **Objective 6: Increase the number of teachers becoming a "master teacher" and encourage collaboratives to use them as part of professional learning communities.** **Activities:** (1) Determine process for tracking teachers meeting the master teacher qualification, (2) Ensure each collaborative has at least 1 master teacher, (3) Support collaboratives in utilizing master teachers for professional development, (4) Encourage master teachers to achieve National Board Certification. **Objective 7: Examine the appropriateness of using the Praxis II alone to earn a preK license or supplemental endorsement.** **Activities:** (1) Convene Task Force to examine issues pertaining to early childhood education degrees, (2) Submit recommendations to Licensure Commission, (3) Implement a transition plan. **Objective 8: Increase the pool of highly qualified preK personnel.** **Activities:** (1) Provide support to the (T.E.A.C.H.) program, (2) Provide scholarships to the Early Years Network's PreK Credential, (3) Provide stipends to the Summer Training

Institute, (4) Publicize supports. **Objective 9: Ensure comparable pay for preK educators in grant-funded classrooms.** **Activities:** (1) Provide salary subsidies for grant-funded programs. **Objective 10: Revise the Guidelines to meet all the requirements of the Preschool Development Grant and implement a transition plan.** **Activities:** (1) Review and revise the Guidelines to align with grant, (2) Establish a Committee of Practitioners to review proposed Guidelines, (3) Adopt the revised Guidelines. **Objective 11: Staff an Office of Early Childhood Education at MDE.** **Activities:** (1) Hire staff. **Objective 12: Adopt and implement a CELAS.** **Activities** (1) Procure tools to fulfill the remaining components of a CELAS, (2) Provide the tools for no cost to grant-funded and state-funded collaboratives, (3) Provide training and technical assistance. **Objective 13: With MDE and Early Years Network support, collaboratives will leverage existing services and resources to provide parents the five essentials of family engagement.** **Activities:** (1) Complete a needs assessment of local community resources, (2) Require collaboratives to hire a Director of the Collaborative, (3) Identify and leverage local partners who can provide the five essentials family engagement, (4) Establish a parent advisory committee. **Objective 14: Develop a stronger partnership between MDE's Office of Early Childhood Education, MDHS's DECCD, MDHS's Foundations for Families Unit, and Excel by 5.** **Activities:** (1) Establish meetings, (2) Establish clear, mutually agreeable goals for coordination of tasks, (3) Coordinate program services, (4) Use the results of the needs assessment to coordinate services. MDE expects all state- and grant-funded preK programs to demonstrate the following outcomes: (1) By 2018-2019, 75% of children in the state preK program will enter Kindergarten ready to succeed in school, (2) 50% of students in a selected high-need community will have access to high-quality preK programs, (3) PreK programs will receive support to increase classroom quality, (4) High-quality preK programs will increase their collaboration with other early childhood education programs and related services. MDE plans to coordinate with the following organizations: Center for the Advancement of Youth; Early Years Network, Mississippi State Extension; MS Department of Human Services; MS Head Start Association, MS Head Start Collaboration Office; MS State Department of Health; National Strategic Planning & Analysis Research Center, MDE Offices of Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education (K-5), Federal Programs, Professional Development, Special Education; and State Early Childhood Advisory Council. The following is a list of school districts/nonprofit subgrantees: Ocean Springs, Okolona, Moss Point, Agape/Canton, Hazlehurst City, South Pike, Leake, Lumberton, Jackson Public, Meridian, Clarksdale, North Panola, Yazoo City, Greenwood, Forest Municipal, Picayune, Nettleton, Poplarville Separate, South Panola, Columbia, Vicksburg- Warren, Starkville/Oktibbeha, Humphreys, Holmes, Perry, Quitman Co., Prek4ward/Gulfport/Harrison, Claiborne, Marshall, Sunflower, Wayne, Simpson, Quitman Municipal, Greene, Cleveland, Hancock, Itawamba, Pontotoc Co., and Lamar.

Project Narrative File(s)

* Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename:

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



Preschool Development Grant

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NOTE: For a listing of acronyms and definitions, please see *Appendix Q*.

A. Executive Summary

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) is very proud to present this application for review on behalf of Mississippi. The state plan that follows advances Mississippi's current efforts in early childhood while deepening partnerships across programs serving children birth through third grade. Highlights of Mississippi's state plan include:

- ✓ Tripling the number of children in the state's high-quality preK program;
- ✓ Improving the quality of preK educators through training and professional development;
- ✓ Increasing the number of highly qualified preK educators and ensuring comparable pay;
- ✓ Developing greater state capacity for implementing program standards;
- ✓ Implementing a Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment System (CELAS);
- ✓ Providing families of eligible children access to services essential to engagement; and
- ✓ Strengthening the coordination of state and local programs serving children birth through third grade.

(1) How Our Plan Builds on the State's Progress

Mississippi's application represents a new hope for children in Mississippi to enter Kindergarten ready to learn. The 2013 passage of Mississippi's landmark *Early Learning Collaborative Act (ELCA)*, which established Mississippi's first state-funded preK program, has set the stage for Mississippi to excel with this opportunity. The state's Preschool Development Grant (PDG) plan expands the state's current collaborative delivery model to 34 new communities and expands the model's reach within 5 of the current 11 collaborative communities. In all, Mississippi will be able to reach 45 communities with high-quality preK.

This grant also builds on the recent progress of other partners in the early childhood sector by coordinating and leveraging state and local resources. As a result of this opportunity, Mississippi will launch a deeper partnership between the MDE, which administers the preK program, and the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), which administers Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the federal home visiting program, and the federal Families First program. The MDE, the lead agency for this application, will also continue to support the goals and state plan of the State Early Childhood Advisory Council (SECAC), a Governor's stakeholder council of diverse early childhood representatives.

(2) Subgrants in One or More High-Need Communities

Mississippi will make subgrants to 39 high-need communities. Mississippi selected these communities, which are predominantly rural, for their poverty rate, lack of access to high-quality preK options, and the percentage of children scoring below proficiency on the state's third grade reading assessment. With grant funding, selected communities will increase their access to high-quality preK to at least 30%; some communities will reach nearly 100% access. For more information about these high-need communities, please see Section D and *Appendix A*.

(3) Plans to Increase the Number and Percentage of Eligible Children Served

Mississippi's plan will triple the number and percentage of eligible children served by the state's high-quality preK program by focusing grant dollars on the creation of new, high-quality preK seats. By the end of the grant period, Mississippi will increase the number of children served from 1,744 a year to 5,119 a year and the percent of children served from 4.3% (FY 2015) to 12.6% (FY2019). Concurrently, Mississippi will raise the required level of quality in Title I- and district-funded preK classrooms in public schools to the level of quality required in this grant in order to serve an additional 10.6% of children in high-quality preK. Combining state and district efforts with the 40% of children served in Head Start, a total of 63.2% of children a year in Mississippi will have access to high-quality preK programs by the end of the grant period. For more information about the number and percentage of eligible children to be served, please see Section D and *Table A*.

(4) Meeting the Definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs

Mississippi's state law sets one of the highest standards in the country for state-funded preK programs. As a result, Mississippi is fully ready to meet this grant's definition of high-quality preschool programs. For more information about how Mississippi's current program meets the definition of high-quality, please see Section B. For information about how Mississippi's new collaboratives will meet this definition, please see Section E and *Appendix B, Exhibits 1 and 2*.

(5) Our Kindergarten-Entry School Readiness Expectation

Mississippi preK children need to enter school ready to learn. Our top goal is for at least 75% of children in the state preK program to meet Mississippi's school readiness definition upon Kindergarten entry, as measured by the Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. This would be an ambitious increase of 40 percentage points from baseline data in 2014-2015. Mississippi currently assesses children at Kindergarten entry in two of the five Essential

Domains for School Readiness and has set a target score for these domains that represents 70% mastery of knowledge and skills critical to early literacy and early numeracy. Through this grant, Mississippi will develop a CELAS that adds the remaining domains to our Kindergarten-entry assessment, and Mississippi will set a target score for each additional domain. See page 39 for more information about the planned CELAS and page 46 for more information about the state's program outcomes.

(6) Support from Stakeholders

The SECAC, state legislators, business leaders, parent and community organizations, and early childhood associations have coalesced around the importance of increasing access to high quality early learning opportunities for all of Mississippi's children. For a complete list of letters of support and a list of individuals involved in grant development, see *Appendix C*.

(7) Allocation of Funds

A. State-Level Infrastructure

Mississippi plans to invest no more than 30% of this grant in state-level infrastructure and quality improvements to strengthen its capacity to deliver and increase access to high-quality preK. Mississippi will make investments in four key areas: human capital, program standards, a CELAS, and parent and family engagement. For more information about these plans, see Section C.

B. Subgrants to Early Learning Providers

All collaboratives will begin serving children in the first year and will reach full capacity by the end of the second year. Mississippi will subgrant approximately 70% of its funds over the four-year grant period to the selected collaboratives. Through a new Family Engagement Coordinator in the Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE), MDE will support each collaborative 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. Each collaborative will also hire a full-time Director of the Collaborative, who among other significant duties, will work with the state's Family Engagement Coordinator and implement a robust family and parent engagement plan, as described on page 41. For more information about these subgrants, see Section D and *Table A*.

B. Commitment to High-Quality Preschool Programs

Mississippi has a strong state commitment to high-quality preschool programs. This section demonstrates Mississippi's strong commitment and current capacity to deliver and increase access to high-quality preschool.

(1) State Early Learning and Development Standards

The *Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers* (2010) and the *Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Three-Year-Old Children* (2013) and *Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Four-Year-Old Children* (2013) form the foundation of the state's Early Learning and Development Standards. In an effort to provide teachers with instructional support, MDE is currently developing the *Mississippi Teaching Strategies for Classrooms Serving Four-Year-Old Children* (Teaching Strategies) as an indispensable companion to the *Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Four-Year-Old Children* (ELS4). These strategies were written with the teacher in mind and include examples of things teachers should say and do as well as planning ideas. In addition, this companion piece includes examples of what children should say and do to exhibit mastery of the standards. **Together, the *Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers*, the *Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Three-Year-Old Children*, and the ELS4 and accompanying Teaching Strategies meet this grant's definition of Early Learning and Development Standards.**

First, Mississippi's Early Learning and Development Standards describe what children from birth to Kindergarten entry should know and be able to do and their disposition toward learning.

Second, the standards are age-appropriate; they connect and build across each age to prepare children for school entry at Kindergarten. The standards are also appropriate for English Language Learners and students with disabilities or developmental delays. The Teaching Strategies in particular support teachers in understanding and implementing the ELS4 in an appropriate manner for these populations. The document provides guidance for supporting children at a range of developmental levels, including suggested adaptations, accommodations, and modifications for children with disabilities and supports for instructing English Language Learners. A range of assessment strategies that incorporate developmentally appropriate and authentic assessment practices is also provided, guiding early childhood educators to use observations and performance-based tasks to determine mastery of the standard.

Third, the standards at every age level address a variety of domains, including language and literacy, general knowledge and cognition, physical development, social-emotional development, and approaches to learning. PreK classrooms in Mississippi implement the ELS4, which, like all the standards, cover all of the Essential Domains of School Readiness. In the table below, we show each of the five Essential Domains of School Readiness cross-referenced with the eight domains of the ELS4.

Essential Domain of School Readiness	MS ELS4 Domain
Language and Literacy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts
Cognition and General Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mathematics Science Social Studies
Approaches Toward Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaches to Learning Creative Expression
Physical Well-Being and Motor Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Development
Social-Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and Emotional Development

Finally, Mississippi’s Early Learning and Development Standards are universally designed and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate. The standards are written broadly in order to capture what children should know and be able to do but not how they should master or demonstrate the skills.

(2) Financial Investment and Number and Percentage of Children Served

Mississippi first began investing in a state-funded preK program in FY2014 after the passage of the *ELCA*. (Children were not served with state funds in FY2011, FY2012, and FY2013.) In both FY2014 and FY2015, the Mississippi Legislature appropriated \$ (b) to the state’s preK program. MDE, the state agency tasked with administering the preK program, is allowed to reserve up to 5% of the annual appropriation—or \$ (b)(4) of a S (b) appropriation—for administrative costs. Because the program was being developed and implemented for most of FY2014, much of the FY2014 appropriation carried forward into the FY2015 fiscal year, an allowance of the law that is not common for state appropriations. Approved programs spent FY2014 dollars on readying new classrooms as well as upgrading services for any classrooms they had prior to the state program. In total, (b) children were served in FY2014, or (b)% of the

state's four-year-olds. Of four-year-old children at or below 200% of the federal poverty line, an estimated [redacted] % were served in the state-funded program in FY2014. In FY2015, approved programs ramped up to full capacity and are now serving a total of [redacted] children, or [redacted] % of Mississippi's four-year-olds. An estimated [redacted] % of Mississippi's four-year-olds at or above 200% of the federal poverty line are currently being served. Please see *Table B* for additional information.

The Legislature also enacted a 1:1 state tax credit for individuals or businesses who donate to approved state-funded preK programs. This tax credit is capped at the amount of the annual appropriation—\$[redacted] each year for FY2014 and FY2015. Efforts to advertise the tax credit began in earnest in Spring 2014, and approved programs have encouraged local supporters to donate and claim the credit. Donation amounts for FY2014 will not be available until after donors file their 2014 state taxes in 2015. In total, this means Mississippi could spend up to \$[redacted] on preK in FY2015.

(3) Enacted and Pending Legislation

For the past ten years, Mississippi has worked hard to improve the quality of early learning experiences for children birth to age five. In 2006, the Mississippi Legislature passed the *Mississippi Education Reform Act of 2006*, which established the state's first Child Care Resource and Referral System as well as Mississippi's first program to help early learning providers climb a ladder of quality standards. In 2007, the Mississippi Legislature established the Early Learning Collaborative (ELC) Fund to provide grants to collaborations among public school districts, private childcare centers, and Head Start agencies. These local collaborations were charged with designing and implementing "mutually agreeable" early education service delivery models. Regulations governing the distribution of funds, including the program standards of collaborations, were to be written by a new state-level early childhood council. Unfortunately, the Legislature did not appropriate monies at that time for the ELC Fund, resulting in the regulations not being completed or distributed to the public.

The passage of the *ELCA* heralded a new day for increasing access to high-quality preK in the state of Mississippi. The *ELCA* established and funded Mississippi's first state preK program for four-year-olds. An amended and improved version of the 2007 ELC Fund, the *ELCA* provides state funds for preK providers, regardless of setting, who agree to meet state program standards that are based on the National Institute for Early Education Research's (NIEER)

Quality Standards. Mississippi's very strong commitment to quality is clearly demonstrated by this decision to begin the program at the highest level of quality. The state's strategy is to start with very high quality in a small number of communities and increase access over time through a system of phased-in state funding. The *ELCA* calls for three phases of funding over a fifteen-year period. The first phase, set to last for three to five years, began with the passage of the law and the first appropriation of \$(b) .

As its title suggests—and like the ELC Fund legislation before it—the *ELCA* is based on a collaborative delivery model. PreK providers on a local level must form an ELC, which is a district or county-wide council that must include, at a minimum, a local school district and a Head Start, if one is available. Collaboratives may also include private and/or parochial schools and licensed private childcare centers. The authors of the *ELCA* chose a collaborative model for preK for a number of reasons, but the largest among these is that collaboration makes preK possible in Mississippi. Coordination between preschool programs has been a challenge in the past. The *ELCA* recognized this reality by stating, “There exists a patchwork of preKindergarten entities but no coordination of services” (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-51(2)(d)). Collaborative delivery preK resets the playing field by enabling all programs to participate and prosper, provided they meet state program standards. By building on the existing early learning service delivery infrastructure and leveraging the strengths of each partner, collaboration increases access to high-quality preK while simultaneously affording parents the highest degree of choice for programs.

To signal the importance of quality and access provided through collaboration, the *ELCA* called for the first collaboratives to demonstrate existing capacity, commitment, and need. To demonstrate capacity and commitment, collaboratives had to show “evidence of existing strong local collaborations of early education stakeholders” (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-51(3)(h)(vi)). The legislation defined “need” as low academic achievement and the number and percentage of children without quality preK options, yet another sign of Mississippi's commitment to increasing access. MDE conducted a competitive application process in September 2013, and 11 collaboratives were awarded funds in December 2013. Collaboratives began serving children at full capacity in August 2014.

Legislation is not Mississippi's only demonstration of its commitment to increasing access to high-quality preK. The *Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Four-Year-Old Children*

(Guidelines) are the state's regulatory program standards for collaboratives approved and funded under the state program as well as any preK classroom in a public school setting. While optional for private childcare and Head Start classrooms not participating in the state-funded program, the Guidelines set the bar for all classrooms serving four-year-olds in Mississippi. Since the passage of the *ELCA*, the Guidelines have been under revision in order to align them with the law. Part of this revision will require all public school classrooms to meet the same gold standard for quality as required in the state-funded preK program, regardless of whether those classrooms are supported by state program funds. This move brings Mississippi closer to guaranteeing that access to public school preK means access to high-quality preK. With (b) % of Mississippi's four-year-olds in public school preK, this move will more than triple the number of children in programs meeting the definition of high-quality preK ((% of children in collaboratives plus (b) % of public school children for a total of (b) % (FY2015)) prior to any increase in access made possible through the PDG. The updated Guidelines are expected to be adopted following the state's public comment process in December 2014.

(4) Quality of Existing State-Funded Early Learning Programs

A. Components of a High-Quality Preschool Program

Mississippi's *ELCA* was designed to meet all 10 of the Quality Standards established by the NIEER. NIEER's 10 Standards—and, therefore, Mississippi's—are highly aligned with this grant's components for a high-quality preschool program. Furthermore, Mississippi's preK law and associated regulations require state-funded programs to exceed the NIEER standards in key areas that match the additional components of a high-quality preschool program. All programs receiving state preK funds, regardless of setting, must meet these requirements. **As a result, Mississippi's state-funded preK programs as a matter of law and policy already meet nearly all of the components of a high-quality preschool program as defined by this grant.** In *Appendix D*, we provide a table of the components of high-quality preschool programs, as defined by the grant, alongside Mississippi's current requirements, as explained below. All collaboratives funded as a result of this grant will meet all state requirements for preK programs as well as this grant's requirements.

I. High staff qualifications

Mississippi's teacher requirements are one of the jewels of the *ELCA*. The teacher and assistant teacher criteria satisfy both the NIEER standards as well as the requirements of this grant.

- Teachers: All Mississippi preK teachers must have a bachelor's degree (BA) and specialized training in early childhood education (ECE). Mississippi adopted the NIEER definition of "specialized training" which is 1) a degree in ECE, child development, or the equivalent or 2) a degree in any field and at least 12 hours of ECE coursework or the equivalent. This second route to satisfy the specialized training requirement is intended for both alternate route teachers as well as other education majors who want to teach preK. Teachers in a public school setting must also hold a valid license to teach preK.
- Assistant Teachers: Mississippi is particularly proud of the preK assistant teacher criteria because the criteria are more rigorous than the current criteria for paraprofessionals who serve grades K-3. Paraprofessionals in grades K-3 must be "highly qualified" as required by the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, which means that as long as they have 48 hours of community college coursework, an associate's degree (AA) in any field, or a high school diploma with a passing score on the ACT WorkKeys, they can serve as an assistant in a K-3 classroom. Assistant teachers serving in the collaboratives must have not only an AA but also possess specialized training, which the legislation defines as an AA in ECE or an AA in any field and a Child Development Associate (CDA), Montessori certification, or the equivalent. By meeting these higher standards, all assistant teachers in the collaboratives will exceed the state's definition of a highly qualified assistant teacher.
- Master Teachers: Mississippi's early childhood advocates and the authors of the *ELCA* felt very strongly that preK should model best practices in professional learning and development for educators, including professional learning communities and a career ladder for educators. The master teacher qualifications are for exemplary early childhood educators. When writing the *ELCA*, the authors believed master teachers could serve as the cornerstone of professional learning communities within early childhood settings by modeling for other teachers excellence in the preK classroom. Master teachers must meet the qualifications of a teacher and have demonstrated effectiveness as a preK teacher, which can mean a rating of highly

effective on a state teacher evaluation or a record of raising the achievement of preK students.

This grant will support MDE's efforts to further strengthen the training and licensure requirements for personnel as well as increase the number of teachers, assistant teachers, and master teachers meeting the criteria. Section C, beginning on page 24, describes these plans.

II. High-quality professional development

The authors of the *ELCA* believed the collaboratives would be an ideal structure for encouraging true professional learning communities for preK teachers. To this end, the *ELCA* tasks each collaborative's Lead Partner with "facilitat[ing] a professional learning community for the teachers in the preKindergarten program" (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-51(1)(d)). The *ELCA* further requires collaboratives to provide "at least fifteen (15) hours of annual professional development for program instructional staff, including professional development in early literacy" (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-51(3)(d)(iv)). All of the current collaboratives have working professional learning communities in which collaborative partners participate in joint professional development, including workshops and coaching.

To support the collaboratives as well as any district with a preK classroom, MDE conducts regional Early Childhood *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)* training to help educators understand how preK students learn the early literacy and language skills shown in research to be critical for later success. The program provides descriptions of the development of language and literacy in ways that create a deeper understanding of these important processes while offering practical strategies for building these skills in young children. Early Childhood *LETRS* is appropriate for early childhood educators working with preK and Kindergarten children as well as early elementary children experiencing difficulty with the literacy process. It is also appropriate for early care and education providers working with three-year-old children who are interested in enhancing their own interactions with the children in their care.

Additionally, the Mississippi Head Start Association, in conjunction with sponsoring partners, MDE, the MDHS, the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, the Alliance for Early Success, and the Council of Chief State School Officers hosted the Mississippi Early Childhood Conference (MECC) in July 2014. Through sponsorship, MDE paid the registration fee for each collaborative to send ten people to the conference. The purpose of the conference

was to provide an opportunity for teachers, administrators, childcare providers, parents, community partners, policymakers, and business leaders to participate in professional development designed to improve learning and outcomes for young children birth through third grade in Mississippi. Conference attendees exchanged ideas and information about building a comprehensive system for early childhood care and education, providing high-quality early childhood programs and services, preparing children to enter school ready to learn, and supporting healthy families.

MDE also recently hired (b)(7)(C) early childhood Professional Development Coordinators through a partnership with the Regional Education Service Agency at the University of Mississippi. These (b)(7)(C) Coordinators provide early childhood support to districts, collaboratives, childcare centers, and Head Start in the form of on-site technical assistance and on-demand workshops for at least (b)(7)(C) teachers at a time. Grant funds will build upon the work of these Coordinators by providing each collaborative—state and grant-funded—with access to an Early Childhood Instructional Coach who can provide individual coaching and mentoring as well as small-group professional development, modeling, and technical assistance. See detailed plans for these instructional coaches on page 29.

Finally, all collaboratives as well as every early learning provider statewide have access to the Early Years Network. The Early Years Network houses Mississippi’s Child Care Resource & Referral Network (MSCCR&R) and a professional development, training, and technical assistance system funded by the MDHS. The Early Years Network offers scheduled trainings for childcare providers and licensed teachers in all corners of the state as well as on-demand trainings for groups of 10 or more. Continuing education units (C.E.U.s) or contact hours are offered for each of their trainings. Through this grant, MDE will work with the Early Years Network to coordinate professional development and maximize resources. Please see Section C, page 29, for more information.

III. Child ratio of 10 to 1

The *ELCA* mandates a child ratio of 10 to 1 (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-51(3)(d)(viii)).

IV. Class size of 20 with highly qualified teacher

The *ELCA* requires “teacher/child ratios of one (1) adult for every ten (10) children with a maximum of twenty (20) children per classroom and a minimum of five (5) children per classroom” (Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-51(3)(d)(viii)). The Guidelines further specify that one

