

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

2015 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT



JUNE 2016





**Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge
Annual Performance Report
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Illinois

2015

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General Information

1. PR/Award#: S412A130011

2. Grantee Name Office of the Governor, State of Illinois

3. Grantee Address 207 State House
City: Springfield
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Reporting Period Information

5. Reporting Period: From: 01/01/2015 To: 12/31/2015

Indirect Cost Information

6. Indirect Costs

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

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement(s): From: 07/01/2015 To: 06/30/2016

Approving Federal agency: ED HHS Other Specify other: _____

(Submit current indirect cost rate agreement with this report.)

Executive Summary

For the reporting year, please provide a summary of your State's (1) accomplishments, (2) lessons learned, (3) challenges, and (4) strategies you will implement to address those challenges.

Accomplishments

Illinois' Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant initiatives reflect the State's three strategic reform priorities. In each of these areas, Illinois has accomplished a great deal in its third year of implementation.

Priority 1: Deepening the integration of State supports to create a unified framework for all early learning and development programs.

In 2015, Illinois continued the strong momentum of the first two years for its system-building efforts. Accomplishments include:

- Launched ExceleRate Illinois for licensed family child care homes with significantly more rigor than originally proposed and with higher standards than the State's previous Quality Rating System. Integrated into that framework is the Family Child Care Credential, which also launched as a pilot in 2015.
- Made strong progress towards enrollment targets for ExceleRate Illinois with:
 - 100% participation of school-based Preschool for All programs
 - 36% increase in Head Start programs with a Gold or Silver Circle of Quality
 - 83% total performance target met, despite fiscal challenges at the State level that directly impacted the early childhood system.
- Deepened policy integration and alignment of QRIS/ExceleRate Illinois across systems. As an example, programs in Illinois' Preschool Expansion Grant are expected to participate in ExceleRate's highest tiers, including pursuit of an Award of Excellence.
- Continued pilot implementation of the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) and responded to feedback from the field for local flexibility within a statewide framework (*funded primarily by State funds*).
- Completed an initial child record match of a large subset of children across ISBE systems (Preschool for All funded children) and Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) systems (subsidy certificate and some subsidy contract-funded children).
- Built on success of grant program to forge partnerships between two- and four-year colleges by awarding implementation grants to improve the preparation and ongoing professional development of early childhood educators.
- Began research study to validate Illinois' TQRIS with the participation of a diverse cross-section of 161 center and school-based programs.
- Increased the number of Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) "entitled" to offer coursework leading to Gateways Credentials to 67; which is 84% of the total number of IHE's in Illinois that have teacher preparation programs.
- Piloted three new credentials: Family Child Care; Family Specialist; Technical Assistance, and surpassed goals for the awarding of each of the existing credentials (Director, Early Childhood, and Infant Toddler credentials):
 - 700 Director Credentials (goal: 139)

- 5,719 Early Childhood Education Credentials (goal: 1,703)
- 1,571 Infant/Toddler Credentials (goal: 169)

Priority 2: Connecting the most-at-risk children with the supports and services they need.

Although Illinois has an adequate level of services for children with high needs, too many of the most vulnerable young children in the state are not being served. Through its State Plan, Illinois is working to identify and remove barriers to participation for these children and their families. Accomplishments in 2015 include:

- Launch of 4 new Innovation Zones in areas of concentrated high need: Chicago neighborhoods of Altgeld-Riverdale, Austin, Englewood/S. Englewood/Greater Grand Crossing, and the City of Elgin.
- Significant progress in Innovation Zone initiatives, including:
 - East St. Louis: 550 children received developmental screenings and appropriate referrals through a community-wide campaign
 - North Lawndale: All Chicago Public School Preschool for All slots fully enrolled
 - Cicero: Expansion of coordinated intake for home visiting developed through MIECHV initiative to include preschool programs for children ages 3-5

Priority 3: Increasing program quality: From adequate to good and from good to great

Illinois recognizes that all early childhood programs --even those already meeting high quality standards --need support and guidance in developing and implementing continuous program improvement strategies. Recent research demonstrates what is required in terms of program intensity, rigorous curriculum, and high-quality teacher-child interaction to significantly impact the developmental trajectory of children with high needs. Illinois is working to translate that research into strengthened practices in classrooms across the State. Accomplishments in 2015 include:

- Fully implemented the Awards of Excellence (Tier 5 of the State's TQRIS), which promote and recognize best practice achievements in research-based strategies that support the highest quality services for our most high-need, at-risk children and families. They include Infant and Toddler Services, Preschool Teaching and Learning, Inclusion of Children with Special Needs, Family and Community Engagement, and Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Practice.
- Engaged more than 300 instructional leaders representing 170 programs in 10 active cohorts around the state in a professional learning initiative referred to as *Lead. Learn. Excel.* This 16-month process supports instructional leaders in building the systems and structures within their programs to transfer knowledge to practice by implementing sustainable, job-embedded professional learning routines with their teachers. RTT-ELC funds also support an evaluation of the initiative, the results of which will inform this work.
- Developed and launched an innovative online destination and learning community for family child care professionals. Town Square (www.townsquareIL.org) supports professional learning, connects family child care professionals with other providers and enhances the knowledge and skills needed for success in meeting the standards of ExceleRate Illinois and the new Family Child Care Credential.
- Implemented a comprehensive strategy, including targeted outreach and financial incentives, to promote participation in the Bronze Circle of Quality, resulting in 38 centers achieving this level of quality in the last quarter of 2015.

Lessons Learned

One of the key lessons learned in Illinois' third year of implementation is the critical importance of leadership

and the need for continual development of new and emerging leaders. There have been substantial changes in leadership at all levels of the early childhood system, including the Director of Early Childhood at the Illinois Department of Human Services, the Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, as well as early childhood leadership at the Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, the City's Head Start Grantee. Key to successfully navigating these (and other) transitions has been the strength of vision and capacity for implementation of the extant teams within state government and partners in the private sector. The State and its partners have also worked diligently and deliberately to engage new leaders in RTT-ELC initiatives and other system-building strategies.

Another important lesson for Illinois in Year 3 is that it is critical to consider sustainability throughout the implementation process, particularly in the early stages of work to assess viability. The State has long felt fortunate to have been awarded its RTT-ELC grant in Round 2 and is now learning from other states how to approach implementation with sustainability at the forefront of thought. The ongoing budget crisis in Illinois, well-documented throughout this APR, has compelled the State to think carefully about the essential infrastructure components necessary to support families' access to high quality services. As such, Illinois ended 2015 with skeletal plans in place for sustaining key system components in 2017 and beyond.

A final lesson learned for Illinois is the continued need to remain flexible, adaptable, and ready for opportunity. The State's deepening budget crisis and resulting consequences for early childhood programs had significant impact on the capacity of providers to participate in quality-building activities. At the same time, the immediacy of need for our State's youngest residents remained unchanged, a compelling reason to advance messages of continuous quality improvement, which the State did. Increased attention to early childhood at the federal level, including more robust requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant and opportunities within the Every Student Succeeds Act, are also necessitating change at the state level. Illinois' work through RTT-ELC initiatives continue to build the State's capacity and readiness for cross-system action and is well-aligned with our new gubernatorial administration's priority for transformation of education, health, and human services.

Challenges & Strategies to Address Challenges

Illinois' budget crisis presented challenges to the early childhood system and its RTT-ELC initiatives in 2015. Lack of a fully enacted budget, delayed payments, and changes to eligibility in the child care program have contributed to a sense of instability and uncertainty throughout state-funded programs, most notably within the child care and home visiting systems. Described in greater detail in A(3) and referred to throughout this report, the fiscal challenges in 2015 have strained families, programs, and communities.

Advancing an ambitious agenda of system-building and continuous quality improvement in difficult fiscal conditions has been a challenge. The State and its partners have continued to encourage and support programs as they work towards Circles of Quality and Awards of Excellence. It is a testament to the strength of commitment and resiliency of the field that in 2015, 6,371 more children with high needs participated in a program with a Gold Circle of Quality rating than in the previous year. OECD and its partners have continued to emphasize the vision of the state for kindergarten readiness that prioritizes high quality services for the children with highest needs.

Transition to a new administration has also come with a set of challenges along with opportunities. Over the course of 2015, there has been significant turnover of top-level leadership in the Governor's Office and in each of the Participating State Agencies. Additionally, key leadership for early childhood programs has changed within the Department of Human Services. Some projects of RTT-ELC (notably data integration, Kindergarten Entry Assessment, and some inter-agency work) slowed down as new leadership came on board and engaged with the early childhood system over the course of 2015.

However, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) and the Illinois Early Learning Council (IELC) were well-prepared for this transition and have worked hard to engage new leadership, resulting in strong support for the work moving forward. For example, the newly appointed Secretary of Education for the Governor's Office now co-chairs the IELC and has been well-supported by OECD to take on this role. New

leaders have also been included in national meetings and conferences, as an intentional effort to deepen engagement in RTT-ELC initiatives.

Data system integration work continues to be a challenge in Illinois. Illinois chose to build its early learning data system in conjunction with the State's larger P-20 Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS). This has many advantages, including far greater sustainability of the system. However, it has been challenging to move this complex work forward at the pace originally outlined in the State Plan. Data sharing agreements have encountered numerous delays; most recently, delays have been caused by new policies around information security that requires inter-agency alignment. However, OECD is committed to working with its public and private partners to ensure long-term sustainability needs of the data systems are met. Indeed, data-informed decision-making is a top priority for the new gubernatorial administration, and there are several initiatives underway in the State that are well-aligned with RTT-ELC projects. OECD and its partners at Participating State Agencies are working to prioritize the early childhood part of this work and make any adjustments necessary to complete planned data integration and support research and evaluation.

Successful State Systems

Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State (Section A(3) of Application)

Governance Structure

Please provide any relevant information and updates related to the governance structure for the RTT-ELC State Plan (specifically, please include information on the organizational structure for managing the grant, and the governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, State Advisory Council, and Participating State Agencies).

Illinois continued to effectively implement the governance structure that was described in the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) State Plan. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) manages the grant, which includes monitoring of contracts and work performed by sub-grantees. The Interagency Team (IAT), which consists of early childhood leadership from each of the Participating State Agencies (Illinois Department of Human Services, the Department of Children and Families Services, and the Illinois State Board of Education), has successfully led the implementation of the RTT-ELC state plan.

There were, however, significant changes in governance in 2015 due to the election of Governor Bruce Rauner and new leadership at each of the Participating State Agencies. As those new leaders came on board, the OECD Executive Director provided an orientation on both the early childhood landscape in Illinois and the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge initiatives. Illinois' Leadership Team has been kept apprised of progress on the RTT-ELC scope of work.

Throughout this transition, the IAT continued to meet at least monthly to ensure the cross-agency coordination necessary to successfully complete the RTT-ELC scope of work and move toward a more unified early childhood system in Illinois.

At the same time, there have been important changes at the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. IOECD reviewed its staffing structure to determine current need. After this, OECD created and filled the position of Community Systems Policy Director to guide implementation of the state's strategic plan for creating a more robust support system for local collaboration. OECD also created and filled the position of Deputy Director to take on a number of critical functions, including some from vacant/unfilled positions (most notably Grant Administration and Communication). In late 2015, OECD Executive Director and RTT-ELC architect Theresa Hawley resigned. The Secretary of Education immediately filled this position with Kelley Washington, allowing for a smooth transition. It should be noted, however, that primary responsibility for the IAT is now that of the Deputy Director.

The RTT-ELC Team now consists of:

- OECD Executive Director
- OECD Deputy Director
- QRIS Policy Director
- Workforce Development Policy Director
- Licensing & QRIS Integration Policy Director
- Community Systems Policy Director
- Data and Outcomes Manager
- QRIS Implementation Manager

- Policy Fellow

OECD continues to manage several Interagency Project Teams for TQRIS, Workforce Development, Data and Outcomes, and Community Systems. OECD also manages Illinois' MIECHV grant, enabling full integration with home visiting and Illinois' Home Visiting Task Force. These project teams help maintain close collaboration between state agencies and OECD as the RTT-ELC scope of work is implemented. The teams meet on varied schedules depending on current workload but with enough frequency to ensure tight coordination and communication across agencies. These teams also collaborate with the Illinois Early Learning Council (IELC) committees on areas of common work.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) serves as the fiscal agent for the grant. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between ISBE, OECD, Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS), and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) provides the framework to accomplish the work of the grant. IDHS, IDCFS, and IBHE voucher ISBE directly for funds to support vendors that are contracted to do the work within each agency's scope. OECD works closely with ISBE to monitor the entire budget for the grant and approves all sub-contractor's budgets prior to grants or contracts being awarded.

OECD monitors all the work in the Scope of Work to ensure its timely completion and also implements the State's monitoring plan. Staff from the individual State agencies participate in monthly and quarterly monitoring meetings with the subcontractors to ensure that RTT-ELC work is well-coordinated with other efforts to strengthen and effectively administer the State's early learning system.

The IELC continues to play a key advisory role for the implementation of the RTT-ELC. Both the full IELC and Executive Committee have been updated on the implementation of the grant and consulted for input on major initiatives. The Executive Committee receives more detailed implementation information and provides input to the IAT and OECD on implementation direction. The IELC Committees also played key roles in developing the policy for the implementation of RTT-ELC objectives. For example, multiple committees researched and developed policies, tools, and processes for identifying and engaging children from specific priority populations (e.g., homeless, child welfare) with highest needs and connecting to high quality services.

In 2015, Illinois embarked on two privately funded initiatives to look at early childhood system governance and the composition and structure of the IELC. These efforts, one funded through the National Governor's Association and the other through an Illinois foundation, have continued throughout a number of key transitions. In addition to these early childhood system specific efforts, the Governor's Office has embarked on two overarching initiatives that are creating a new context for governance issues. An early initiative of our new Governor was a "Health and Human Services Transformation" strategy, which led to the the announcement in early 2016 of the formation of the Governor's Cabinet on Children & Youth, which will formulate a strategic vision for education and health and human services. The Children's Cabinet's intention is to ensure a holistic focus on children, eliminate bureaucracy where possible, and streamline decision-making towards shared goals. The OECD Executive Director, along with the Governor's Secretary of Education and state agency leaders, have been appointed to this Cabinet.

Stakeholder Involvement

Describe State progress in involving representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the implementation of the activities carried out under the grant.

The Early Learning Council (IELC), which functions as Illinois' State Advisory Council, is comprised of over 75 members from throughout the early childhood system. The IELC also has five committees and numerous subcommittees that are made up of hundreds of early childhood stakeholders from across the state and both the Council and committees have members who are parents of young children participating in the state early

childhood system. The IELC and each committee are co-chaired by two leaders: one from the private sector and one from the public sector. The IELC made it a priority to ensure stakeholder input in the implementation of the RTT-ELC. The State sought input on all major implementation decisions related to its State Plan through IELC committees, other state-level advisory committees (e.g., the Child Care Advisory Committee, Professional Development Advisory Committee, KIDS Implementation Advisory Committee, and the Day Care Licensing Advisory Committee), and/or through special-purpose ad-hoc committees.

A good example of the participatory nature of Illinois' implementation efforts comes from the Systems Integration and Alignment Committee (SIAC) of the IELC. Embedding developmental screening within the child care system is of critical importance (and a requirement for higher levels of our TQRIS). At the request of the Early Intervention (Part C) system, SIAC has taken the lead to create a Memorandum of Agreement template and guidance for use between child care programs and the regional Child and Family Connections agency, which is the point of entry for Part C services. This form and process will be piloted in 2016 in the Illinois Innovation Zones.

In addition to these more formal opportunities for stakeholders to provide input, OECD staff prioritized being accessible to providers and parents to receive timely input. The OECD Executive Director and other staff have presented at numerous conferences and local meetings around the state to communicate the State's vision and plan and to hear and respond to questions and concerns raised by practitioners and other stakeholders. The OECD and ExceleRate Illinois websites have a "contact us" function, which is frequently used by stakeholders to communicate their thoughts about the system development work. In addition, OECD publishes a monthly newsletter, which also generates dialogue about emerging trends and initiatives in the field.

Proposed Legislation, Policies, or Executive Orders

Describe any changes or proposed changes to state legislation, budgets, policies, executive orders and the like that had or will have an impact on the RTT-ELC grant. Describe the expected impact and any anticipated changes to the RTT-ELC State Plan as a result.

Illinois Budget

The State of Illinois faced an unprecedented fiscal challenge in 2015. On Jan. 1, 2015, the State's personal income tax rate changed from 5% to 3.75%, a result of the sunset of a temporary tax increase in effect since 2011. In addition, the corporate tax rate went from 7%-5.25%. The Governor's Office of Management & Budget estimated an 11% decrease in General Revenue Funds from FY 2015 to FY 2016. At the same time, Illinois continues to face the most severe pension funding crisis in the nation.

Tackling Illinois' structural budget imbalance is of critical importance to the public and private sectors of the State. However, to do so would require significant program cuts, tax increases, or both. Unable to come to agreement on the best solution, the State began FY 2016 on July 1, 2015 without a fully enacted budget in place; as of the writing of this annual performance report in February, 2016, a budget still has not been put into place. Certain General Revenue Fund spending has continued in the absence of a budget, including grants for elementary and secondary education (which includes the Early Childhood Block Grant, the funding source for Preschool for All and the Prevention Initiative). However, early childhood programs within the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) - child care, Early Intervention, some home visiting programs, and other family services - have not been appropriated. The effect of this is that IDHS does not have full spending authority for programs using State General Revenue Funds.

Funding for Core Early Childhood Programs

Illinois' overall budget crisis has led to significant volatility and instability in the early childhood system. The FY 2015 (which ended June 30, 2015) appropriation for child care was not sufficient to meet program obligations for the full year, a situation that fueled great uncertainty about the viability of child care programs serving high proportions of children with subsidies. The FY 2016 budget proposal, which included \$135 million in cuts to the child care program, added to concern in the field. In the Spring of 2015, the General Assembly approved a \$226 million supplemental appropriation for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to meet FY 2015 obligations.

Uncertainty about the level of funding for child care, a perennial concern among child care providers in Illinois, grew throughout the first half of 2015 and intensified as FY 2016 began on July 1, 2015 without a fully enacted budget.

Lack of a fully enacted budget has also significantly impacted payment to providers across the early childhood system. Legislation passed in August enabled payment to programs using federal funds (including Child Care & Development Fund and MIECHV), albeit behind schedule. However, programs that are fully supported by General Revenue Funds (such as Parents Too Soon and Healthy Families Illinois, two of Illinois' evidence-based home visiting programs) have not received payment for services rendered in FY 2016. It is important to note that programs funded through the Illinois State Board of Education (including Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative) are receiving payment. Projects funded by Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds have been receiving payment regularly as well. Legislation passed in August 2015 has enabled Illinois to issue payments from federal funding sources.

Child Care Assistance Program --Administrative Rule-making

As a mechanism to reduce child care spending for FY 2016, IDHS enacted emergency rules for the child care assistance program. From July 1-November 9, 2015, CCAP intake for new families was restricted to the following priority need groups: 1) families earning less than 50% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) (reduction from 185%); 2) Teen parents; 3) TANF recipients; 4) children with special needs. On November 9, the income eligibility limit was raised to 162% FPL, with the promise of restoration to 185% FPL once the FY 16 budget is passed.

The effect of this rule change on RTT-ELC work has been substantial. First, it greatly reduced family access to child care subsidies, which in turn impeded the ability of child care programs to fully enroll -especially problematic at the beginning of the school year. Additionally, this emergency rule change injected a strong sense of uncertainty about the future of the CCAP program, causing many programs to curtail all but essential activities.

The impact of this funding situation on the capacity of early learning programs to participate in ExceleRate Illinois, the State's TQRIS, in 2015 cannot be overstated. Child and family serving organizations are under enormous financial strain, and it is not yet fully known what impact the 4-month freeze on eligibility had on program enrollment. Data show that the CCAP caseload declined by approximately one-third from July 2015 to January 2016.

Administrative Rules

On a more positive note, there were two important additions to the Illinois Administrative Code that reflect and embed a systemic approach:

- Language was added to the State's early childhood teacher preparation licensure programs to align the competencies embedded in the Gateways Level 5 Credential (granted by IDHS) with the Endorsement for Early Childhood Education (Birth through Grade 2) granted by ISBE. This codification of alignment between systems at the level of Bachelor's Degree teachers represents an important step in Illinois' efforts to build a unified early childhood workforce.
- Illinois' TQRIS was codified in the Illinois school code, requiring Early Childhood Education Block Grant preschool programs to participate in ExceleRate Illinois. The expectation that programs achieve a Silver (Tier 3) or Gold (Tier 4) rating is included in this rule.

Participating State Agencies

Describe any changes in participation and commitment by any of the Participating State Agencies in the State Plan.

Although there have been significant changes in personnel at the leadership level due to a new gubernatorial administration, there are no changes in participation and commitment of Participating State Agencies.

High-Quality, Accountable Programs

Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) (Section B(1) of Application).

During this reporting year of RTT-ELC implementation, has the State made progress in **developing or revising** a TQRIS that is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards?

If **yes**, these standards currently apply to (please check all that apply):

- State-funded preschool programs
- Early Head Start and Head Start programs
- Early Learning and Development programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA
- Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA
- Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program:
 - Center-based
 - Family Child Care

If **yes**, these standards currently apply to (please check all that apply):

- Early Learning and Development Standards
- A Comprehensive Assessment System
- Early Childhood Educator Qualifications
- Family Engagement Strategies
- Health Promotion Practices
- Effective Data Practices

The State has made progress in ensuring that (please check all that apply):

- TQRIS Program Standards are measurable
- TQRIS Program Standards meaningfully differentiate program quality levels
- TQRIS Program Standards reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children
- The TQRIS is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Describe progress made during the reporting year in ***developing or revising*** a TQRIS that is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards. Please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the four-year grant period.

Illinois made substantial progress in 2015 as it continued to build out and implement ExceleRate Illinois, and to transition its previous quality rating system (Quality Counts) to expanded and significantly higher standards. ExceleRate Illinois is a cross-sector, five-level TQRIS that is inclusive of all early learning and development programs serving children from birth to kindergarten entry in group settings. Transition to ExceleRate Illinois for child care centers is substantially complete and is currently underway with licensed family child care homes. License-exempt homes may still participate in the Quality Counts programs. In 2013, the State focused its system development activities on establishing common standards for licensed child care centers, school-based preschool classrooms, and Head Start/Early Head Start programs. In 2014, the State focused on the development of standards for licensed family child care and group homes, establishment of the Awards of Excellence (Tier 5 of ExceleRate Illinois), and the formation of expedited pathways for Head Start programs and license-exempt centers to achieve quality ratings. Multiple accreditations were approved as paths to ExceleRate Illinois ratings, and multiple curricula were reviewed for alignment with the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines (IELGs) and the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS). In 2015, ExceleRate Illinois for family child care was launched with full transition and alignment protocols for existing quality-rated homes and enrollment of new home providers. This included creation of a custom pathway for homes accredited by the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC). Integrated with this work was the pilot of a new Family Child Care Credential, and the development of a full series of ExceleRate Illinois - required trainings embedded in that credential. The Awards of Excellence were fully implemented for Preschool Teaching and Learning, Infant and Toddler Services, Family and Community Engagement, Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Practice, and Inclusion of Children with Special Needs. This included the development of application processes and portfolio review protocols, recruitment of advisory panels of content area experts, and provision of robust technical assistance supports in all five areas of practice.

Alternate ("Custom") Pathways

A key feature of ExceleRate Illinois is its recognition of multiple forms of evidence as pathways to the Silver and Gold Circles of Quality. In 2013, the ExceleRate Illinois standards were crosswalked with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC) accreditation standards, and the State implemented an expedited ExceleRate Illinois enrollment process for these accredited programs. In 2014, the State established accreditation crosswalks for the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Council on Accreditation (COA) Standards for Early Childhood Programs, and enrollment processes were likewise implemented. The National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation was reviewed and accepted in 2015, and the AdvanceEd accreditation is currently under review for a pathway to ExceleRate Illinois.

The State also implemented a crosswalk between the Head Start Performance Standards and the Gold Circle of Quality in ExceleRate Illinois in 2013. While the alignment was clear, the pathway to demonstrate compliance was challenging. This was primarily due to the ExceleRate Illinois' requirement of site-level assessment scores for classroom quality, coupled with an absence of site-level evidence on these measures available from Head Start Federal Review protocols, which report CLASS scores at the program/grantee level. OECD created and implemented a process to address this challenge for Head Start programs in 2014, in partnership with the Head Start State Collaboration Office and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS). It was agreed that evidence for thirteen of the fifteen Gold Circle standards could be substantially demonstrated with Federal Review results, and that only the remaining two standards (Learning Environment and Instructional Support) would require site-level verification. This creates a welcome efficiency for both the Head Start grantee and the State, as it allows the assessment visit to focus only on the gap in evidence. It allows the grantee to provide the remainder of evidence from its existing Head Start compliance documentation, rather than undergo a parallel

and often duplicative process. Because the same assessors verify classroom quality in Head Start, school-based Preschool for All and child care, it also promotes and reinforces the credibility, fairness, and level playing field of our cross-sector system, where “Gold means Gold” in every setting.

This protocol was successfully piloted with 5 Head Start grantees operating 27 Head Start/Early Head Start sites in 2014. The pilot was evaluated in the spring of 2015 and expanded statewide with minor process adjustments from lessons learned. An additional five grantees formed the second cohort of Head Start programs pursuing the expedited pathway in 2015. Site-level assessments for 15 of these facilities were completed in 2015, with another 14 sites scheduled for completion by April 2016.

Family Child Care Implementation for ExceleRate Illinois

There was much anticipation of the ExceleRate Illinois launch for licensed family child care programs, as home providers had been diligently watching the roll out of the system for child care centers. Under the leadership of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD), the State began implementing ExceleRate Illinois for family child care providers at the end of 2014. The State strove to follow the process that was created for centers, as much as possible, in order to minimize confusion and maintain parity between centers and homes. Timelines, deadlines, and grace periods were set to resemble those provided to centers.

In October 2014, the State posted the ExceleRate Illinois charts that outlined the tiers, domains, standards and evidence for licensed family child care programs. The detailed and focused planning process to develop the family child care system was summarized in last year's APR report. The final ExceleRate Illinois standards for licensed family child care include 17 standards, spread across four domains: Teaching and Learning; Family and Community Engagement; Leadership and Management; and Qualifications and Continuing Education. These domains are almost identical to the ExceleRate Illinois domains for centers, based on the recommendation of the stakeholders (in particular the family child care providers) that felt these domains remained applicable to their programs.

The ExceleRate Illinois standards for family child care homes were developed with significantly more rigor than was proposed in Illinois' Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant application. In the application, the State proposed making only minor revisions to the criteria in place for the Quality Counts system. However, after closely monitoring the development of ExceleRate Illinois standards for centers, the family child care community believed it was important to develop the standards for home-based programs under the framework of “Gold means Gold.” Family child care providers believed that the standards reflect the same rigor and quality expectations as the center standards. As a result, there are fewer family child care programs in the top tiers of ExceleRate Illinois at this stage than was initially projected in the grant application.

Awards of Excellence

The Awards of Excellence comprise the fifth and highest tier of ExceleRate Illinois and were fully implemented in 2015. Awards of Excellence may be pursued by programs that have already achieved the Gold Circle of Quality (Tier 4) and are inclusive of both school- and community-based early learning programs. The Awards of Excellence promote and recognize best practice achievements in research-based strategies which support the highest quality services for our most high-need, at-risk children and families. They include Infant and Toddler Services, Preschool Teaching and Learning, Inclusion of Children with Special Needs, Family and Community Engagement, and Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Practice. In 2013, content area experts in each specialty identified the benchmarks and rigorous requirements for each of these awards. The recommendations included assessment tools, staff qualifications, training requirements, and portfolio evidence to validate achievement of the Award of Excellence in each content area. These awards and the accompanying standards are expected to inform practice and push forward quality improvement efforts throughout the system, in order to support Illinois' larger goal of increasing the number of high-need children served in our state's highest quality early learning and development programs.

Screening and Referral Resources for Capacity-Building

Among the higher expectations embedded in ExceleRate Illinois are child screening, evaluation, and service referral protocols for all children from birth through kindergarten entry. All providers at the Silver and Gold Circles of Quality are required to develop and implement policies and procedures that ensure all children served receive developmental screening at least annually. Additional training and other protocols must be implemented for the Gold Circle, among them the requirement of a formal written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the program and the local Early Intervention provider and/or the Local Education Agency. These standards are a key strategy to promote kindergarten readiness and school success in the State, especially among the highest-need children. In recognition of a gap in knowledge and experience with these systems on the part of some early learning providers, the Special Education Sub-Committee of the Illinois Early Learning Council stepped up in 2015 to create resources to assist providers in meeting these expectations and successfully implementing the protocols with competence. In consultation with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and IDHS, the committee developed a standard MOU template for statewide use. The template includes step-by-step instructions, along with a robust inventory of screening and training resources. The resource is currently being piloted with providers in three of the State's Innovation Zones whose strategic priorities focus on universal screening and access to enhanced services.

Curriculum Alignment

ExceleRate Illinois standards for Teaching and Learning require that programs implement a research-based curriculum that is aligned with the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines (IELGs) for birth - age 3, and the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) for children ages 3 - 5. In order to help programs meet this standard, OECD created a crosswalk process to review various curricula for their alignment with the IELGs and IELDS. Practitioners and Quality Specialists were surveyed about their curriculum choices, outreach was conducted with publishers/authors of curricula in widespread use, and providers encouraged other publishers to undergo the review. Publishers submit an application that includes a narrative describing its research base and training capacity in Illinois, along with a full set of curriculum materials and standard-by-standard written evidence of its alignment with the IELGs and IELDS. Applications and curricula are reviewed three times per year by state agency content experts designated by the Interagency Team. To date, 22 curricula have been reviewed and determined to be aligned and accepted for the ExceleRate Illinois curriculum standard. Three of these also meet the family child care curriculum standard. Nine are proprietary curricula implemented by private chains/franchises, which are only available for their use. Several additional curricula for both center-based and family child care are in process for a spring 2016 review. OECD is also testing a simplified rubric for evidence of alignment for those practitioners who choose to implement their own self-designed curriculum, or in cases where a publisher declines to undertake the crosswalk process. Four such independent crosswalks have been submitted for review, and another 9 applications are expected in the spring 2016.

License-Exempt Provider Pathway

In 2014, a policy for license-exempt centers was developed to ensure the statewide TQRIS is accessible to all early childhood programs that serve children in groups. The standards for ExceleRate Illinois were developed with the understanding that basic health and safety issues were assessed and ensured through the DCFS Day Care Licensing process. However, as a multi-sector Quality Rating and Improvement System, ExceleRate Illinois applies to preschool programs, including the state's Preschool for All (PFA) programs, which are frequently housed in public school buildings. These programs are legally exempt from Day Care Licensing by Illinois statute but are held accountable for other health and safety standards applicable to public school buildings by ISBE and local school districts.

The ExceleRate Illinois policy specifies the conditions under which other legally license-exempt programs may participate in ExceleRate Illinois. The policy aims to ensure that such programs have demonstrated in some meaningful way that they do indeed provide a safe and healthy environment for young children. In particular,

programs must demonstrate that their facilities are safe, that appropriate staff child ratios are met, and that the program has obtained adequate background checks on all staff. Several school-based non-PFA programs inquired about the license-exempt application process in 2015, and one accredited Montessori School completed it. However, significant changes under the new Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) authorization suggest that the license-exempt pathway may require substantive revision for compliance. Accordingly, the license-exempt pathway is suspended while the new State CCDF Plan is completed and further implementation guidance is issued by federal administrators.

Promoting Participation in the TQRIS (Section B(2) of Application)

Describe progress made during the reporting year in promoting participation in the TQRIS. Please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the four-year grant period.

The State implements a multitude of strategies to promote participation in ExceleRate Illinois and to create the conditions for success for the many programs already-engaged in the quality rating system as RTT-ELC transforms the landscape for early learning in Illinois. The State established recognition and reciprocity for multiple forms of evidence to engage and enable new programs from a variety of settings in its cross-sector system to demonstrate compliance with the standards of ExceleRate Illinois. Several initiatives were undertaken and/or enhanced in 2015 to articulate the diverse routes to achieve an ExceleRate Illinois rating. Among these:

Provisional Ratings and Program Alignment Processes for Child Care Centers

Prior to RTT-ELC and the development of ExceleRate Illinois, the State had already been administering a quality rating system, Quality Counts, since 2007. Nearly 600 licensed child care centers were rated and enrolled in Quality Counts when ExceleRate Illinois was implemented in July 2013. The State worked diligently to provide these programs with a seamless and non-disruptive dual enrollment process from Quality Counts to ExceleRate Illinois. These included provisional ratings and reasonable timeframes for programs to align themselves with the higher standards of ExceleRate Illinois. Quality Counts 1- and 2-Star programs were dually-enrolled in the Silver Circle, and 3- and 4-Star programs were enrolled in the Gold Circle of ExceleRate Illinois, in the fall of 2013.

A staggered alignment timeframe brought all but a handful of these centers from provisional to full ExceleRate Illinois ratings during 2014 and 2015. Forty aligning centers achieved a higher Circle of Quality (Gold) than their provisional ratings of Silver; 12 chose to align at a lower Circle (Silver) rather than their provisional ratings of Gold. Centers whose alignments remain incomplete were originally enrolled with NECPA accreditation, which has since been determined ineligible for reciprocity with ExceleRate Illinois. OECD, IDHS, and the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) worked diligently to create a respectful path with resources, support and an extended timeframe for Illinois' 27 NECPA-accredited programs to pursue an alternate pathway via assessment or another accreditation, in order to maintain their eligibility for ExceleRate Illinois. Six of these programs have already completed that process with the achievement of NAEYC accreditation; the balance (21) are expected to complete the alignment process (via accreditation or the assessment process) by June 2016.

Since 2013, a total of 41 provisionally-enrolled programs (7%) failed to complete the alignment process with ExceleRate Illinois. Twenty of these programs failed to renew licenses or accreditations. Nine sites closed or were reconstituted with other programs or in other facilities. Another 12 withdrew from or were otherwise determined ineligible for ExceleRate Illinois. Several were Head Start sites whose grantees/management has changed under the federally-required Designated Renewal System. Their licenses and accreditations are not transferrable from one grantee to the next, and as a result re-application with DCFS, NAEYC, and ExceleRate Illinois is required.

Family Child Care Support, Engagement, and Program Alignment Processes

Nearly 300 licensed family child care homes were rated and enrolled in Illinois' original Quality Rating System, Quality Counts, when ExceleRate Illinois for family child care was implemented in 2015. The State worked diligently to provide these programs with a seamless and non-disruptive dual enrollment process from Quality Counts to ExceleRate Illinois, with provisional ratings and a reasonable timeframe for programs to align themselves with the higher standards of ExceleRate Illinois.

Similar to the process for child care centers, Quality Counts family child care programs were dually-enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois. 1, 2- and 3-Star programs were dually enrolled in the Silver Circle, and 4-Star programs were enrolled in the Gold Circle. Family child care dual enrollment took place in June 2015. Family child care programs that are dually enrolled are currently undergoing the alignment process to move from a provisional rating to a full ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality. Currently, 2 family child care programs have aligned at the Gold Circle of Quality, and 3 programs have aligned at the Silver Circle of Quality (with an additional 10 alignment applications in process). Programs have until June 2016 to move from provisional to full ExceleRate Illinois ratings.

Family child care providers have demonstrated considerable interest in the Bronze Circle of Quality. Already 12 new providers have engaged in ExceleRate Illinois and achieved the Bronze Circle of Quality. Another 13 Bronze applications are in process, and family child care providers continue to create high demand for the trainings that lead to the Bronze Circle of Quality.

Approximately 300 licensed family child homes are accredited by NAFCC in Illinois. Due to NAFCC accreditation omitting key areas that are included in the ExceleRate Illinois family child care standards, such as curriculum, screening and assessment, ratios, and provider qualifications, the State could not use NAFCC accreditation as a straight alternative pathway to the Gold Circle of Quality. However, the State recognized the effort and dedication involved in obtaining NAFCC accreditation and invited NAFCC to submit a crosswalk application of their accreditation standards with ExceleRate Illinois. In 2015, the NAFCC accreditation crosswalk application was received, thoroughly analyzed, and discussed for appropriate inclusion in ExceleRate Illinois for family child care by a panel of experts. The review team created a fair and expedited pathway for NAFCC accredited programs to demonstrate compliance with the ExceleRate Illinois requirements. Illinois has included the NAFCC custom pathway as an attachment to this report.

The State values the work of family child care providers and understands the unique challenges they face balancing the needs of their home and small business. Professional development programs and quality supports that are specifically built for family child care providers are critical to the implementation of ExceleRate Illinois, particularly given the rigorous standards for family child care programs in our system. Through RTT-ELC, the State developed and launched an innovative online destination and learning community for family child care professionals. Town Square (www.townsquareIL.org) supports professional learning, connects family child care professionals with other providers, and provides resources to enhance the knowledge and skills needed for success in meeting the standards of ExceleRate Illinois and the new Family Child Care Credential.

The State's contractor began work on the portal and online training materials/modules for Town Square in April 2015. The site officially launched in January 2016 and is expected to help providers successfully strive for and reach quality standards, participate in the Credential process, and provide feedback on the focus and quality of support services that are most likely to impact quality of care in FCC homes in Illinois. Town Square is a valuable support for Illinois providers and other family child care providers around the country that are looking for resources and materials on quality early learning and best practices in home-based care.

Engaging New Child Care Centers with ExceleRate Illinois

One hundred forty three new child care centers applied for and achieved ExceleRate Illinois ratings in 2015. Of these 56 are rated as Bronze, 21 as Silver, and 66 as Gold. Eighty-two additional applications received by December 2015 are undergoing eligibility review and are expected to receive ratings before the end of March 2016. Quality Specialists from the State's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies continue their outreach to engage new programs and have developed a variety of tools to help assess their readiness to work toward specific Circles of Quality. The CRRs provide consultation and technical assistance to help programs stay on track with their Continuous Quality Improvement Plans. This is especially important for those programs

in the Silver Circle of Quality, as the task now turns to facilitating their improvements to achieve the Gold Circle.

Bronze Circle Outreach Initiative

To attain the Bronze Circle of Quality programs are required to complete a robust series of trainings and attain introductory-level credentials. The Circle is designed to lay the groundwork of core knowledge essential for success in ExceleRate Illinois and was fully built-out and implemented in 2014-2015. Although optional, it is an effective entry point for providers new to quality improvement activities. It consists of approximately 50 hours of prescribed content area training for administrators and 30 hours for classroom teachers. The State identified 153 child care centers whose administrators had completed at least 50% of the Bronze Circle trainings and challenged them to complete the balance of the trainings by the end of 2015. A portion of the ExceleRate Illinois bonus incentives was set aside for centers that applied for the initiative by the end of August. Seventy-five centers applied by the deadline, and 38 (50%) completed the training and met the staff credential requirements by the end of 2015 to achieve the Bronze Circle of Quality and receive the bonus incentive. An additional 15 centers are on track to complete all the trainings in the first quarter of 2016 and are expected to achieve the Bronze Circle despite the absence of the bonus incentive.

Innovation Zones and Promising Practice Initiatives

One of Illinois' key projects within the RTT-ELC grant is the Innovation Zone initiative. In each of these geographically based Innovation Zones, early learning and development programs are working collaboratively to plan for and implement local cross-system strategies towards the goal of enrolling children with highest needs in a continuum of high-quality early learning and development programs. In Year One, the State launched 7 zones:

- Aurora (small city (urban/suburban) in northern part of state)
- Greater East St. Louis (south central urban/suburban)
- Cicero (densely populated suburb of Chicago)
- Thornton Township (south suburbs of Chicago)
- North Lawndale (neighborhood in City of Chicago)
- Williamson County (southern Illinois, largely rural)
- Pilsen/Little Village (City of Chicago neighborhood)

Based on early successes within this initiative and with the availability of additional resources, the State invited community applications for participation in a second cohort of Innovation Zones in 2015. The areas selected in Year Three include:

- Austin (neighborhood in the City of Chicago)
- Southside cluster (three neighborhoods in the City of Chicago)
- Elgin (small city in northern part of state)
- Altgeld-Riverdale (City of Chicago housing project and immediate neighborhood)

Each of the 11 communities was selected based on demonstrated need as well as capacity to plan for and implement cross-system strategies. Innovation Zone teams in each community receive support in the form of technical assistance, coaching, training, and opportunities for peer-to-peer learning. All of the Innovation Zones focus on one or more strategies identified in their local community, such as universal screening, coordinated intake, and/or increasing the enrollment of high-need children in quality early learning programs.

Most also implement related initiatives to increase the quality of early learning programs in their community. One example is the Greater East St. Louis (GESTL) Innovation Zone, which has created local networks of providers working together to conduct universal developmental screening and coordinated intake, while

concurrently engaging providers in ExceleRate Illinois. At the end of 2015, Illinois as a whole had 31% of its child care centers enrolled above the Licensing level (Tier 1) of ExceleRate Illinois, with 17% in the Gold Circle of Quality. The State's overall RTT-ELC targets on these measures are 50% above Licensing and 25% Gold, respectively. As a result of the diligent and intentional work of the GESTL Innovation Zone, its performance on these targets exceeds the statewide goal with 66% of its programs above Licensing, and it has almost met the statewide goal with 22% of its programs achieving the Gold Circle of Quality. The GESTL has requested and been granted adjustments in some requirements in order to achieve larger and more important goals for children in the community. As an example, their Bronze training cohort parlayed the required developmental screening session into an extended day, during which all their providers were fully trained on the Ages & Stages (ASQ) screening tool. They can now implement their own developmental screenings in their centers, rather than refer children out for screenings. This cohort also conceived a plan to bundle the Bronze trainings into Gateways Credential content areas, enabling them to receive the maximum credential points possible for their investment in the trainings. INCCRRA is piloting this plan with the GESTL Innovation Zone, and it will be rolled out statewide if successful.

Regional Continuous Quality Improvement Work Groups

Illinois continued and expanded upon its successful model of regional continuous quality improvement (CQI) work groups. In addition to the local meetings that occur regularly around the state, two large statewide gatherings were conducted in 2015 to bring all the regional work groups together. These gatherings provided opportunities for providers to learn from one another and share promising strategies and practices, in addition to building relationships across the sectors in the early childhood system.

Accreditation Reciprocity

As discussed in Section B(1) of the narrative, ExceleRate Illinois standards were crosswalked with standards for NAEYC, NAC, AMS and COA early childhood program accreditation standards with great success. The upcoming review of AdvanceEd accreditation standards will further bolster pathways for centers, as will the recognition of NAFCC for family child care homes in ExceleRate Illinois. The result of these efforts is a streamlining of processes in which multiple standards of evidence demonstrate that a program meets the Gold Circle of Quality. This in turn has contributed to a meaningful increase in the number of accredited programs participating in ExceleRate Illinois. It is an efficiency for the accredited programs and the State and is a key element of the sustainability strategy for ExceleRate Illinois. It also enhances the State's ability to identify more seats for at-risk children in high-quality early learning programs in communities throughout Illinois.

Head Start/Early Head Start Collaboration and Reciprocity

As described in Section B(1) of this narrative, the State developed a careful crosswalk between the ExceleRate Illinois standards, the Head Start Program Performance Standards, and the Head Start Federal Review Monitoring Protocols. Most community-based Head Start programs operate in licensed child care centers, and many are already enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois via accreditation. Illinois also has a well-developed and robust system of Head Start/Child Care collaboration programs, 170 of which are represented in ExceleRate Illinois participation numbers for licensed child care centers. This is an expansion of 45 collaboration programs in 2015 and represents a 36% increase in such programs over those enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois in 2014.

In partnership with IDHS and the Head Start State Collaboration Office, OECD implemented a custom, site-level assessment process to enable "stand-alone" (non-collaboration) Head Start sites to enroll in ExceleRate Illinois via an expedited pathway, utilizing evidence from their Federal Review documentation to demonstrate compliance with 13 of the 15 Gold Circle standards. This approach was initially implemented in 2014 and expanded upon in 2015. To date, 10 Head Start/Early Head Start grantees operating a total of 42 stand-alone licensed center-based sites in Illinois have completed the process, with another 14 sites scheduled for classroom assessments by April 2016. The grantees are spread throughout the state in both urban and rural regions, with sites ranging from a single Head Start classroom to as many as 13. Nine sites operate both Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms. Head Start grantees provide evidence of compliance from their most recent Federal Review, along with their site monitoring protocols and annual monitoring schedule to document their process for ensuring that each individual site is implementing each of the ExceleRate Illinois requirements.

Each site provides supplemental evidence required for select standards as determined from the crosswalk. These include the number of children with special needs served and verified training hours from Illinois' Gateways to Opportunity Registry. All teaching staff and site administrators also apply for Gateways credentials. Classroom assessments are conducted at each site. Grantees may choose ECERS-R or CLASS assessments for Head Start classrooms. Early Head Start classrooms are assessed with the ITERS-R. The results of the site-level classroom quality assessment determine whether the Head Start program has achieved the Gold Circle of Quality in ExceleRate Illinois. Since compliance with all other Head Start Performance Standards align with the Gold Circle per the crosswalk, sites that do not meet the threshold classroom quality scores for the Gold Circle are assigned the Silver Circle and are invited to request new classroom assessments after a cycle of quality improvement.

Illinois has not yet been able to provide site-level assessments for most of the State's Head Start grantees' school-based Head Start classrooms. The primary barrier is funding. ExceleRate Illinois requires site-level assessments of classroom quality and Head Start grantees only have this data at the program or grantee level. Head Start programs operating in community-based child care centers are licensed and have access to that assessment path with the cooperation of IDHS and the Head Start State Collaboration Office. However, there is no similar mechanism for school-based programs via ISBE or local school districts. At the end of 2015, the only school-based Head Start programs enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois are those implemented by the Chicago Public Schools. To address this gap, OECD added an assessment position to its final RTT-ELC budget revision and no-cost extension request. If approved, Illinois will have the resources to assess school-based Head Start sites during the 2016-17 school year.

Reciprocity with School-Based Preschool for All

The State conducted a crosswalk between the standards of ExceleRate Illinois and the ISBE Monitoring Protocol for its Preschool for All grantees in 2013. This created an expedited path for school-based Preschool for All programs to enter ExceleRate Illinois with acceptance of administrative compliance and classroom quality assessment gathered in the course of ISBE's triennial monitoring cycle. By the end of 2015, 100% of ISBE's school-based Preschool for All programs were enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois. Consistent with the expectations for Head Start programs, overall compliance with the Preschool for All grant requirements is equivalent to the Gold Circle of Quality in ExceleRate, and the site-based classroom quality monitoring results determine whether the final site rating is the Gold or Silver Circle of Quality.

Collaboration with Community-Based Preschool for All

As with Head Start, most community-based Preschool for All programs are implemented in licensed child care centers, many of which already have quality ratings through accreditation. Although community-based Preschool for All programs are monitored by ISBE, these monitoring results are limited to the actual funded classrooms at the site. As such, they do not represent the actual site-level quality rating, inclusive of all classrooms, which is required for enrollment in ExceleRate Illinois. For those that are not accredited, a variety of supports and technical assistance have been implemented by the CCR&R System to enable programs to achieve an ExceleRate Circle of Quality for their site.

Approximately half the Preschool for All (PFA) programs in the City of Chicago, and 17% of those elsewhere in the state, are in community rather than school-based settings. Data from ExceleRate Illinois currently identifies 193 such PFA/Child Care collaborations in licensed child care centers. This is an increase of 42 quality-rated collaboration sites enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois in 2015, for a 28% increase over 2014.

Awards of Excellence Technical Assistance and Supports

As described in Section B(1) of this narrative, Awards of Excellence (Tier 5) were developed for Gold Circle programs to highlight and advance best practice in the areas of Infant and Toddler Services, Preschool Teaching and Learning, Inclusion of Children with Special Needs, Family and Community Engagement, and Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Practice. A key implementation strategy of the Awards of Excellence is the provision of targeted supports and technical assistance in each of the domains of practice. An important feature of these supports is the intentional inclusion of programs at all levels of ExceleRate Illinois as a strategy to build and

sustain both the appetite and the capacity to improve. Quality improvement is a continuous process, and practice moves incrementally with the development of knowledge and competencies. While only Gold-rated programs may *apply* for an Award of Excellence, technical assistance, and supports are available to *all* programs in order to inform and advance practice. This strategy has created robust cross-sector communities of practice around the state, which in turn has led to new relationships and opportunities for mentorship and collaboration at all levels of the system.

Funds were budgeted in the RTT-ELC Grant to support programs to achieve Awards of Excellence in each of the five content areas. An additional portion of funds was set aside for the explicit purpose of improving and supporting general preschool instruction in all school- and center-based programs. The State engaged technical assistance contractors to deliver targeted support services to cross-sector cohorts of early learning programs in schools and centers throughout Illinois. This work kicked off in the fall of 2014 and was fully operational for all practice domains in 2015. The largest and most ambitious of these initiatives is a partnership between contractors that advances practice in Preschool Teaching and Learning, and Infant and Toddler Services through *Lead Learn Excel*. This 16-month process supports instructional leaders in building the systems and structures within their programs to transfer knowledge to practice by implementing sustainable, job-embedded professional learning routines with their teachers. In 2015, *Lead Learn Excel* was engaged with more than 300 instructional leaders, representing 170 programs, in ten active cohorts around the state.

In 2015, an additional 113 programs throughout Illinois engaged in supports for the three remaining practice areas of Family and Community Engagement, Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Practice, and Inclusion of Children with Special Needs.

Participation in supports for the Inclusion of Children with Special Needs has been enthusiastic and resultant in substantive change within programs, such as at the Schaumburg school district:

The staff as a team decided to end pull-out speech services for all children, after working through the Inclusive Classroom Profile Assessment Tool. In addition, they developed a resource guide to give to families at the initial IEP meeting, rather than just discussing it verbally, so that parents could go back and reference it.

A good example of work underway by a program pursuing the Linguistic and Cultural Practice Award is found at the YMCA of Metro Chicago:

As a result of the first few months in the project, we have created new policies that delineate our approach to language and cultural teaching, learning and development. Our leadership staff is beginning to embed linguistic and cultural appropriate practices with families, and are supporting teachers with implementing those same practices with the children. Teaching staff are engaged in collaborative inquiry with each other and are creating new knowledge that is quickly transforming to new practices. Finally, children are involved in high quality interactions and are developing conceptual knowledge, linguistic proficiency and cultural competence.

A final example comes from a Head Start program at Catholic Charities:

Because of participating in the Award for Family and Community Engagement and receiving such positive feedback about our work with fathers and male caregivers, we decided to take it further by offering a week of Father Activities that include healthy snacks, light cardio exercise - Daddy & Me, a Father-child dance with pictures, with an educational component each day. We're holding a job fair with vendors who have real jobs to offer, a resume van so fathers can create or update their resumes, and "Suit R U" will provide suits for the day of interviews. The final activity will be an Olympic family fun night with everyone getting a medal for participating.

Financial Incentives

In recognition of the real costs of pursuing and sustaining continuous quality improvement through ExceleRate

Illinois, Illinois introduced financial incentives. The ExceleRate Illinois incentives were established after developing an Illinois-specific cost model that can be manipulated to reflect different program sizes and different funding streams and their associated requirements (such as child care only, child care and Preschool For All, child care and Head Start, etc.). The cost model provided a realistic estimate of the cost of operation for early learning programs at various levels of quality consistent with ExceleRate Illinois. The baseline in the model is an annual revenue and expense budget that meets the requirements in licensing rules, followed by annual revenue and expense budgets meeting the standards of ExceleRate Illinois at the Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. The interactive cost model provides a reasonable estimate of the ongoing operation cost at a given level and was instrumental in designing a set of financial incentives to support programs participating in ExceleRate Illinois.

Incentives for licensed child care centers were introduced in July 2014 and in December 2015 for licensed family child care homes. Centers and homes at three levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold) can receive a one-time bonus payment after their eligibility for a Circle of Quality designation is established. Bonus payments for centers range from \$1,000 to \$6,500 and are based on center size and Circle of Quality attained. Bonus payment for family child care homes range from \$250 to \$950 and are based on size (regular family child care home versus group child care home) and Circle of Quality attained. In addition, centers and homes that care for children in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and achieve the Silver or Gold Circle of Quality can receive State-funded tiered reimbursement for the CCAP children in their program (a 10% and 15% add-on respectively). Most programs report that they use the tiered reimbursement to provide higher compensation to their staff than they would otherwise be able to provide.

The one-time bonus incentives for center-based programs were exhausted in 2015. Funds for tiered reimbursement are not part of the RTT-ELC budget. Since 2007, tiered reimbursement has been financed from a portion of the State's Quality Set-Aside, and State General Revenue Funds. Illinois continued to provide State-funded tiered reimbursement to licensed centers and licensed family child care homes that participated in Quality Counts, Illinois' previous QRIS. Centers that were dually enrolled in Quality Counts and ExceleRate Illinois continued to receive Quality Counts tiered reimbursement through June 2015. These payments continued upon alignment with ExceleRate Illinois. Homes that are dually enrolled in Quality Counts and ExceleRate Illinois will continue to receive Quality Counts tiered reimbursement through June 2016. Continuity of tiered reimbursement for programs with an ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality will depend on the state budget.

City of Chicago Quality Team

Programs in the City of Chicago remained highly-engaged in ExceleRate Illinois in 2015. With support from a private foundation and the Mayor's Office, a dedicated team works to shepherd all of the city's delegate agencies and community partners to an ExceleRate Illinois rating, with a strong emphasis on achieving the Gold Circle. This work is led by the local CCR&R, in collaboration with key leadership of the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) and the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The team has dedicated Quality Specialists at IAFC, and embedded in both DFSS and CPS. All of the Head Start and Early Head Start programs funded by DFSS, and all of the Prevention Initiative and Preschool for All programs funded by CPS, engage in coordinated quality improvement activities which include *Lead Learn Excel* and other Awards of Excellence supports. Many licensed child care centers engaged in formal partnerships with city delegate agencies are also working to achieve an ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality. Teachers and administrators participate in cohorts focused on completion of specific training modules and progressing with credential achievement.

Flexibility as a Key Strategy for Provider Engagement

The State has been nimble and flexible in its policy-making in order to enable providers from all sectors to align with and achieve an ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality. For example, Gateways credentials are embedded

throughout the standards of ExceleRate Illinois, which in turn build our statewide system and provide data (rather than anecdotes) to inform us of legitimate barriers and professional development needs. When the state administering agency was inadvertently buried in thousands of credential applications required for ExceleRate alignment, policy was adjusted to require application for (rather than awarding of) credentials, with a one-year grace period for the required percentage of teachers and directors to achieve the benchmark. Similarly, when data revealed that the requirement of a portfolio documenting professional contributions was the only barrier to 1,000+ teachers achieving a credential, the professional contribution requirement was removed from the initial credential award and is now required only upon credential renewal. Decisions such as these have greatly reduced anxiety among providers and generated much positive feedback. The State is pleased to report that, to date, all programs have been able to meet the credential benchmarks at the required level and maintain their Circle of Quality.

Technology in Support of Directors and ExceleRate Illinois

The Gateways Registry Director Portal was implemented in 2014 and features online access to tools that help early learning program administrators manage their programs. Access to the portal is restricted and must be requested by the director. Initially the online tools were meant to help directors monitor compliance with licensing regulations, including staff membership in the Gateways Registry and completion of 15 training hours per year. With ExceleRate Illinois bringing additional emphasis to Gateways Credentials, the State implemented a policy change that allows directors access to additional staff information in order to monitor progress toward credentials. A new report was created to enable directors to view individual staff educational qualifications, application and progress toward credentials, and award of credentials. This helps directors monitor their programs' compliance with ExceleRate Illinois standards related to teacher qualifications and credentials. The Director portal has over 1,600 users. It is currently being utilized by approximately one-third of the nearly 3,000 licensed centers in Illinois.

Technology in Support of Training

The Gateways *i-learning* system includes a full menu of training available to meet ExceleRate Illinois training requirements for directors and teachers. As a complement to classroom trainings designed through RTT-ELC funds, all *i-learning* content is aligned with the face-to-face versions and objectives in order to meet Gateways Registry approval requirements. The *i-learning* system provides 15 online trainings that meet ExceleRate Illinois standards and requirements. Over 41,000 child care providers have accessed the *i-learning* system since its launch. An average of 2,100 ExceleRate trainings are completed by child care providers each month on the Gateways *i-learning* system.

Communication and Engagement with Providers and Other Stakeholders

The State's administering agency continued its robust outreach and marketing strategies to engage with and inform multiple stakeholders about ExceleRate Illinois. Their comprehensive marketing plan was implemented with an effective mix of email blasts, newsletter articles, face-to-face networking at conferences meetings, social media, and strategic partnerships. Materials are audience-specific for child care centers, family child care homes, schools, parents, and community partners. Toolkits were created to guide directors through the credential process for their staff, as were parent tip sheets and resources on choosing a quality early learning program. The ExceleRate Illinois website continues to be built out and updated regularly, and on-line search functions are fully operational for child care centers, family child care homes, and schools.

OECD staff have continued to diligently to build cross-sector knowledge in order to effectively communicate with multiple and diverse audiences and educate all our state systems and administering agencies about the nuances of one another's program models to promote common understanding of quality early learning. One example of this approach is the way school-based Preschool for All programs are notified of their ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality. Because the quality rating for school-based sites is automatically generated by the monitoring results, programs do not "apply," and principals are not always aware of the rating. We ensure that two ExceleRate Illinois certificates are sent to each school, one to the principal's attention and one to the early childhood program. Sample letters to notify parents are included, as are talking points for newsletters, sample

press releases and links to the ExceleRate Web Store where stickers, banners and other promotional materials can be purchased. The response from schools has been overwhelmingly positive, and we have seen newspaper articles from around the state highlighting local schools which have achieved an ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality. Traffic at the Web Store has been brisk, and the heightened visibility of these programs has also created significant interest with schools around the Awards of Excellence.

OECD also works closely with several of the private chains operating early learning programs in Illinois, which collectively account for 205 (7%) of licensed child care centers in the state. These include Knowledge Universe/ KinderCare, the Learning Care Group, Rogy's Learning Centers, Kiddie Academy, and the Goddard Schools. These centers represent a significant portion of our early learning programs and ExceleRate enrollment, and they serve many of our low-income children. In addition to regular communication regarding their issues and concerns, we have promoted a "case management" approach to working with them as they enroll and/or align with ExceleRate. We have engaged their statewide and regional quality improvement staff in training opportunities alongside our CCR&R Quality Specialists. They have also been enthusiastic about the Awards of Excellence, and are interested in forming their own cohorts to work toward them. Knowledge Universe/ KinderCare has expressed interest in pursuing AoEs for both Inclusion, and for Family/Community Engagement through a cohort model. Support subcontractors for these content areas are working with regional managers to establish such cohorts for the fall 2016 application cycles.

OECD held regular webinars with day care licensing representatives (DCLRs) at the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in 2015. The webinars provided in-depth information on ExceleRate Illinois, its purpose and benefits, the standards and evidence, available resources, and talking points for communicating with child care providers about the new TQRIS during a licensing visit. The webinars also provided a forum to hear concerns and answer questions among the DCLRs. Providing webinars to DCLRs is an effective strategy for promoting participation, particularly among family child care providers, because DCLRs are an information source for providers and have the most face-to-face contact with providers on a daily basis. In addition, OECD worked closely with INCCRRA to develop a portal for DCLRs on the Gateways Registry website. This portal allows DCLRs to quickly and efficiently review a provider's professional development record, review trainings that count toward an ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality and offer encouragement and guidance on next steps to reach the Bronze Circle of Quality.

Performance Measure (B)(2)(c)

In the table, provide data on the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that are participating in the State's TQRIS by type of Early Learning and Development Program. Targets must be consistent with those in the State's application unless a change has been approved.

Performance Measure (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide TQRIS.										
Targets: Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS										
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Baseline		Year One		Year Two		Year Three		Year Four	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool	0	0%	600	50%	1,200	100%	1,200	100%	1,200	100%
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹	25	3%	360	50%	720	100%	720	100%	720	100%
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C										
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619										
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA										
Programs receiving CCDF funds	507	17%	2,967	100%	2,967	100%	2,967	100%	2,967	100%
Other 1	259	3%	9,857	100%	9,857	100%	9,857	100%	9,857	100%
<i>Describe:</i>	Homes receiving from CCDF funds									
Other 2										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 3										
<i>Describe:</i>										

¹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Performance Measure (B)(2)(c) - Additional Other rows

Targets: Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS

Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Baseline		Year One		Year Two		Year Three		Year Four	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Other 4										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 5										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 6										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 7										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 8										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 9										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 10										
<i>Describe:</i>										

Performance Measure (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide TQRIS.

Actuals: Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS

Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Baseline			Year One			Year Two			Year Three			Year Four		
	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%
State-funded preschool	1,400	0	0%	1,200	486	40.5%	1,283	1,195	93.1%	1,250	1,250	100%			
<i>Specify:</i>															
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹	720	25	3%	600	73	12.16%	600	263	43.8%	600	376	62.7%			
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C															
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619															
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA															
Programs receiving CCDF funds	2,967	507	17%	2,941	2,941	100%	2,923	2,923	100%	2,981	2,981	100%			
Other 1	9,857	259	3%	9,271	294	3.71%	9,026	9,026	100%	8,759	8,759	100%			
<i>Describe:</i>	Homes receiving from CCDF funds														
Other 2															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 3															
<i>Describe:</i>															

¹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Performance Measure (B)(2)(c) - Additional Other rows

Actuals: Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS

Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Baseline			Year One			Year Two			Year Three			Year Four		
	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%	# of programs in the State	#	%
Other 4															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 5															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 6															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 7															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 8															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 9															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 10															
<i>Describe:</i>															

Performance Measure (B)(2)(c) Data Notes

Indicate if baseline data are actual or estimated; describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information; and please include any definitions you used that are not defined in the notice.

Baseline numbers of programs are estimated, as are the total numbers of programs in the State by type for Head Start/Early Head Start. Data systems should allow for an exact, unduplicated count of Head Start/Early Head Start sites in 2016, two years later than originally planned. Total number of Preschool for All programs, child care centers, and child care homes are actual numbers.

Year One numbers for Preschool for All and Head Start/Early Head Start included only programs with completed ratings in the Silver or Gold Circle, as do Year Two and Three numbers for Head Start/Early Head Start. Year Two and Three numbers for Preschool for All include all programs. Once fully implemented, the State's new data systems will allow the reporting of actual numbers across all Circles of Quality for all types of programs.

All IDEA Part C services in Illinois are provided on a fee-for-service, individual basis. There are no classroom-based programs funded by the State to provide Part C services, and therefore there are no programs that it would be appropriate to include in the TQRIS. The IDEA Part B classrooms that will participate in the TQRIS are included in the Preschool for All count above as they are blended classrooms providing an inclusive "least restrictive environment" for children with special needs. Title I funds are used to expand Preschool for All in CPS Schools and in other LEAs throughout the State, and therefore these programs are counted in the Preschool for All count above.

"Programs receiving from CCDF funds" represents only child care centers licensed to serve children under kindergarten age as of December 31, 2015. Homes receiving CCDF funds are listed in the row below. These data include all licensed centers and family child care homes that serve children ages five and under, not only those currently receiving Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funds. Center number also includes programs that only provide part-day services, which were not eligible for Quality Counts but are included in ExceleRate Illinois.

Performance Measure (B)(2)(c) Target Notes

For all targets that were not reached in the reporting year, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in reaching the established grant targets by the end of the grant period.

Illinois met its Performance Measure target of 100% of licensed programs and State-funded preschool enrolled in the TQRIS. All licensed child care centers and licensed family homes are included in at least Tier 1 of ExceleRate Illinois, and all State-funded preschools have received monitoring visits and are now enrolled.

For Head Start and Early Head Start, the State did not meet its target of 100% enrollment in 2015. Illinois met 62.7% of its Performance Measure Target of the estimated 600 programs enrolled. This is primarily due to the fact that Illinois' requirement of site-level classroom assessment data for ExceleRate Illinois enrollment remains a barrier for Head Start programs, whose classroom assessment data is reported at the program/grantee level. 248 of the Head Start programs enrolled are licensed child care centers operating in community-based sites. 206 of these are Head Start/Child Care collaboration sites, and 42 are stand-alone Head Start sites. As described earlier in Sections (B)(1) and (B)(2) of this report, the State did develop policy and protocols for an expedited path for Head Start enrollment in ExceleRate Illinois. This approach was successfully implemented in 2014 and 2015 with 10 Head Start grantees at the 42 stand-alone sites noted above, and will be made available to all Head Start grantees in 2016 as a key strategy to meet the grant targets for Head Start and Early Head Start participation in the TQRIS. An additional 128 school-based sites operated by CPS are enrolled, because CPS can provide the State with the independent monitoring data at the classroom level.

Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs (Section B(3) of Application).

The State has made progress in developing and enhancing a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs that participate in the TQRIS that (please check all that apply):

- Includes information on valid and reliable tools for monitoring such programs
- Has trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability
- Monitors and rates Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency
- Provides quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site)
- Makes program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Describe progress made during the reporting year in developing and enhancing a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs that participate in the TQRIS. Describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs by the end of the grant period.

The State continues to implement a rigorous assessment process for all its early learning and development programs. These processes were established with Illinois' previous TQRIS, Quality Counts, through IDHS, and with the Preschool for All monitoring protocol through the ISBE. Both IDHS and ISBE contract with the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership (MCECL) at National Louis University for this purpose, and OECD has expanded the scope of this work through RTT-ELC in order to support the increased volume of assessments required for ExceleRate Illinois.

MCECL's assessment tools include the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) for Infants and Toddlers, Early Childhood, School Age, and Family Child Care; the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS); the Program Administration Scale (PAS); and the Business Administration Scale (BAS). The assessment contracts require reliability of at least 85% on all these instruments, and the contractor conducts reliability checks every 6-10 assessments. Assessors from MCECL provided full ERS and PAS/BAS assessments for child care centers and family child care homes seeking the Gold Circle of ExceleRate Illinois in 2015. MCECL continues to implement the Preschool for All Monitoring Protocol (which includes ERS) for ISBE programs outside the City of Chicago. They provided CLASS and/or ERS assessments for sites participating in the expedited Head Start pathway (described earlier in this narrative). This work expanded in 2015 and is expected to further expand in 2016 as more Head Start grantees engage with ExceleRate Illinois. MCECL will also provide both ERS and CLASS assessments across all settings for selected Awards of Excellence, where some standards may require such scores.

Assessments for child care centers seeking the Silver Circle of ExceleRate Illinois were conducted by Quality Specialists through the State's regional Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agencies through October 2015. This protocol was changed in November 2015 as a result of findings from the State's own system continuous quality improvement (CQI) process. This review identified challenges due to turnover in the ranks of Quality Specialists and related challenges in balancing their on-the-ground responsibilities for recruitment, consultation, and conducting reliable assessments. The Silver Circle protocol is now a hybrid process, with MCECL assessors performing the ERS assessments, and the Quality Specialists verifying the other standards. The Quality Specialists have all undergone rigorous training on both the ERS and the PAS, and are able to use that knowledge in their consultative and technical assistance roles with providers. Because the Silver Circle is strongly focused on rigorous self-assessment and CQI, Quality Specialists are also trained on CQI and protocols

for monitoring. Quality Specialists receive robust and ongoing professional development, training, support and consultation from MCECL through regular regional meetings and telephone support. This ensures that providers receive accurate guidance and feedback to support them in implementing program improvements to achieve the Silver Circle. It is expected that this new division of labor will enhance recruitment and program engagement efforts in local communities. It will also enable the Quality Specialists to better support the quality improvement efforts of family child care home providers, who are enthusiastically engaging with ExceleRate Illinois.

Head Start and Preschool for All programs are required to submit independent evidence of their classroom quality for enrollment in ExceleRate Illinois and have both an ERS and a CLASS option for assessing classroom quality. With the exception of the Chicago Public Schools, all Preschool for All programs use the ERS and are monitored under ISBE's contract with MCECL. All Head Start programs in the state, as well as all Preschool for All classrooms in the Chicago Public Schools, use the CLASS tool. To ensure consistency across multiple settings in the State's systems, threshold classroom quality scores required for both the Gold and Silver Circles are aligned across child care centers, Preschool for All, and Head Start/Early Head Start programs. Site-level classroom quality scores for Head Start/Early Head Start programs are required to be provided by independent assessors properly certified by the protocol required for the tool, and assessors may not be employed by the program being assessed.

Rigorous crosswalks were performed with both the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Preschool for All Program Monitoring Protocol, in order to ensure that the evidence required to achieve the Gold Circle was as rigorous as that required of child care programs. Head Start and Preschool for All programs operating in compliance with their grants are expected to meet all standards at the Gold Circle of Quality. Those whose classroom scores fail to meet the required threshold for Gold are assigned to the Silver Circle and implement a quality improvement plan.

Most Head Start/Early Head Start programs and all Preschool for All programs in the City of Chicago are monitored for classroom quality and administrative compliance by the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) and the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). As described earlier in this narrative, the Chicago Quality Team is led by Illinois Action for Children (IAFC) and consists of key administrators from DFSS and CPS. This team coordinates and implements large scale program improvement plans across all settings in the City of Chicago, with dedicated Quality Specialists embedded in the public agencies and at IAFC. This team works closely with OECD to streamline and integrate monitoring processes to reduce the burden on programs, to ensure support for CQI, and to implement an efficient process for generating classroom scores and other program data required for ExceleRate.

To manage the large volume of programs in the universal TQRIS, the State also recognizes the independent verification of quality through accreditation wherever possible. As discussed elsewhere in this narrative, the State has conducted rigorous crosswalks with four national accrediting bodies - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Accreditation Commission (NAC), the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Council on Accreditation (COA). An expedited path for ExceleRate enrollment is available to Illinois programs accredited by NAEYC, NAC, AMS and COA. The use of accreditation to furnish evidence for substantial portions of ExceleRate Illinois standards will create an efficient system that will allow the State to redirect system resources and provide a strong foundation to sustain the TQRIS in the future.

Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs (Section B(4) of Application).

Has the State made progress in improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs that are participating in your State TQRIS through the following policies and practices? (If yes, please check all that apply.)

- Program and provider training
- Program and provider technical assistance
- Financial rewards or incentives
- Higher, tiered child care subsidy reimbursement rates
- Increased compensation

Describe the progress made in improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs that are participating in your State TQRIS during the reporting year. Please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the grant period.

Community Systems Development

In 2014, RTT-ELC funds supported the development of a State Strategic Plan for Community Systems Development. From the fall of 2014 through the Spring of 2015, state agency representatives, along with state leads from current community systems initiatives and co-chairs of the Early Learning Council's Community System Development Subcommittee, fleshed out an action plan based on the state plan. With consensus around the critical need for local collaboration, the proposal was that a network of regional hubs was the most feasible structure for promoting and supporting local community collaborations in their important role by working across child and family serving systems to build the capacity of community collaborations and regional system actors to:

- Develop robust “pipelines” to link children with high needs to effective early childhood services
- Coordinate existing services to maximize impact
- Serve as feedback loop between communities and state leaders to align systems and inform policy and effective implementation of programs
- Strategically plan for needed expansion and enhancement of services, including readiness to respond to opportunities
- Meaningfully engage families in the development of systems and services

In the summer of 2015, OECD held a series of “Community Systems Development Listening Sessions” to collect feedback from community collaborations. In these sessions, concerns were raised about regional councils, boundaries, costs, and sustainability. In response to that feedback and leadership changes at the state level, OECD and a core group of the Community Systems Development Subcommittee of the Early Learning Council have worked to modify the State Plan toward a more feasible and sustainable structure of state-level supports for effective community systems.

To build capacity for effective cross-system collaboration, at both the local level and within key sectors that are in position to provide support to local collaborations, the State has invested RTT-ELC funds in piloting a model for training, technical assistance, and coaching using the Able Systems Change Framework. One of the goals of this pilot is to align technical assistance efforts across local system initiatives (including the Innovation Zones and MIECHV) toward the State's goal of ensuring that all children (especially those with very high needs) receive continuous high quality services prenatal to third grade.

In 2016 the State will continue to work with state agency representatives to develop an operational and fiscal sustainability plan for providing state supports for community systems. In addition, the State will align its capacity-building supports for community collaborations (a process that began in 2015) and roll out these supports to a targeted subset of communities. Community-level data improvements are also underway, and a Subcommittee of the Early Learning Council will be recommending a process and infrastructure to include family engagement in state policy tables and discussions.

Family Child Care Standards Development

As described previously in this narrative, Illinois convened a broad and diverse group of early learning experts and stakeholders to develop its TQRIS for Family Child Care. The stakeholders reviewed standards and evidence charts from 15 states to ensure that Family Child Care programs would be developed and included in ExceleRate Illinois with objectivity and diligence. Tier 4, the Gold Circle of Quality, includes the validation of key standards and achievement of quality scores in the learning environment, interactions, and business practices. Benchmarks were set for aligned curriculum and assessment, child screening, culturally and linguistically appropriate practice, and inclusion of children with special needs. Given Family Child Care providers' unique relationship with the families they serve, benchmarks were also set for family-provider communication and collaboration, as well as connecting and supporting families. Additional benchmarks were set for provider/child ratios, provider qualifications and professional development, and continuous quality improvement protocols.

The benchmarks set for provider qualifications proved to be the most controversial and required thorough discussions about research, reality, barriers, and supports. Ultimately, the stakeholders recommended that providers hold a BA degree and a Family Child Care Credential Level 5 (or Level 4 if collaborating with a State-approved consultant) to qualify for the Gold Circle of Quality. The ExceleRate Illinois standards for Family Child Care are challenging and require a commitment to quality and professional development. Supports are being developed to encourage and assist providers in reaching these high-quality benchmarks. While the standards are rigorous and challenging, this provides a framework for providers to follow that will help grow the field of high-quality Family Child Care programs.

Awards of Excellence

As discussed in Section (B)(1) of this narrative, Illinois' top level of its TQRIS for center- and school-based programs consists of 5 Awards of Excellence. These include Infant and Toddler Services, Preschool Teaching and Learning, Family and Community Engagement, Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Practice, and Inclusion of Children with Special Needs. Following initial content expert meetings during 2013, these same teams reconvened in 2014 to complete the development of high-quality benchmarks and rigorous requirements to achieve the awards. The benchmarks were presented to and approved by the Executive Committee of the Illinois Early Learning Council (IELC).

Funds were budgeted in the RTT-ELC Grant to support programs pursuing the awards in all five content areas. Technical assistance providers were selected through an RFP process and contracted to provide these supports around the state. This work began in the fall of 2014 and was fully operational for all practice domains in 2015. An additional portion of funds was set aside to provide additional supports to improve preschool instruction in all early learning settings. These technical assistance activities are focused on developing effective instructional leaders, to equip them with the knowledge and skills to guide and support teachers in classroom implementation, and to position more programs for Awards of Excellence in the future.

Outreach for participants was conducted throughout the state, and cohorts preparing for awards in all five content areas were implemented in 2015, with more than 400 instructional leaders engaged in supports. All sectors (licensed child care, Preschool for All and Head Start) in both school- and community-based settings are represented in the cohorts. In addition to the content-specific support cohorts, programs may choose to apply for Awards of Excellence via an independent path. The technical assistance contractors provide webinars, self-assessment tools, training recommendations, and other resources to guide practitioners through the independent route.

Application and review processes for the Awards of Excellence were developed in fall 2014. Two application

cycles were implemented in 2015, and three are planned for 2016. The process begins with a preliminary application and verification of selected pre-requisite standards, which include threshold scores on assessment tools, training requirements and staff qualifications. If prerequisites are met, applicants are invited to submit a full application and electronic program portfolio for review by a statewide advisory panel of content area experts. The IELC assists with outreach to identify candidates for the review panels, emphasizing the recruitment of younger, mid-career leaders, and other rising stars. This strategy is intended as an opportunity for professional development with exposure to statewide systems, while raising new leaders to create a bench of knowledgeable and experienced professionals to carry on and move forward with our state's work.

Twenty-two programs applied for Awards of Excellence in the two application cycles implemented in 2015, and 12 were awarded - 10 for Inclusion of Children with Special Needs, and 2 for Family and Community Engagement. There are 26 applications submitted for the first 2016 cycle, with all content areas except for Infant and Toddler Services represented.

Innovation Zones and Promising Practice Initiatives for Identifying and Enrolling Families with High Needs

As mentioned previously, RTT-ELC funds support 11 geographically based Innovation Zones (IZ), in which programs are working collaboratively to plan for and implement local cross-system strategies towards the goal of enrolling children with highest needs in a continuum of high quality early learning and development programs. All of the Innovation Zones focus on one or more strategy identified in their local community, such as universal screening, coordinated intake, and/or increasing the enrollment of children with high needs in quality early learning programs. Most also implement related initiatives to increase the quality of early learning programs in their community.

The RTT-ELC grant now supports 11 Innovation Zones: Aurora, Cicero, Elgin, Greater East St. Louis, Thornton Township, Williamson County, and the Chicago neighborhoods of Austin, Altgeld-Riverdale, Greater Englewood/Southside, North Lawndale, and Pilsen-Little Village. The RTT-ELC grant supports Innovation Zone strategies and activities to increase enrollment of children with high needs in high quality programs, as well as to increase the circle of quality of programs in those communities. These RTT-ELC funded strategies include coordinated intake and referral, developmental screening collaboratives, parent ambassador programs, "pop-up" preschools, and peer learning cohorts/communities. Innovation Zone work in each community is highly collaborative with other federal, state, and locally funded programs including (MIECHV and Preschool Expansion Grant), creating great local synergy and maximization of resources.

Two of the Innovation Zones, Chicago's Pilsen-Little Village community (P-LV) and the town of Cicero, have expanded their parent outreach activities. Both of these communities serve large Latino populations that have been historically under-served by local early learning programs. With Innovation Zone supports, Cicero was able to build onto the "birth to three" ("0-3") coordinated intake and community systems infrastructure established with federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funding to create a continuous pipeline for "birth to five" services. Through MIECHV, local home visiting programs established a shared intake form and referral process for families with children from 0-3. RTT-ELC Innovation Zone support enabled the community to develop a robust and targeted outreach component and to expand its 0-3 intake and tracking system to also include programs for children from age 3-5. To enhance community outreach, Cicero re-started a parent ambassador program model that had previously been successful in engaging local Spanish-speaking families. In addition, they used demographic data and geo-mapping to identify blocks within the town with large concentrations of families with high needs. The Cicero team assigned teams of parent ambassadors to canvass door-to-door in targeted sections. The MIECHV Coordinated Intake staff then conducted a more detailed screening to refer families to an appropriate high quality program. Some families had no prior experience with early learning and were hesitant to leave their children in the care of strangers. In addition, some programs filled up quickly, resulting in waiting lists. To address these issues, the Cicero team offered "pop-up preschools" in convenient neighborhood locations to introduce new families to ECE and to offer interim services when slots were full. The success of this model in Cicero inspired P-LV to adopt this method as well.

Other Innovation Zones have focused their attention on forging stronger partnerships with service providers outside the early childhood system that serve large numbers of families with high needs. For example, Thornton Township has had success in partnering with child welfare and homeless service providers, creating a coordinated referral system and offering training to their cross-sector providers on trauma-informed practice to improve their ability to engage families effectively. Altgeld-Riverdale (in the City of Chicago) is partnering with a

local health clinic to add early learning and development programs to the range of referrals offered by the clinic's health care professionals and social workers. Greater East St. Louis (GESTL) has established a new partnership with the local WIC program to offer parent-child workshops following the ASQ screenings, and they are working with the local Healthy Start initiative to increase developmental screenings and referrals from health care providers.

Performance Measures (B)(4)(c)(1)

In the table below, provide data on the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the TQRIS. Targets must be consistent with those in the State's application unless a change has been approved.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the TQRIS.					
Targets					
	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Total number of programs enrolled in the TQRIS	778	13,534	13,839	14,104	14,104
Number of programs in Tier 1	0	11,866	11,643	11,298	10,813
Number of programs in Tier 2	65	230	285	410	545
Number of programs in Tier 3	246	435	617	770	890
Number of programs in Tier 4	456	990	1,270	1,590	1,795
Number of programs in Tier 5	11	13	24	36	61
Number of programs enrolled but not yet rated					

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the TQRIS.					
Actuals					
	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Total number of programs enrolled in the TQRIS	778	12,734	13,006	12,797	
Number of programs in Tier 1	0	11,248	10,896	10,468	
Number of programs in Tier 2	65	0	0	63	
Number of programs in Tier 3	246	535	725	948	
Number of programs in Tier 4	456	951	1,356	1,306	
Number of programs in Tier 5	11	0	0	12	
Number of programs enrolled but not yet rated					

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(1) Data Notes

Describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information; and please include any definitions you used that are not defined in the notice.

The State now has complete lists of all school-based and community-based Preschool for All sites. A regular data exchange from DCFS with INCCRRA gives up to date information on all licensed child care centers and family child care homes. The ExceleRate Illinois application designed with INCCRRA gives detailed information about the funding sources in each site, which has enabled the State to extract and report on community-based Head Start and Preschool for All collaboration sites. Working with the Head Start State Collaboration Office, OECD has made significant progress in creating a comprehensive list of all Head Start programs in schools and community-based sites. This list can be cross-matched with INCCRRA's existing data, and missing programs can be added to its database. As the TQRIS administering agency, INCCRRA has detailed information on programs entering, leaving and/or moving between Circles of Quality in ExceleRate Illinois.

The total number of programs enrolled in the State's TQRIS is 12,797. This consists of 1057 school-based sites, 2,981 licensed child care centers, and 8,759 licensed family child care homes.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(1) Target Notes

For all targets that were not reached in the reporting year, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in reaching the established targets by the end of the grant period.

Overall, Illinois made progress toward its Performance Measure targets in 2015, although not as much as we had hoped. The total targets for Tiers 2 through 5 were 2,806 in Year Three. Actuals for Tiers 2 through 5 were 2,329 for Year Three, or 83% of the total performance target. In the 2014 APR, the State noted that Tier 2 was not operational because all the required trainings for that level had not been available until late in the year, and programs were finding it a lengthy process to complete. The State anticipated that performance in Tier 2 would continue to fall behind its targets, and that was indeed the case again in 2015. However, when Tier 2 is excluded, Tiers 3, 4, and 5 totaled 2,266 programs, meeting 95% of those combined targets of 2,396 in 2015.

Tier 1 of ExceleRate Illinois is the Licensing Circle of Quality, and includes both center-based and family child care homes. The Performance Measure for Tier 1 varies from year-to-year, from upward movement to higher levels of TQRIS, as well as changes in the number of licensed child care centers and family child care homes. Illinois' total licensed programs numbered 11,740 in 2015, with 10,468 at Tier 1. This was due to another decline in the number of licensed programs (209) in 2015, as well as healthy participation in higher tiers of TQRIS. It is unclear whether this decline can be attributed to state budget issues. While the number of licensed child care centers has remained fairly steady, licensed family child care homes have declined from 9,857 to 8,759 during the grant period. At the same time, year-over-year change has not been appreciably different. Absent data on the reasons, this decline might also be due to the nature of small business and the normal cycle of turnover.

Tier 2, the Bronze Circle of Quality, involves a robust series of trainings which address the full range of early learning and development program practices, including about 50 hours of training for the program administrator and 30 hours for classroom teachers. The State met 15% of its Performance Target in Tier 2, with 63 of 410 programs achieving the Bronze Circle. Although all the trainings were fully-operational in 2015, programs struggled to get the required number of personnel through the full course. This was exacerbated by the State's fiscal crisis, which caused payment delays in the spring of 2015. Emergency child care rules enacted in the absence of a State budget caused disruptions in enrollment in the fall of 2015, which led to program/classroom closings, layoffs and significant staff turnover.

Tier 3, the Silver Circle of Quality, met 123% of its Performance Target with 948 programs, 178 more than the target.

Tier 4, the Gold Circle of Quality, met 82% of its Performance Target with 1,306 programs, 284 fewer than the target. One reason for this was the full launch of Family Child Care in ExceleRate Illinois, and the formal provisional rating and alignment process undertaken in 2015. Many of the 3-Star family child care programs in the previous Quality Counts program were NAFCC-accredited, and as such, had been presumptively included in the Gold Circle. However, NAFCC accreditation aligned more closely with the standards for the Silver Circle, so 212 NAFCC programs moved from the Gold to the Silver Circle in 2015. Also contributing to this shortfall is the delay in Head Start enrollment in ExceleRate Illinois. Although performance on this measure increased from 44% to 63% from 2014 to 2015, there are still many Head Start programs yet to be enrolled. The State expects an increase in Head Start enrollment in 2016, with expanded use of the expedited pathway (described in the narrative), and plans to add an assessor to facilitate school-based Head Start enrollment.

Tier 5, the Awards of Excellence, met 33% of the 2015 Performance Target, with 12 program achieving an Award in either Inclusion of Children with Special Needs, or Family and Community Engagement. Two application cycles occurred in 2015 and a total of 22 applications were submitted. The technical assistance and supports surrounding these awards are lengthy and robust, so not all programs were ready to apply in 2015. There are three application cycles scheduled for 2016, and there were already 26 applications submitted for the first of these cycles. More than 400 instructional leaders, representing nearly 300 programs, are currently engaged in technical assistance and supports, and the State is confident that the full target for Tier 5 will be achieved, if not exceeded, in 2016.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2) Definition of Highest Tiers

For purposes of Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2), how is the State defining its "highest tiers"?

"Top Tiers of TQRIS" is defined here as Gold Circle of Quality in ExceleRate Illinois, with or without an Award of Excellence.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2)

In the table below, provide data on the number and percentage of children with high needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the TQRIS. Targets must be consistent with those in the State's application unless a change has been approved.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2): Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the TQRIS.										
Targets: Number and percent of Children with High Needs in programs in top tiers of the TQRIS										
Type of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State	Baseline		Year One		Year Two		Year Three		Year Four	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool			28,829	38%	37,933	50%	52,347	69%	58,416	77%
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹			8,765	26%	17,868	53%	24,947	74%	27,644	82%
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C										
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619			13,906	38%	18,696	50%	25,495	69%	28,585	77%
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA										
Programs receiving CCDF funds	15,059	13%	18,946	16%	20,115	17%	21,839	19%	25,063	22%
Other 1										
Describe:										
Other 2										
Describe:										

¹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2) - Additional Other rows

Targets: Number and percent of Children with High Needs in programs in top tiers of the TQRIS

Type of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State	Baseline		Year One		Year Two		Year Three		Year Four	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Other 3										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 4										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 5										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 6										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 7										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 8										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 9										
<i>Describe:</i>										
Other 10										
<i>Describe:</i>										

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2): Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the TQRIS.

In most States, the **Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State** for the current reporting year will correspond to the **Total** reported in Table (A)(1)-3a. If not, please explain the reason in the data notes.

Actuals: Number and percent of Children with High Needs in programs in top tiers of the TQRIS

Type of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State	Baseline			Year One			Year Two			Year Three			Year Four		
	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%
State-funded preschool	75,865			84,022	16,934	20.1%	75,231	44,291	58.9%	75,154	46,235	61.5%			
<i>Specify:</i>	PFA														
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹	36,644			51,053	2,257	4.4%	40,079	9,213	23%	42,170	10,891	25.8%			
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	19,624			18,727			19,581			21,249					
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	37,083			37,518			37,378			37,745					
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA															
Programs receiving CCDF funds	115,188	15,059	13%	107,170	18,420	17.18%	135,873	17,555	12.9%	93,483	19,891	21.3%			
Other 1															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 2															
<i>Describe:</i>															

¹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2) - Additional Other rows

Actuals: Number and percent of Children with High Needs in programs in top tiers of the TQRIS

Type of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State	Baseline		Year One			Year Two			Year Three			Year Four			
	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	#	%
Other 3															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 4															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 5															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 6															
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Other 8															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 9															
<i>Describe:</i>															
Other 10															
<i>Describe:</i>															

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2) Data Notes

Please indicate whether baseline data are actual or estimated; and describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information; and please include any definitions you used that are not defined in the notice.

All data for 2015 are actual counts; however, the number of children shown as served by CCDF in Gold Circle of Quality programs may be somewhat under-counted as it only includes programs that had submitted complete data on children by funding stream as of December 31, 2015. Year One data had been estimated from licensed capacity and Child Care Assistance Program voucher data.

Performance Measure (B)(4)(c)(2) Target Notes

For all targets that were not reached in the reporting year, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in reaching the established targets by the end of the grant period.

Although there was a significant increase in 2015, the State fell short of its target for children served in State-funded Preschool in the Gold Circle of Quality, with 61.5% vs. the goal of 69%. The State expects to meet the Year Four targets as results from the new monitoring cycle become available in 2016, which are expected to increase the proportion of Gold-rated PFA sites.

The State fell short of its target for Head Start/Early Head Start in 2015. This is due to delays experienced in receiving required site level data in order to enroll programs in ExceleRate. The State expects this to improve in 2016 with more widespread use of the expedited Head Start pathway and an assessor for school-based Head Start programs, as detailed in Section B(2) of the narrative.

The State exceeded its target for CCDF children enrolled in Gold Circle programs. This is largely due to the large increase in the number of Gold Circle child care programs, which have nearly doubled from the baseline at the commencement of RTT-ELC.

Validating the effectiveness of the State TQRIS (Section B(5) of Application).

Describe progress made during the reporting year in validating the effectiveness of the TQRIS during the reporting year, including the State's strategies for determining whether TQRIS tiers accurately reflect differential levels of program quality and assessing the extent to which changes in ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness. Describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made by the end of the grant period.

Planning for the validation study began in January 2015 upon the execution of the contract, and the project remains on schedule. At the beginning of the year, the research team from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina (FPG) traveled to Chicago to meet with relevant agency staff and the technical advisory panel. The team presented the overall goals of the validation study to the State's Interagency Team (IAT). The project plans were also discussed with a technical advisory panel composed of four researchers with content and/or methodological expertise in Illinois' TQRIS. The State submitted finalized plans to the federal officers for their review, and the OECD approved the final study design. Research questions for the study include:

1. To what extent does ExceleRate Illinois differentiate levels of quality in programs overall and across each domain?
2. To what extent does a program's score on each domain contribute independently to its overall rating?

3. What combination and/or weighting of indicators best discriminate levels of quality?

4. Do children who participate in programs rated at higher Circles of Quality overall and across particular domains demonstrate greater gains in child outcomes compared to children who participate in programs rated at lower levels overall and across domains, and do findings differ by pathway through which programs entered ExceleRate Illinois?

To address these questions, the research team proposed a stratified sample of 175 centers randomly selected from each of the three Circles of Quality (Licensed, Silver, and Gold; there were too few programs at Bronze level to sample) and based on region of the state and pathway (for Silver and Gold programs). In fall 2015, the team began recruiting programs to participate in the study. Despite some challenges retaining programs after agreeing to participate, the team was able to recruit 92% (161) of the target sample size with sufficient numbers of programs for each stratification factor:

- Type of program: 108 Centers, 53 School-based Pre-K programs;
- Region: 34 Chicago, 42 Collar Counties, 66 Downstate Urban, 19 Downstate Rural;
- Circle of Quality: 17 Licensed, 52 Silver, 92 Gold; and
- Pathway: 43 Accredited, 188 Assessed.

Classrooms within these programs were stratified by ages served and randomly selected for recruitment. In total, 233 preschool classrooms and 148 infant/toddler classrooms are included in the study. In fall of 2015, the team completed direct assessment of the language, academic, and self-regulation skills of 738 preschool children who were consented into the study. The team also collected teacher ratings of academic and social skills and parent ratings of child health. Teachers were asked to complete surveys, including teacher demographics and teacher qualifications, information about their classroom, such as curricula used, group size/ratio, and number of children with disabilities. The research team gathered information about programs' family engagement practices.

Thus far, the project has experienced no major delays. OECD is working closely with UNC, IDHS, and ISBE to ensure that the data sharing agreements are completed in sufficient time to allow for data analyses as planned. Remaining tasks include completing data collection; analyzing data to determine changes in child outcomes associated with different levels of TQRIS; providing input in to the TQRIS revision committee; and planning for additional effectiveness studies to fully evaluate the impact of the TQRIS.

Focused Investment Areas -- Sections (C), (D), and (E)

Select the Focused Investment Areas addressed in your RTT-ELC State Plan:

- (C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.
- (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.
- (C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.
- (C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.
- (D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.
- (D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- (E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.
- (E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.

Grantee should complete only those sections that correspond with the focused investment areas outlined in the grantee's RTT-ELC application and State Plan.

ILLINOIS DID NOT ADDRESS FOCUS AREAS C(1), C(2), C(3), C(4), OR D(1) IN THEIR RTT-ELC APPLICATION. PAGES 47 OF 118 THROUGH 53 OF 118 HAVE BEEN DELETED.

Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

(Section D(2) of Application)

The State has made progress in improving the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs with the goal of improving child outcomes (check all that apply):

- Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with your State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;
- Implementing policies and incentives that promote professional and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention, including
 - Scholarships
 - Compensation and wage supplements,
 - Tiered reimbursement rates,
 - Other financial incentives
 - Management opportunities
- Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention
- Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for --
 - Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
 - Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Describe the progress made during the reporting year. Please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the grant period.

Illinois engaged in a variety of activities in 2015 designed to provide opportunities and incentives for educators to advance along Illinois' career pathway for early childhood. The Gateways Credentials (credentials) can be earned by completing an approved program at an entitled college or university or by submitting an application with documentation of education and experience. Illinois has also made great strides in providing and expanding access to professional development opportunities aligned to Illinois' Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework (known as the credential "benchmarks"), around which the credentials are built. We also engaged in significant work with Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) to ensure teacher preparation programs at two- and four-year institutions are aligned to credentials, meet new State standards, and are preparing well-trained teachers to serve the State's youngest students. OECD has formed strong partnerships with the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), both of which have prioritized strengthening early childhood teacher preparation programs.

Higher Education Partnership Grants for Teacher Preparation

Illinois continued the important, long-range work highlighted in the previous year's report that will lead to more well-prepared students and teachers who have access to a seamless education pathway. The State recognizes that a successful early childhood system is dependent upon a well-trained workforce, and therefore approached higher education institutions with early childhood teacher preparation programs across the State to engage in work to revise and strengthen programs and pathways for teacher candidates. In early 2014, the State --through a partnership among OECD, ICCB, IBHE, and the Center for Early Childhood --made awards to 11 four-year teacher preparation programs and their (nearly 30) two-year partners to improve the preparation and ongoing professional development of early childhood educators. This initiative is known as the Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation Grant or "EPPI" Grant. This year, in early 2015, the State made EPPI awards to an additional 8, four-year teacher preparation programs and their 20 two-year partners. In addition, the State made "implementation grants" to five of the first year grantees to continue what the State believes is innovative work that could benefit the state and students. Coupled with the grant awards made in 2014 to eleven four-year teacher preparation programs and their two-year partners, this project has involved 70% of the early childhood educator preparation programs in Illinois. Awardees represent both public and private institutions in all regions of Illinois, including urban, suburban, and rural areas of the state. The focus of these grant initiatives remains squarely centered on improvement of the preparation and ongoing professional development of early childhood educators, and key areas for enhancement, such as early math, infant/toddler development or flexible pathways to degree attainment. All grantees focused efforts on aligning their programs to new State and national early childhood teacher preparation standards and on ways to enhance articulation with their two-year partners.

The 2015 grants will end as follows: (1) new initial awardees will complete their work in January 2016; (2) continued implementation grantees will complete their work in March 2016; (3) and a final awardee will complete its work in October 2016. The State is continuing to document the strides partnerships have made through this work. To this end, the State contracted with an external research organization to summarize not only the progress of the grants but the processes that made the work successful. The State intends to use this report to share lessons learned and innovative ideas to other institutions across the state. The first of these research publications, focused on partnership development theory and the unique challenges and opportunities presented by engaging in program redesign across two- and four-year institutions, was published in May 2015 ("The Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation Grant: Lessons from Initial Implementation."); http://ierc.education/ierc_presentations/early-childhood-educator-preparation-program-innovation-eppi-grant.) This work has been widely shared through the Illinois Annual Higher Education Forum, the Illinois Education Research Council's Annual Research Symposium, and other state and national venues.

Work is under way with a second, descriptive study looking at the ways in which the higher education partners have, through the grant initiative, addressed regional and state early childhood workforce development needs through program redesign and other related innovations. Publication of this second study is expected in the fall of 2016. Finally, a third publication is under development, to be released November/December 2016. The third publication is a monograph comprised of invited chapters from grantees, describing their partnership projects in greater depth, grounding their efforts in related research, and highlighting partnership innovations with a "voices from the field" treatment. Proposals have been submitted to share this work at various state and national venues through 2016.

The State continues to receive significant positive feedback on these innovative grants. Participating institutions from both the 2014 and 2015 cohorts were invited to attend a mini-conference in December 2015. The purpose of the conference was to create opportunities for cross-dissemination of promising practices and conversations about the unique challenges each partnership faces as they continue to launch their program redesign efforts. Faculty participants shared their solutions to these challenges and built informal referral networks to support one another's efforts. Institutions, in this December 2015 venue and through other opportunities for feedback have reported that by providing seed funding and allowing institutions to develop their own specific grant focus, the State allowed for significant buy-in and involvement at the two- and four-year level. Some of the outcomes of the grants include innovative approaches to course-by-course articulation and work towards the development of a non-licensure bachelor's program that will fully articulate AAS coursework from partnering two-year colleges. Other institutions tackled issues such as cross-institution advising, the

development and piloting of unique early math teacher preparation and professional development micro-modules, and revising coursework to embed the attainment of the bilingual/ESL endorsement through the standard teacher preparation pathways.

Aligning Higher Education and Credentials

The State recognizes the importance of a seamless pathway to earning stackable credentials in early childhood. In order to ensure this, Illinois engaged in work to determine how to make the pathway to Gateways Credentials easier for both teacher preparation programs and students to navigate. To further the alignment of higher education teacher preparation programs and the Gateways credentials, Illinois formed a workgroup to explore issues at both the State level and with Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) where there may be levers for or challenges to alignment of the education and credential processes. Through a joint partnership, OECD, IBHE, ICCB, Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), and the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) developed the Early Childhood Credentialing (ECC) Workgroup to explore opportunities and challenges at all levels of the credentialing process - from earning a twelve-hour credential to earning a Bachelor's degree at one of the State's four-year licensed teacher preparation programs. The ECC Workgroup convened a subcommittee of the State's Early Childhood Illinois Articulation Panel for a two-day retreat in December 2014 and, with higher education faculty, explored issues related to the processes for: attaining a credential; credential alignment with State and IHE certificates; financial aid challenges; counting credential attainments as "completers" and developing a more unified pathway for students. A report and recommendations from this meeting were completed in February 2015.

The ECC Workgroup reconvened in the Spring and early Summer of 2015 to implement key recommendations to modify the Gateways ECE credentials at Levels 2 and 3 in order to better support alignment and coordination between credentialing and higher education systems. Through conversations with faculty and data analysis, we realized that the Level 2 ECE credential (12 hours) did not have the required number of hours in order for students to receive federal financial aid; these credential requirements were raised to 16. Additionally, the workgroup realized that few students were achieving the Level 3 credential (27 hours), though many were achieving the Level 4 credential (Associates Degree). Through discussions, the workgroup learned that many students "skipped" Level 3 (and were often advised to do so) due to a requirement that students attain a "transferable math". This requirement has been adjusted for students to attain a "credit bearing" math.

To further alignment efforts, the State hired a team of faculty consultants in the fall of 2015 to develop, in consultation with the ECC Workgroup, an application for two-year institutions with Gateways ECE entitlement to participate in an individualized technical assistance program. Approximately 50% (22) of the two-year institutions in the state with early childhood teacher preparation programs were accepted to participate in the work and submitted a needs assessment in October 2015. The consulting team reviewed needs assessment documents and developed individualized plans of technical support for each participating institution. The individualized plans focus on the following outcomes: (1) Creating full, transparent alignment between two-year programs, certificates, and Gateways ECE credentials; (2) Designing programs of study that ensure stackability and portability of credentials as part of institutional transfer agreements; (3) Eliminating barriers to student completion of programs, certificates, and credentials; (4) Supporting program faculty in navigating institutional and state structures to ensure advising, advertising, and program approval documentation procedures fully reflect the inclusion of Gateways ECE credentials as stackable pathways to employment, degree completion, and transfer. Consultants began meeting with their assigned institutions in January 2016 and will complete this initiative by summer 2016. Approximately 50% (22) of two-year colleges with teacher preparation programs applied for and were awarded small stipends to participate in the work.

Higher Education Website

In response to requests from many teacher preparation program higher education faculty over the last several years, the State launched a website in fall of 2014 specifically for early childhood faculty known as EC HERO (Early Childhood Higher Education Resources Online - <http://ilfacultyresources.org/>). The site provides

resources for Early Childhood higher education faculty and contains links to articles, publications, websites, blogs, videos, research, and classroom activities that might be of interest. There is also a listing of upcoming events (local, state, national and international) that are relevant to early childhood. Resources and events can be added by members of HERO and are continually being updated. Forum boards are available for discussions. In 2015, a section was added to HERO for programs that received a higher education partnership grant for both grant reporting and sharing resources with colleagues.

There are approximately 250 members, 350 linked resources, and 20 upcoming events currently on the site, and over 100 users log in each week. In an effort to make the site more meaningful, convenient and well-used, a survey has been developed that will be distributed to HERO members and other EC higher education faculty in early 2016. The website will be modified and improved based on feedback from the survey. The State contractor continues to promote the use of HERO through fliers, emails and presentations at meetings where early childhood teacher preparation faculty are in attendance.

Annual Faculty Forum

On April 9 - 10, 2015, Illinois held its annual Illinois Higher Ed Forum for early childhood teacher preparation faculty from two and four-year institutions, funded in part by Early Learning Challenge funds. In 2015 the focus of the Forum was dissemination of information regarding the EPPI grants. The Forum provided a broad opportunity to share innovative designs in teacher preparation program models with faculty representing two- and four-year higher education institutions from all over the state. Key opportunities were provided for in-depth discussions among faculty about ways to mitigate identified and perceived barriers in teacher preparation programs, including a focus on challenges with articulation within and between institutions. Approximately 100 faculty attended the Forum representing 54 different IHE's from across the state. State agencies also were well represented through 22 participants. Faculty survey results from the 2015 Forum have been integral to the design and development of the 2016 statewide Forum. Based on 2015 survey results, an RFP process was developed and implemented as the selection process for workshops/topics for the 2016 Forum.

Professional Development Providers

The State greatly expanded the number of professional development providers (known in Illinois as "Authorized Entities") approved to provide "Registry approved" professional development and training opportunities to early childhood educators. In 2013, Illinois had 30 authorized entities, in 2014 Illinois had 68 Authorized Entities, and in 2015 Illinois had 99 including but not limited to State agencies, cross-sector partners, and distance learning organizations from across the country.

Authorized Entities apply for authorization by agreeing to and demonstrating alignment with shared standards of quality for professional development, including processes for ensuring trainers have content expertise and knowledge of adult learning theory, and that trainings have clear learning objectives and incorporate multiple methods to assess whether objectives are being internalized by participants. Authorized Entities provide in-person and distance learning opportunities, and participants receive credit and documentation of the training in their personal Professional Development Record (PDR). The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) accepts the Gateways Registry PDR as documentation of completion of pre-service and in-service training hour requirements for child care licensing.

Illinois provided extensive technical assistance to Authorized Entities to assist them in developing training that could be applied to a credential. With this assistance, the State has seen significant increases in the number of credential-approved trainings. Illinois currently has 189 trainings in the Gateways Registry that can be applied toward a credential; increased from 97 trainings in 2014 and 20 trainings in 2013.

A team of state agency and professional development Authorized Entities, in support of consistent categorization and promotion of training opportunities, developed and implemented the Gateways Registry Levels of Learning. Revising the five Stages of Training to less complicated Levels of Learning, allowed for more universal application of Introductory, Intermediate and Advanced trainings. Levels are based on the depth of content rather than experience or role of the participant. To support professional development providers,

including Authorized Entities, the State developed a range of informational and planning tools, including a rubric and promotional resources. A two-prong approach to outreach was utilized, ensuring relevance and applicability for both training participants and trainers/training entities.

Systems and Technology to Support Professional Development:

Illinois has an online training calendar where Authorized Entities post their professional development offerings. The calendar allows participants to search by topic, region of the State, whether training can be applied to a credential, and whether training is approved for ExceleRate Illinois. This has allowed early childhood educators to have a greater awareness of and greater access to professional development across the State and across professional development providers.

Significant accomplishments in 2015 include the launch of an online registration feature for the online training calendar. This feature allows Authorized Entities to choose whether they wish to make online registration available for their training; if so, trainings will automatically populate the provider's information on the training roster within the Authorized Entity Portal. Illinois experienced a significant increase in the number of trainings listed on the calendar (from 2,187 in 2013 to 3,196 in 2015) and the number of searches performed for trainings. Consequently, the code behind the calendar needed to be updated to accommodate this additional demand. Planning also began for revisions to the online calendar in 2016 that will enhance searchability and focus on the most frequently used search options. In addition, the State launched a phone-based app that allows conference registrants to verify their attendance at a conference; participation is then immediately populated to the individual's professional development record.

Finally, the State initiated efforts to provide a suite of technology services that will allow Authorized Entities to seamlessly integrate with the Gateways Registry. A set of webservices was developed that allow for the "automatic upload" of participant training completion records to the Gateways Registry. This functionality was fully implemented for the Gateways i-learning System (online trainings) on January 1, 2016 and was also implemented with Erikson Institute for their Town Square family child care online trainings. The State anticipates rolling this out with more providers in the future.

Credential Development

Using RTT-ELC funds, Illinois is developing three new credentials (in addition to the preexisting Director, Infant Toddler, and Early Childhood Education (ECE) credentials). These new multi-level credentials are the Family Child Care credential for home care providers, the Family Specialist credential for those who work with and support families, and the Technical Assistance credential for those who work as coaches or mentors. Illinois implemented pilots for all three credentials during 2015.

The Family Specialist Credential (FSC) pilot: Five higher education institutions are participating in the pilot. Each of these IHE's modified and/or aligned coursework to meet Family Specialist Credential requirements and educational competencies. The pilot closed December 30, 2015 with more than 100 Family Specialist Credentials awarded. Survey data from applicants who did and did not receive a credential is being analyzed. The FSC Committee will utilize this information to make recommendations about potential adjustments to the Family Specialist Credential requirements. The Family Specialist credential will be ready for statewide rollout in June 2016.

The Family Child Care Credential (FCC) pilot: Six higher education institutions are participating in the pilot. Each of these IHE's modified and/or aligned coursework to meet Family Child Care Credential requirements and educational competencies. The pilot will close March 30, 2016. To date, more than 50 Family Child Care Credentials have been awarded. The State will survey those who did and did not receive a credential to better understand their experiences with the credential process. The FCC Credential pilot is on track for statewide rollout in August 2016.

The Technical Assistance Credential (FCC) pilot: Five higher education institutions are participating in the pilot.

Each of these IHE's modified and/or aligned coursework to meet Technical Assistance Credential requirements and educational competencies. This pilot will be completed in December 2016. To date, 75 applications have been received from members of this distinct workforce.

Policies and Incentives That Promote Career and Professional Advancement

Illinois has continued and expanded its programs that provide supports and incentives to providers to advance along Illinois' career pathway for early childhood educators.

Scholarships: Illinois continued to provide scholarships to those working towards a credential through the Gateways Scholarship Program, funded by IDHS and ISBE. These scholarships pay a percentage of tuition and fees on a sliding scale and are available across a wide range of education levels, from beginning practitioners to those who have a Bachelor's degree and are working towards additional certification.

With RTT-ELC funds, Illinois expanded its scholarship program and provided support to licensed educators with Bachelor's degrees to pursue an English as a Second Language (ESL) or Bilingual Education endorsements. A recent Illinois administrative rule requires that by July 1, 2016, school-based preschool teachers working with children whose home language is not English must hold a specialized ESL or Bilingual endorsement. These scholarship funds will allow teachers to earn the credential that will enable them to provide more specialized language services to children that historically have not been able to access them until kindergarten.

To date, 102 teachers receiving RTT-ELC support have completed their ESL/Bilingual endorsement. Additionally, there are four active cohorts of students pursuing endorsements, including three with Regional Offices of Education. In 2015, OECD collaborated with ISBE and three Regional Offices of Education to leverage multiple funding sources to support cohorts of teachers. This will allow more districts to meet the State mandate and to ensure children have access to highly qualified teachers. These new cohorts are hosting a total of 53 teachers who are taking coursework at various higher education institutions.

Compensation and Wage Supplements: Illinois continued implementation of the State-funded Great START (Strategies to Attract and Retain Teachers) program, which provides wage supplements to providers in full-day, year-round programs based upon their educational attainment and continued employment. This strategy has proven helpful in narrowing the salary gap between community and school-based early childhood educators. In 2015, the State provided wage supplements to 3,732 individuals. These are provided via state funds, not Race to the Top Funds. Supplements are provided based on education level and income. See wage scale here: <http://www.ilgateways.com/en/wage-supplement-scale>

Tiered Reimbursement Rates and Bonuses: As described in section B(2)2, Illinois introduced incentives (bonuses) for licensed child care centers (2014) and licensed family child care homes (December 2015) that pursue continuous quality improvement with ExceleRate Illinois. Centers and homes at three levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold) can receive a one-time bonus payment after their eligibility for a Circle of Quality designation is established. In addition, centers and homes that care for children in the CCAP and achieve the Silver or Gold Circle of Quality can receive State-funded tiered reimbursement for the CCAP children in their program (a 10% and 15% add-on respectively). Most programs report that they use the tiered reimbursement to provide higher compensation to their staff than they would otherwise be able to provide.

Illinois continued to provide State-funded tiered reimbursement to licensed centers and licensed family child care homes that participated in Quality Counts, Illinois' previous QRIS. Centers that were dually enrolled in Quality Counts and ExceleRate Illinois continued to receive Quality Counts tiered reimbursement through June 2015. Homes that are dually enrolled in Quality Counts and ExceleRate Illinois will continue to receive Quality Counts tiered reimbursement through June 2016. Transition to ExceleRate Illinois for child care centers is substantially complete and is currently underway with licensed family child care homes. License-exempt homes may still participate in the Quality Counts programs.

Reduced Cost for Credentials: The credentials were developed as a voluntary, opt-in system, and the

administrative costs were initially borne by the participants. As the State incorporated these as a mandatory part of ExceleRate Illinois, the State began to subsidize this cost. In July 2013, with RTT-ELC funds, Illinois significantly reduced the cost for educators to apply for and receive credentials from \$300 to \$30. Additionally, through a public-private partnership, the \$30 credential fee and costs for students graduating from entitled schools was waived. As a result of the reduced cost and the inclusion of the credentials in the ExceleRate Illinois standards, the State has seen a significant increase in those applying for and receiving credentials. (See below for more information.)

Incorporating Credentials into the TQRIS: In 2013, Illinois integrated the credentials into the requirements for ExceleRate Illinois. As programs are rated for inclusion in one of the ExceleRate Illinois Circles of Quality, they must demonstrate that a percentage of their teaching and administrative staff have attained a Gateways Credential. In response to this requirement, early childhood educators demonstrated an explosion of interest in exploring and seeking credential attainment. Nearly 2000 credentials were awarded in 2013, over 2,500 credentials were awarded in 2014, and nearly 10,000 credentials were awarded in 2015.

The State received 12,545 applications for credentials in 2015. Many of these applicants still need to submit appropriate documentation or complete needed coursework, but their applications and interest in the system have allowed the State to verify their status, what would be needed to earn the credential, and provide technical assistance to applicants to help them move forward on their education and career pathway.

Publicly Reporting Aggregated Data on Early Childhood Educators

Illinois has made significant strides in building its capacity to report more accurate and comprehensive information on the Illinois early childhood workforce. In 2015, Illinois continued to focus efforts in this area on building data systems and integrating administrative data to record and track information related to educators' development, education, credentials, and retention in the Gateways to Opportunity Registry. In late 2012, the Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS), implemented an administrative rule change requiring all staff in licensed child care facilities to establish a profile in the Gateways Registry. With this change, the Registry saw an increase in participation from 32,402 to 56,503 members in 2013 and to 80,769 members by the end of 2014. By the end of 2015, nearly 100,000 individuals had joined the Gateways Registry, and over 77,500 individuals had "active" records as of December 31, 2015. In 2014, Illinois increased its capacity to review and verify voluntarily submitted official transcripts of those who self-enroll in the Registry to ensure accurate data. Verified transcript information is now included in the Registry for nearly 19,000 individuals. The increase in participants in the Registry and the integration of verified data allows Illinois to track and promote professional development of its early childhood workforce.

Products of these efforts have allowed for additional current and future data reporting on the workforce in Illinois. For example, workforce data from the Gateways Registry were shared with the State's Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) to inform the work of the Workforce Development and Pathways Committee regarding credential and degree attainment. In addition, data have been shared with the P-20 Council and Illinois Early Learning Council to build awareness around the characteristics of the licensed child care workforce. In 2015, data were shared specifically with a local municipality to inform its work around providing professional development for its constituents and also informed several private partnerships, including development of a grant-funded Infant Toddler Teacher Quality Initiative and another cohort to increase the number of professionals with an Infant/Toddler Credential.

In 2015, the Gateways Registry was able to provide data for the National Workforce Registry Alliance's national dataset. Illinois workforce data were highlighted at several national conferences and meetings, including the NAEYC Professional Development Institute, BUILD Institute, National Workforce Registry Alliance Conference, and the Child Care Policy Research Consortium annual meeting.

The first report on the characteristics of Illinois' early care and education workforce (based on Gateways Registry data) will be released in early 2016. In addition, the state-mandated Salary and Staffing Survey of Licensed Child Care Programs will utilize administrative data from the Gateways Registry for the first time in

2016. Because of this, the state was able to remove a significant number of questions from the survey administered in 2015, which in turn reduced the amount of time it took practitioners to complete the survey. This resulted in a notable increase in the survey response rate compared to previous years.

Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs aligned to competencies required for Gateways Credentials and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Gateways Credentials

Illinois' goal was to increase the number of entitled institutions of higher education to 58 in 2015. However, the State exceeded this goal in 2014, with 61 institutions being "entitled" to offer coursework leading to credentials. In 2015, Illinois ended the year with 67 of the 80 teacher preparation programs in the state being entitled. Illinois awarded 876 individuals a credential via the entitled route in 2015, bringing the cumulative total of those receiving a credential via the entitled route to 1,529. The State's goal in the original application was to have a cumulative total of 540 people awarded credential via the entitled route by the end of 2015.

Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the competencies in Gateways

Through maintenance and changes in policies and programs designed to help early childhood educators earn a credential along Illinois' career pathways for early childhood educators, the State saw a significant increase in the number of new credentials awarded in 2015 (see tables below). Illinois surpassed its goals for the awarding of each of the three credentials (Director, Early Childhood, and Infant Toddler credentials). In 2015, the State awarded 700 Director credentials (goal 139), nearly four times what was awarded in 2014, which nearly doubled the total number of Director credentials in the State. The State awarded 5,719 ECE credentials (goal 1703), nearly triple the amount awarded in 2014, which doubled the total number of ECE credentials in the State. The State awarded 1,571 Infant Toddler credentials (goal 169) in 2015, four times more than 2014, which nearly doubled the total number of Infant Toddler credentials in the State.

The State was particularly pleased to see that practitioners are earning higher levels of credentials than anticipated. For example, at the credential level generally equivalent to an Associate's degree, the State set goals of awarding 80 Director credentials, 165 ECE credentials, and 23 Infant Toddler credentials. However, the awards far surpassed the goals, and the State awarded 449, 1098, and 468 credentials respectively. In addition, at the credential level generally equivalent to the Bachelor's degree, the State had goals of awarding 53 Director's credentials, 172 ECE credentials, and 49 Infant Toddler credentials. However, the awards far surpassed the goals, and the State awarded 232, 1773, and 311 respectively.

The increase in those awarded credentials can be attributed to a number of State initiatives, including the reduction in cost to receive a credential, the integration of the credential in the ExceleRate Illinois, changes to credential requirements that presented unintended barriers to completion, and an ongoing program known as Jump Start. Through Jump Start, the State has deployed credential specialists to colleges and universities to educate those in early childhood programs about the requirements and pathways to receiving a credential. Specialists provide faculty and students with resources and materials to apply for credentials. This program has been very successful, as many faculty members know much about their own programs but may not have in-depth knowledge about how their programs dovetail with Illinois' credentials for early childhood educators.

Illinois is unsure whether the State will experience a continuation of this trend in 2016, due to issues surrounding the state budget. We know that in 2015, the State received over 12,500 applications for credentials, many of which are in various stages of processing or award. While many of these applications are still awaiting review due to the overwhelming number of applicants, it is apparent that many applications will take a considerable length of time to process as they are missing key information such as documentation of education (e.g., official transcripts). In many cases, the applicants also need to complete coursework to be eligible for a credential. Additionally, the State will implement two policies that will go into effect this year, requirements for programs to adhere to credential requirements for directors and teachers who care for infants

and toddlers. As of July 2016, in order to meet or maintain higher circles of quality in ExceleRate Illinois, directors will have to have a Director Credential. Additionally, at this time, a percentage of staff working with infants and toddlers will have to have the Infant and Toddler Credential.

Despite these factors, the State is unsure if programs and staff will continue to seek credentials. The State has still not passed a state budget, and both child care programs and universities have been affected. Additionally, whereas the state has been able to disburse the Gateways scholarships for early childhood teachers, the state funded MAP grants (general scholarships) have not been funded by the state.

Support to Directors and Credential Candidates

The State has been working to ensure that the process to apply for and receive a credential is as user friendly as possible for candidates. One such effort in 2015 included a project to reach out to center directors in Illinois to determine process obstacles (real or perceived) that exist and delay or deter credential attainment. One thing that was clear is that directors wanted more information to help them help their staff navigate the credential process.

In response to this, the State developed some FAQs and documents that outline the process and timeline for attaining a credential. In addition, Illinois looked for ways to help directors better track where their staff were in the credential process. The State determined a key way to get information to directors was through the Gateways Registry Director Portal.

The Gateways Registry Director Portal was implemented in 2014 and features online access to tools that help early learning and development program administrators and directors manage their program. Access to the portal is restricted and must be requested by the director of the early learning program. Initially the online tools available were meant to help a director monitor compliance with licensing regulations, including current staff membership in the Gateways Registry and completion of 15 hours of in-service training per year. With ExceleRate Illinois bringing additional focus and importance to the Gateways Credentials, the State implemented a policy change that would allow directors to have access to additional staff information for purposes of monitoring progress toward an ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality. This October 2015 policy change resulted in an additional report being made available whereby a director can view each of their staff's educational qualifications, attainment of Gateways Credentials, and status of applications for a Gateways Credential. This report helps them to plan for participation or an increase in their ExceleRate Illinois Circle of Quality and to encourage staff in their attainment of Gateways Credentials. The Director Portal has over 1,600 users. It is being utilized by approximately one-third of the nearly 3,000 licensed centers in Illinois and by several other programs as well.

Performance Measures (D)(2)(d)(1):

In the tables below, indicate State progress toward meeting ambitious yet achievable targets for: Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(1): Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators receiving credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Baseline and Annual Targets					
	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Total number of "aligned" institutions and providers	45	48	53	58	63
Total number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an "aligned" institution or provider	170	240	360	540	790

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(1): Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators receiving credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Actuals					
	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Total number of "aligned" institutions and providers	45	49	61	67	
Total number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an "aligned" institution or provider	170	353	688	1,529	

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(1) Data Notes

For this table, "entitled" institutions of higher education are included.

The data was provided by the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA), the organization that tracks this information.

- Total number of "aligned" institutions and providers: These data represent the total number of "entitled" institutions of higher education (IHEs) in Illinois.
- Total number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an "aligned" institution or provider: These data represent the total number of individuals that have received a credential via an entitled institution as of the end of 2015.

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(1) Target Notes

For all targets that were not reached in the reporting year, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in reaching the established targets by the end of the grant period.

Illinois was successful in meeting its Performance Measure targets for this Measure. The State's outreach efforts to entitled institutions have been successful in increasing the number of students who are obtaining their Gateways credentials.

Performance Measures (D)(2)(d)(2):

In the tables below, indicate State progress toward meeting ambitious yet achievable targets for: Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(2): Increasing number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.										
Baseline and Annual Targets										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	<i>Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have moved up the progression of credentials, aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, in the prior year</i>									
	Baseline		Year One		Year Two		Year Three		Year Four	
<Select Progression>	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Credential Type 1	244		48	20%	58	20%	80	23%	107	25%
<i>Specify:</i>	Director's Credential, Level 1									
Credential Type 2	187		37	20%	44	20%	53	20%	64	20%
<i>Specify:</i>	Director's Credential, Level 2									
Credential Type 3	115		5	5%	6	5%	6	5%	6	5%
<i>Specify:</i>	Director's Credential, Level 3									
Credential Type 4	1,532		612	40%	857	40%	1,200	40%	1,680	40%
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 1									
Credential Type 5	107		54	50%	96	60%	154	60%	205	50%
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 2									
Credential Type 6	24		7	29%	9	29%	10	25%	12	24%
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 3									
Credential Type 7	111		61	55%	103	60%	165	60%	220	50%
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 4									
Credential Type 8	139		70	50%	106	51%	174	55%	245	50%
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Levels 5 and 6									
Credential Type 9	107		32	30%	41	29%	72	40%	125	50%
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Level 2									
Credential Type 10	6		12	200%	14	78%	23	72%	37	67%
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Level 3									
Credential Type 11	49		14	29%	18	29%	23	28%	30	29%
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Level 4									
Credential Type 12	84		50	60%	44	33%	51	29%	63	28%
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Levels 5 and 6									
Credential Type 13	342		17	5%	36	10%	73	20%	88	20%
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Teacher Certificate with Bilingual or ELS endorsement or approval									

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(2): Increasing number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Actuals

Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	<i>Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have moved up the progression of credentials, aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, in the prior year</i>									
	Baseline		Year One		Year Two		Year Three		Year Four	
<Select Progression>	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Credential Type 1	244		32	13%	100	36%	449	119%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Director's Credential, Level 1									
Credential Type 2	187		30	16%	62	29%	232	83%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Director's Credential, Level 2									
Credential Type 3	115		4	3%	9	8%	19	15%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Director's Credential, Level 3									
Credential Type 4	1,532		605	39%	1,256	59%	2,057	61%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 1									
Credential Type 5	107		28	26%	109	81%	554	227%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 2									
Credential Type 6	24		11	46%	63	180%	231	237%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 3									
Credential Type 7	111		116	105%	290	128%	1,908	369%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Level 4									
Credential Type 8	139		128	92%	249	93%	1,779	345%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential. Levels 5 and 6									
Credential Type 9	107		62	58%	169	100%	733	217%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Level 2									
Credential Type 10	6		3	50%	9	100%	58	322%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Level 3									
Credential Type 11	49		92	188%	122	87%	468	178%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Level 4									
Credential Type 12	84		87	104%	92	54%	312	119%		
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Toddler Credential, Levels 5 and 6									
Credential Type 13	342		226							
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Teacher Certificate with Bilingual or ELS endorsement or approval									

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(2) Data Notes

Please describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information.

The Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Networks (INCCRRA) tracks the information for credentials 1-3, and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) tracks the information for ESL/Bilingual endorsements. These data represent the number of new credentials (not renewals) awarded annually.

Percentages are calculated based on the percentage increase in the total number of individuals with said credential/certification from one year to the next.

Credential Type 1: Director Credential; Credential Type 1 is the Illinois Director Credential (IDC). There are three levels of the IDC.

Credential Type 2: Early Childhood Education (ECE) Credential; Credential Type 2 is the Illinois Early Childhood Education (ECE) credential. There are six levels of the ECE credential.

Credential Type 3: Infant Toddler Credential; Credential Type 3 is the Illinois Infant Toddler Credential (ITC). There are five levels of the ITC.

Credential Type 4: The number in the table represents the number of educators with an Early Childhood Teaching Certificate who earned an English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement or Bilingual endorsement each year. Due to a recent redesign of the data system for Professional Educator Licenses in Illinois, the number of new ESL or Bilingual endorsements earned in 2015 by educators with an Early Childhood endorsement is not yet available.

Credential Type 13: We are working on a solution for matching the data since the move from the Educator Certification System to the Educator Licensure system, but do not at this time have the data or a timeline for when it will become available.

The number of credentials by level within each credential type are indicated. Due to table size restrictions, levels are collapsed where cell sizes are few.

Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(2) Target Notes

For all targets that were not reached in the reporting year, please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in reaching the established targets by the end of the grant period.

Illinois was successful in meeting its Performance Measure Targets for all Gateways Credentials this year.

Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry (Section E(1) of Application)

The State has made progress in developing a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that (check all that apply):

- Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;
- Is administered beginning no later than the start of the school year in the fourth year of the grant to children entering a public school kindergarten. States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;
- Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and
- Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Describe the domain coverage of the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment, validity and reliability efforts regarding the Kindergarten Entry Assessment, and timing of the administration of the Kindergarten Entry Assessment.

As noted in the State's Phase I and Phase II applications, Illinois issued a Request for Sealed Proposals (RFSP) for a kindergarten entry and progress assessment system in October 2011. In June 2012, a contract was signed with WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies (WestEd), with a subcontract to Berkeley Evaluation and Assessment Research Center, Graduate School of Education, University of California - Berkeley (BEAR Center) to develop and implement the Illinois Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS). This contract is funded with existing state funding. KIDS is an adaptation of the Desired Results Developmental Profile-School Readiness (DRDP-SR). Specific adaptations included the development of additional domains that are in the Illinois Kindergarten Learning Standards but were not addressed in the DRDP-SR and the development of a subscale assessing Spanish language development. KIDS includes the following 11 domains: Approaches to Learning/Self-Regulation; Social Emotional Development; Literacy and Language Development; English Language Development; Spanish Language Development; Math - Cognitive; Science - Cognitive; Physical Development; Health; History and Social Studies; and Visual and Performing Arts. KIDS is designed to be completed three times during the kindergarten year (at approximately 40, 105, and 170 days into the school year.)

The DRDP-SR was selected in part because it already had evidence of adequate validity and reliability. However, given the modifications and extensions that were made to the tool, Illinois recognized the need to complete additional studies of the tool's validity. Illinois' plan includes a process for evaluating the tool's validity, beginning with establishing construct validity through a field study which was completed in 2014 and a calibration study that was completed in 2015.

Currently, teachers implementing KIDS attend a two-day training to learn how to gather evidence for and complete the assessment, use the results to inform planning curriculum, and share results with parents. Administrators are also invited to attend the two-day training, or attend a half-day training specifically for administrators. Teachers can find resources for implementing KIDS on the KIDS website (www.illinoiskids.org), such as tutorials, observation resources, checklists, and articles of interest.

With RTT-ELC funds, Illinois contracted with WestEd to develop an online system through which teachers can establish and maintain reliability in administering KIDS. This system was developed, pilot tested and completed in 2015.

The current scope of school readiness data collection does not cover entire domains, but does include measures from the domains of Language and Literacy Development, Cognitive Math Development, Social Emotional Development, and Approaches to Learning. The revised implementation plan is described below.

Describe the progress made during the reporting year. Please describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the grant period.

As of December 2015, 3,778 kindergarten teachers and 1,131 School Administrators participated in the two-day training on KIDS implementation. There are an additional 1,288 School Administrators that participated in the KIDS half-day Administrator training and 158 individuals who have completed KIDS coach training. There were 188 school districts (595 schools) that used KIDS in Fall 2015 and completed the KIDS assessment on 16,854 kindergarten students. The districts participating are geographically diverse and together represent the ethnic and economic diversity of the state.

Teacher and administrator feedback from the pilot has been utilized to customize, restructure, and simplify the KIDS instrument, training, and implementation process. School district feedback has been collected through surveys, focus groups, and from program coaches. In response to the feedback, ISBE explored modifications in conjunction with the KIDS Advisory Committee. Subsequently, ISBE initiated rule changes to revise the implementation schedule and reduce the amount of information that is collected and reported to ISBE, significantly reducing the requirements for districts. Those changes went into effect in September 2015, applying to the 2015-16 school year. The impact of these changes was a reduction in the number of students assessed in 2015 compared with 2014 (a decrease of 9,690 students).

At the September 2015 board meeting, the ISBE board approved an amendment to the ISBE Goal 1 in the Illinois State Board of Education Strategic Plan, which included as the first part of the goal, "Every child in each public school system in the State of Illinois deserves to attend a school system wherein 1) all kindergartners are assessed for readiness." In furtherance of this goal, and in response to continued concerns from some school districts about the feasibility of implementing KIDS, the KIDS Advisory Committee was charged with further reducing the time burden of reporting school readiness data to ISBE while ensuring that all kindergartners are assessed for readiness. In November 2015, the Committee made recommendations, based on a developmental research review conducted by WestEd, to collect data at the beginning of the school year on 14 high-impact measures for all kindergartners. This is a shift from current requirements, which include data collection at three points in time on multiple domains. Agency staff are currently getting feedback on this plan from school districts and will initiate rulemaking accordingly.

The new plan for collecting kindergarten readiness data requires less information to be reported by school districts, builds off information collected through local assessment systems and instructional practices, and continues to provide the state with a summative snapshot of the readiness of kindergartners across the state. School readiness information is an important part of the educational continuum that will inform programs, services, and policies to improve early learning outcomes and ensure that more children are arriving to kindergarten ready to succeed and eager to learn. This will also help identify and target readiness gaps that may exist across or within communities and to ensure quality and equity for each and every child.

Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, districts will report annually to ISBE on 14 measures of school readiness for each kindergartener. Data for each student, based on local instruction and assessment practices, will be reported through the KIDSTech rating system. These measures were selected because they provide information about unique and important aspects of behavior that are predictive (based on empirical research) of kindergarten readiness and later academic success. The 11 domains and 55 measures of the full KIDS instrument continue to be available to schools at no cost. Also, school districts looking to use KIDS to monitor progress and growth can continue to collect and enter data during the winter and spring reporting periods.

14 State-Collected School Readiness Measures

Approaches to Learning - Self-Regulation

- ATL-REG: 1 - Curiosity and Initiative in Learning
- ATL-REG: 2 - Self-Control of Feelings and Behavior
- ATL-REG: 3 - Engagement and Persistence

Social and Emotional Development

- SED 3 - Relationships and Social Interactions with Familiar Adults
- SED 4 - Relationships and Social Interactions with Peers

Cognition: Math

- COG: MATH 1 - Classification
- COG: MATH 2 - Number Sense of Quantity
- COG: MATH 3 - Number Sense of Math Operations
- COG: MATH 6 - Shapes

Language and Literacy Development

- LLD 3 - Communication and Use of Language (Expressive)
- LLD 4 - Reciprocal Communication and Conversation
- LLD 6 - Comprehension of Age-Appropriate Text
- LLD 8 - Phonological Awareness
- LLD 9 - Letter and Word Knowledge

The State is especially appreciative of the private sector support it received in 2013, 2014, and 2015 to support the implementation of KIDS. The Joyce Foundation provided a grant of \$1.2 million to WestEd to hire regional coaches who provide training, technical assistance, and support to administrators and teachers throughout the state as Illinois builds towards statewide implementation of the instrument. The feedback from teachers and administrators has repeatedly been that the coaches have made the difference in them being able to successfully implement KIDS. Alternative funding to continue the regional coaches once the Joyce Foundation funding ends is being explored.

Early Learning Data Systems (Section E(2) of Application)

The State has made progress in enhancing its existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or building or enhancing a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and that (check all that apply):

- Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Describe the progress made during the reporting year, including the State's progress in building or enhancing a separate early learning data system that aligns with and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and that meets the criteria described above. Describe the State's strategies to ensure that measurable progress will be made in this area by the end of the grant period.

Illinois continues to pursue its plans to build an early learning data system as part of a broader interagency effort for the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS). This approach allows us to leverage existing and developing supports and resources, including the ILDS legal and governance structures, administrative personnel, and end-user supports.

In 2014, through an RFP process, the ILDS Governing Board selected and contracted with Northern Illinois University's (NIU) Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) to establish the Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (CDDA). The CDDA establishes an identity resolution system across the ILDS agencies to address the challenge of different state agencies using different identifiers for the same individuals. In 2015, NIU-CGS established the CDDA master client index involving over 20 million records from six of the seven ILDS agencies. The seventh agency, IDHS, is in the process of finalizing its CDDA data sharing agreement with NIU. Moving forward, the master client index will significantly reduce the effort needed for interagency data sharing.

Under its contract for the CDDA, NIU completes the following tasks:

- Develop and maintain a batch file exchange process to achieve a standardized data exchange for the Illinois Longitudinal Data System;
- Develop, maintain, and administer a Master Client Index that tracks multiple unique identifiers across ILDS agencies (including ISBE and IDHS) necessary for record linkages;
- Provide identity resolution services to identify and reconcile records with the Master Client Index; and
- Provide a confidence rating service to identify a threshold for determining true matches and non-matches.

These systems and services will support critical early learning projects, including the current effort to establish an unduplicated count across ISBE, IDHS, and Head Start systems of children receiving State-supported early childhood services.

Within the past year, NIU completed an initial child record match of a large subset across ISBE systems (Preschool for All funded children) and IDHS systems (subsidy certificate and some subsidy contract-funded children) and delivered a presentation and report to ISBE, IDHS, and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. Finalization of that work awaits the completed transfer of IDHS data files for site administered contracts. Before the end of the grant period, the project envisions matching data from ISBE and IDHS birth to age three programs (e.g., programs funded under IDEA Parts B and C and home visiting programs) to complement the existing matched records of preschool aged children. ExceleRate Illinois data from INCCRRA's Data Tracking Program (DTP) is merged to provide data on children by program. Additionally, reports delineate programs by each Innovation Zone. OECD works closely with the team at NIU to develop and populate reports and key metrics contained in the "Illinois Early Learning Services Dashboard", which will serve both as proofs of concept of the record matching work and a critical tool for decision-making for various projects throughout the state, including community systems development.

In the past year, the Head Start data collaborative project led by Illinois Head Start Association (IHSA) made significant progress aligning their internal systems to be inter-operable with the ILDS. IHSA continued to work with the 17 pilot programs whose data had been merged in the prior year across Teaching Strategies Gold and Child Plus systems to provide technical assistance and local capacity for data uploading and sharing. For example, the team finalized crystal reports to support easy uploading of data for individual programs. IHSA also began work this year with remaining programs, including those in the city of Chicago using the COPA system and others using the COR system, to establish the appropriate MOUs and pilot data transfer to ensure the universe of Head Start data will be included in the collaborative before the end of the grant period. IHSA continues to work closely with OECD to resolve issues of data privacy concerns related to ILDS integration. For example, NIU CDDA staff and OECD staff hosted a webinar with the Head Start Directors to explain the ILDS and field questions about its use.

The Interagency Project Team on Data and Outcomes led by the Data and Outcomes Manager in OECD has undertaken several additional projects to prepare early childhood systems to include essential data elements, to be inter-operable, and to be able to generate information while meeting privacy laws. Staff at OECD and ISBE collaborated to inventory necessary system changes and improvements at ISBE in order to be inter-operable with the ILDS. Additionally, in coordination with INCCRRA staff, OECD identified a need to compile a single, unduplicated list of sites in the state. Currently, a single site delivering services to a child may be accounted for differently in ISBE versus DCFS versus IDHS. OECD convened a meeting, bringing together thought partners and agency representatives to understand and document system changes necessary to create a unified system across agencies with the capacity to produce a consistent, unduplicated list of sites statewide. In response to these needs, INCCRRA is poised to build out the capacity of a "look up" table as an intermediate solution to this important need. This look up table feeds into the DTP to facilitate accurate and up-to-date program information.

As described in our Phase II application, Illinois defined its "Essential Data Elements" to include elements from three categories of data: In addition to the child/family level data work undertaken at NIU and as part of the ILDS project, program data are collected in in the Data Tracking Program (DTP) housed at the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (INCCRRA). With connections to data systems at the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and ISBE, DTP includes ExceleRate Illinois data on all licensed programs and all publicly-funded, school-based preschool programs in Illinois. Illinois' primary workforce data system is the Gateways to Opportunity Registry. Over the course of calendar year 2015, the Registry has grown to nearly 100,000 individuals of which approximately 77,000 are "active." Plans to facilitate the automatic integration of ISBE early childhood *teacher licensure* data and non-certified teacher aide data into the Registry have stalled due to data privacy concerns. When these tasks are complete, the Gateways Registry will have comprehensive data on the vast majority of the formal early childhood workforce.

INCCRRA began work to create data "universes" related to ExceleRate Illinois and the Registry in 2015. The first project, completed in 2015, identified changes needed to facilitate reporting on Gateways Credential attainment. Additionally, funds were used to create a new data warehouse at INCCRRA in order to facilitate the integration of data from a variety of sources with less manual intervention. This increased capacity to consolidate information will allow INCCRRA to analyze, mine, and monitor key metrics. The warehouse will also

create a data repository that will be used to offload reporting functionality from live production systems in order to ensure that production system resources are devoted to serving customers. Activity in 2015 included completion of the planning and scoping out the initial vision for the warehouse, identification of facts and dimensions related to workforce data and processing of applications (for programs such as Gateways Credentials, Great START Wage Supplement, etc.), and initial mapping of data from the source system to the planned warehouse schema.

As part of our strategy to ensure data systems are able to generate usable information, Illinois has been working to articulate key research questions related to early childhood that might be answered, in part, with state data eventually to be made available through the ILDS. The Data, Research, and Evaluation committee of the Early Learning Council worked with other committees to develop and curate a research agenda which will be publicly posted on OECD website on January 2016. Additionally, staff in OECD have been working with local partners to ensure that the state has capacity to engage expert researchers in addressing key questions. For example, in June, 2015 staff at OECD organized a well-received meeting with leading state policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and other partners in attendance. The meeting addressed questions and issues to consider in developing research-practice-policy partnerships. Also included were panels comprising nationally-renowned experts on home visiting and on TQRIS validation studies and a gallery walk featuring a variety of state projects and initiatives related to early childhood.

Data Tables

Commitment to early learning and development.

In the tables that follow, provide updated data on the State's commitment to early learning and development as demonstrated in Section A(1) of the State's RTT-ELC application. Tables A(1) -1 through 3 should be updated with current data. Tables 4 and 5 should provide data for the reporting year as well as previous years of the grant. Tables 6 and 7 may be updated only where significant changes have occurred (if no changes have occurred, you should note that fact).

Table (A)(1)-1: Children from Low-Income¹ families, by age		
	Number of children from Low-Income families in the State	Children from Low-Income families as a percentage of all children in the State
Infants under age 1	69,151	43.9%
Toddlers ages 1 through 2	139,823	43.9%
Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry	178,355	43.9%
Total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families	387,329	43.9%

¹ Low-Income is defined as having an income of up to 200% of the Federal poverty rate.

Data Table A(1)-1 Data Notes

Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data if needed.

Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM), 2013 data, based on 5-year ACS 2009-2013

Note: For children age 5 not yet in Kindergarten, 1/2 the number of 5-year-olds was used. This number will vary depending on the month of the year from 1/12 of 5-year-olds to 12/12 of 5-year-olds. Thus the middle variation is used.

Table (A)(1)-2: Special populations of Children with High Needs

The State should use these data to guide its thinking about where specific activities may be required to address special populations' unique needs.

Special populations: Children who	Number of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...	Percentage of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...
Have disabilities or developmental delays ¹	58,928	6.7%
Are English learners ²	68,179	7.7%
Reside on "Indian Lands"	0	0%
Are migrant ³	448	0%
Are homeless ⁴	27,302	3.1%
Are in foster care	5,818	0.1%
Other 1 as identified by the State		
<i>Describe:</i>		
Other 2 as identified by the State		
<i>Describe:</i>		

¹For purposes of this Annual Performance Report, children with disabilities or developmental delays are defined as children birth through kindergarten entry that have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

²For purposes of this Annual Performance Report, children who are English learners are children birth through kindergarten entry who have home languages other than English.

³For purposes of this Annual Performance Report, children who are migrant are children birth through kindergarten entry who meet the definition of "migratory child" in ESEA section 1309(2).

⁴The term "homeless children" has the meaning given the term "homeless children and youths" in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (425 U.S.C. 11434a(2)).

Data Table A(1)-2 Data Notes

Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data if needed.

- Have disabilities or developmental delays: Data come from Illinois Department of Human Services, FY 2014 (0-2 with an Individualized Family Service Plan) and Illinois State Board of Education, FY 2015 (3-5 year olds, all disabilities, December 1 count)
- English Language Learners: Data come from IECAM data, from IPUMS. Reflects number of 0-5 year olds who do not speak English at home and who speak English less than very well. For children younger than age 5, responses refer to mother's responses, if present; if not, then fathers; if not, then guardians.
- Reside on "Indian Lands": Not applicable
- Are migrant: Data come from 2014-15 Head Start Program Information Report - cumulative enrollment for IL Migrant & Seasonal Head Start
- Are homeless: Estimated based on reported number of homeless 0-18 year olds in "America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homeless." by National Center on Family Homeless. <http://homelesschildrenamerica.org/>
- Are in foster care: Data come from Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
- Percentages based on data provided by the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM), 2013 data, based on the five-year American Community Survey, 2009-2013. For children age 5 not yet in kindergarten, 1/2 the number of 5-year-olds was used. This number will vary depending on the month of the year from 1/12 of 5-

year-olds to 12/12 of 5-year-olds. Thus the middle variation was used.

Table (A)(1)-3a: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age

Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.

Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
State-funded preschool	0	3,642	71,512	75,154
<i>Specify:</i>	Preschool for All (for children ages 3-Kindergarten Entry)			
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>	Illinois State Board of Education 2015			
Early Head Start and Head Start¹	2,641	7,535	40,000	50,176
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>	2014 Program Information report (PIR); Includes IL Early Head Start, Head Start, and			
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619	2,409	18,517	37,745	58,671
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>	IL Dept of Human Services, 2013 for children two and under and IL State Board of Ed			
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	0	7,595	21,169	28,764
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>	2014 IL Consolidated State Performance Report, Section 2.1.2.3. Unduplicated coun			
Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program	11,303	30,191	51,989	93,483
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>	Illinois Department of Human Services, March 2015 CCAP reports			
Other 1	0	14,852	0	14,852
<i>Specify:</i>	Prevention Initiative			
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>	Illinois State Board of Education, 2015. Unduplicated counts are not broken out for in			
Other 2				
<i>Specify:</i>				
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>				
Other 3				
<i>Specify:</i>				
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>				
Other 4				
<i>Specify:</i>				
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>				
Other 5				
<i>Specify:</i>				
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>				
Other 6				
<i>Specify:</i>				
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>				

Table (A)(1)-3a - Additional Other rows

Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
Other 7	0			
<i>Specify:</i>				
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>				
Other 8				
<i>Specify:</i>				
<i>Data Source and Year:</i>				

¹ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Data Table A(1)-3a Data Notes

Enter text here to clarify or explain any of these data if needed.

- State Funded Preschool: Data come from Illinois State Board of Education 2015. Children must be 3 years of age to enroll in PFA; children identified as toddlers ages 1 through 2 were enrolled in the program once they turned 3 years old but their age was calculated based on September 1 of the school year.
- Early Head Start and Head Start: Data come from 2014 PIR and reflect cumulative enrollment
- For the following programs, Illinois data cannot be broken down by children under age one and children ages one and two. Therefore data depicted shows children ages zero through age two.
 - Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619
 - Programs funded under Title I of ESEA
 - Programs funded by the Prevention Initiative
- Programs funded under Title I of ESEA: Data come from 2014 IL Consolidated State Performance Report, Section 2.1.2.3. Unduplicated counts are not broken out for infants and toddlers; data for toddlers includes children birth through age 2.
- For Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program, the following age breakdowns were used, based upon available data.
 - Infants under age 1: Actually birth to 14 months
 - Toddlers ages 1 through 2: Actually 15 months to 36 months
 - Preschoolers ages three under Kindergarten entry: Actually 37 months to 5 year
- Prevention Initiative: Data come from Illinois State Board of Education, 2015. Unduplicated counts are not broken out for infants and toddlers; data for toddlers includes children birth through age 2.

Table (A)(1)-3b: Participation of Children in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State, by Race/Ethnicity

Note: Totals are not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.

Number of Children							
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Hispanic Children	Number of Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native Children	Number of Non-Hispanic Asian Children	Number of Non-Hispanic Black or African American	Number of Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Children	Number of Non-Hispanic Children of Two or more races	Number of Non-Hispanic White Children
State-funded preschool	23,385	173	2,524	17,074	89	3,058	28,851
<i>Specify:</i>	Preschool for All						
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹	15,852	359	932	21,522	85	4,300	15,490
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	5,912	15	630	2,875	7	515	10,972
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	8,226	251	1,317	4,775	78	1,366	21,732
Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA							
Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program	36,606	111	1,712	80,052	249	4,966	2,666
Other 1	5,327	21	403	5,359	21	683	3,038
<i>Describe:</i>	Prevention Initiative (state funded for children birth through age three)						
Other 2							
<i>Describe:</i>							

¹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Table (A)(1)-3b - Additional Other rows

Number of Children							
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Hispanic Children	Number of Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native Children	Number of Non-Hispanic Asian Children	Number of Non-Hispanic Black or African American	Number of Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Children	Number of Non-Hispanic Children of Two or more races	Number of Non-Hispanic White Children
Other 3							
<i>Describe:</i>							
Other 4							
<i>Describe:</i>							
Other 5							
<i>Describe:</i>							
Other 6							
<i>Describe:</i>							
Other 7							
<i>Describe:</i>							
Other 8							
<i>Describe:</i>							

Data Table A(1)-3b Data Notes

Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data if needed.

- State-funded preschool: Data come from Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
- Early Head Start and Head Start: Data come from 2014-15 Program Information Report (PIR); 2 other categories not included here - "Other" =4,050 & "Unspecified" =4,096
- Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C: Data come from Illinois Department of Human Services
- Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619: Data unavailable at this time; to come from ISBE
- Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA: Data unavailable because 2014 CSPR does not aggregate by both age and race/ethnicity
- Illinois Department of Human Services, Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), March 2014. March data is used because March gives the most typical picture of the CCAP. It is the one month of the school year with typically no major holidays and 21-23 regular business days. Data in this table is birth- age 13. DHS cannot provide ethnicity break by age. An additional 16,542 children are noted as "ethnicity not reported"
- Prevention Initiative: Data come from Illinois State Board of Education

Table (A)(1)-4: Data on funding for Early Learning and Development.

Note: For States that have a biennial State budget, please complete for all fiscal years for which State funds have been appropriated. We are not asking for forecasting, but for actual allocations. Therefore, States that do not have biennial budgets need not complete for years for which appropriations do not yet exist.

Funding for each Fiscal Year					
Type of investment	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start¹	\$731,298	\$700,048	\$793,714	\$731,298	
State-funded preschool	\$300,192,400	\$300,192,400	\$293,438,100	\$314,238,100	
<i>Specify:</i>	Early Childhood Block Grant includes Preschool for All 3-5 and Prevention Initiative 0-3				
State contributions to IDEA Part C	\$72,904,200	\$83,691,900	\$85,718,700	\$87,691,900	
State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through kindergarten entry	\$17,308,047	\$16,488,199	\$16,488,210		
Total State contributions to CCDF²	\$127,345,031	\$126,269,800	\$124,709,469	\$124,710,000	
State match to CCDF Exceeded / Met / Not Met	Met	Met	Met	Met	
<i>If exceeded, indicate amount by which match was exceeded</i>					
TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs³	\$134,482,223	\$139,402,852	0	0	
Other State contributions 1	0	0	0	0	
<i>Specify:</i>	Even Start Programs (Title 1)				
Other State contributions 2	\$454,157,940	\$512,230,764	\$665,213,602	\$500,000,000	
<i>Specify:</i>	Child Care GRF claimed for TANF MOE				
Other State contributions 3	\$35,254,798	\$34,137,675	\$34,084,574	\$30,000,000	
<i>Specify:</i>	Infant Mortality/Family Case Mgmt GRF				
Other State contributions 4	\$8,240,341	\$8,358,158	\$8,195,105	\$8,115,146	
<i>Specify:</i>	Healthy Families Illinois GRF				
Other State contributions 5	\$6,870,300	\$6,870,300	\$6,715,700	\$6,870,300	
<i>Specify:</i>	Parents Too Soon				
Other State contributions 6	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	
<i>Specify:</i>	Child Care GRF claimed for Title XX/SSB				

Table (A)(1)-4 - Additional Other rows

Funding for each Fiscal Year

Type of investment	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Other State contributions 7	\$29,557,764	\$35,062,808	\$43,840,732	\$43,800,000	
<i>Specify:</i>	Other State spending in Child care not claimed as CCDF				
Other State contributions 8	\$83,572,255	\$85,643,680	\$82,193,224	\$82,100,000	
<i>Specify:</i>	IDCFS (Foster care, adoption, protective services)				
Total State contributions:	\$1,271,816,597	\$1,342,694,694	\$1,279,891,725	\$1,199,456,744	

¹ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.
² Total State contributions to CCDF must include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), State Match, and any State contributions exceeding State MOE or Match.
³ Include TANF transfers to CCDF as well as direct TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs.

Data Table A(1)-4 Data Notes

Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data, including the State's fiscal year end date.

Budgets are for the State's fiscal year. The State's baseline was for FY 2013, which ran from July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013. Year one is FY 2013, July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. Year two is FY 2014, July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Year three is FY 2015, July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

All funding amounts for Year 3 shown above except "State Funded preschool" are not yet enacted. The State began fiscal year 2016 on July 1, 2015 without a fully enacted budget in place. Some General Fund appropriations were enacted into law for a few state agencies. Certain spending from the General Funds can occur without passage of a budget if the State is ordered to make such payments by court order or consent decree. Various court actions since July 2015 and prior consent decrees have directed the State to continue to make payments in the absence of appropriations for items. The Governor signed P.A. 99-005, which authorizes spending for elementary education grants.

Some Year 1 numbers changed from 2014 APR, as actual spending differed from budgeted amount reported in APR.

- State-funded preschool: Early Childhood Block Grant includes Preschool for All 3-5 and Prevention Initiative 0-3
- IDEA Part B figures represent federal funds. We are not able to determine the specific amount of state contribution that goes to preschool for any of the years reported.

Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State

Note: Totals are not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs. However, the current year should match the program totals reported in Table (A)(1)-3a.

Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program¹					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Baseline	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
State-funded preschool <i>(annual census count; e.g., October 1 count)</i>	78,607	75,623	75,231	75,154	
<i>Specify:</i>	Preschool for All				
Early Head Start and Head Start² <i>(funded enrollment)</i>	41,075	41,849	40,079	42,170	
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 <i>(annual December 1 count)</i>	55,505	56,245	56,959	58,994	
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>(total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report)</i>	30,856	34,123	28,764		
Programs receiving CCDF funds <i>(average monthly served)</i>	115,188	107,170	135,873	93,483	
Other 1	19,481	14,770	14,264	14,852	
<i>Describe:</i>	Prevention Initiative, Healthy Families Initiative, Parents as Teachers and Nurse				
Other 2					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 3					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 4					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 5					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 6					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 7					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 8					
<i>Describe:</i>					

¹ Include all Children with High Needs served with both Federal dollars and State supplemental dollars.

² Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Data Table A(1)-5 Data Notes

Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data if needed. Include current year if data are available.

- Preschool for All: Data come from Illinois State Board of Education
- Early Head Start and Head Start: Data come from 2014-15 Program Information Report (PIR). Data do not match data reported in Table A(1)-3 due to differences in actual enrollment versus funded enrollment.
- Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C: Data come from Illinois Department of Human Services
- Programs and services funded by IDEA Part B, section 619: Data come from Illinois State Board of Education
- Programs funded under Title I of ESEA: Year one data come from 2014 Consolidated State Performance Report. Year three data is not yet available because the 2015 Report has not been published.
- Programs receiving CCDF funds: Data come from Illinois Department of Human Services
- Prevention Initiative: Data come from Illinois State Board of Education; 2015 data includes only Prevention Initiative.

Table (A)(1)-6: Current status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards

Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the State's Early Learning and Development Standards address the different age groups by Essential Domain of School Readiness.

Essential Domains of School Readiness	Age Groups		
	Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers
Language and literacy development	X	X	X
Cognition and general knowledge (including early math and early scientific development)	X	X	X
Approaches toward learning	X	X	X
Physical well-being and motor development	X	X	X
Social and emotional development	X	X	X

Data Table A(1)-6 Notes

Enter text to explain or clarify information as needed.

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State.

Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.

Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
State-funded preschool	X	X	X	X	
<i>Specify:</i>					
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	X	X	X	X	
Programs receiving CCDF funds					
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements (Specify by tier)					
Tier 1					
Tier 2			X	X	
Tier 3	X	X	X	X	
Tier 4	X	X	X	X	
Tier 5					
State licensing requirements			X	X	
Other 1					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 2					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 3					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 4					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 5					
<i>Describe:</i>					
¹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.					

Table (A)(1)-7 - Additional Other rows

Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
Other 6					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 7					
<i>Describe:</i>					
Other 8					
<i>Describe:</i>					

Data Table A(1)-7 Notes

Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data if needed.

Budget and Expenditures

Budget Summary Table Narrative

Please provide a brief explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and its total expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending is slightly delayed in several projects, given the end date of June 30, 2016.

Budget Summary Table Explanation of Changes

Please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

Illinois anticipates submitting a no-cost extension to address underspending in some projects and to ensure projects are completed in a high-quality manner.

Project Budget 1

Project Name: Grants Management

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending for year three is delayed due to the inability to hire a communications director and an administrative assistant, as planned.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate submitting a budget amendment to repurpose funds we had intended to use to hire a communications director and administrative assistant. Funds may be used for similar purposes, such as communications, but through alternate mechanisms. Additionally, we anticipate requesting a no cost extension for this project to ensure funds are spent completely and appropriately.

Project Budget 2

Project Name: TQRIS Systems

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending is delayed for year three of the grant in this area, due to a delay in a state contract amendment. We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget 3

Project Name: Quality Improvement

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending is delayed for year three of the grant, due significant delays in a state contract amendment. We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget 4

Project Name: TQRIS Assessments

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

There are no discrepancies between the approved project budget and expenditures. Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. While our spending appears on track for year three given the end date of June 30th, given the State budget situation and impact on child care providers, we are preparing for a slow-down in ExceleRate applications and assessments and therefore anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no-cost extension.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget 5

Project Name: Public Awareness of TQRIS

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

There are no discrepancies between the approved project budget and expenditures. Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. While our spending is on track for year three given the end date of June 30th, the State's ongoing budget crisis is a continuing consideration for this project. We anticipate the need to request a budget amendment and no-cost extension to ensure thorough project completion.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget 6

Project Name: TQRIS Evaluation

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

There are no discrepancies between the approved project budget and expenditures. Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. While spending for this project is currently on track, given challenges at the State and delay in finalizing datashare agreements, we anticipate requesting a budget revision and no-cost extension to ensure funds are spent and project thoroughly completed.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget 7

Project Name: Community Supports

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

There are no discrepancies between the approved project budget and expenditures. Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending is on track for year two given the end date of June 30th. However, due to the nature of this project, which includes intensive training for cohorts of community-level leaders, we anticipate a delay in spending as the year progresses.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure these funds are spent and associated projects are completed.

Project Budget 8

Project Name: Gateways Registry

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending is delayed for year three due to a delay in a state contract amendment.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to ensure the funds are spent and associated projects and work are completed.

Project Budget 9

Project Name: Professional Development

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

There are no discrepancies between the approved project budget and expenditures. Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending is on track for year three given the end date of June 30th.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a no-cost extension and budget amendment to repurpose funds and continue with work in this project area.

Project Budget 10

Project Name: KIDS

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2015. Our spending is delayed for year three given the end date of June 30th. Delays are related to a change in the State's plan for roll-out of the KIDS assessment.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a budget amendment and no cost extension to complete the work of this project.

Project Budget 11

Project Name: Data Systems

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016.

The state has underspent in the Data Systems project for year three of the grant. As work has progressed on the data systems project, it has become clear that fewer RTT-ELC resources will be needed to develop and implement the federated approach to the State's Longitudinal Data System. This is due both to the fact that relatively low-cost solutions for developing the system have been identified, and to the unanticipated availability of remaining funds from the State's Longitudinal Data System federal grant.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a no-cost extension to complete projects begun with this grant. In addition, we anticipate reallocating some funds to other project areas to account for unanticipated underspending.

Project Budget 12

Project Name: Multi-state Partnership

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year three of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Illinois has underspent in this project in year three, as the lead state partner on this work has experienced a delay in work. We are working with the lead state partner to determine how Illinois can best support their work.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate requesting a no-cost extension to support the work of the lead state partner.

Project Budget 13

Project Name: Targeted High-Needs Communities

Project Budget Narrative

For this project, please provide an explanation of any discrepancies between the State's approved budget and expenditures for the reporting year.

Illinois received approval to budget based on the State's fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends June 30th. Therefore year two of the grant ends on June 30, 2016. Our spending is slightly delayed this fiscal year, as the work with our newly selected communities has progressed slightly slower than anticipated.

Project Budget Explanation of Changes

For this project, please describe any substantive changes that you anticipate to the State RTT-ELC budget in the upcoming year.

We anticipate submitting a no-cost extension to complete the work of the grant.

RTT-ELC Budget Summary of Actual Expenditures

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$294,970.50	\$244,154.54	\$193,655.21	\$0.00	\$732,780.25
2. Fringe Benefits	\$190,292.10	\$169,480.13	\$166,475.01	\$0.00	\$526,247.24
3. Travel	\$16,918.23	\$10,392.10	\$5,813.47	\$0.00	\$33,123.80
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$7,144.21	\$2,629.47	\$5,226.26	\$0.00	\$14,999.94
6. Contractual	\$428,921.00	\$1,347,854.46	\$2,041,267.33	\$0.00	\$3,818,042.79
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$17,457.00	\$14,163.11	\$9,857.89	\$0.00	\$41,478.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$955,703.04	\$1,788,673.81	\$2,422,295.17	\$0.00	\$5,166,672.02
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$6,648,396.75	\$12,812,517.88	\$11,465,028.58	\$0.00	\$30,925,943.21
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$80,946.00	\$47,386.51	\$73,706.63	\$0.00	\$202,039.14
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$7,685,045.79	\$14,648,578.20	\$13,961,030.38	\$0.00	\$36,294,654.37
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$7,685,045.79	\$14,648,578.20	\$13,961,030.38	\$0.00	\$36,294,654.37

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 1 - Grants Management

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$294,970.50	\$244,154.54	\$193,655.21	\$0.00	\$732,780.25
2. Fringe Benefits	\$190,292.10	\$169,480.13	\$166,475.01	\$0.00	\$526,247.24
3. Travel	\$16,918.23	\$10,392.10	\$5,813.47	\$0.00	\$33,123.80
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$7,144.21	\$2,629.47	\$5,226.26	\$0.00	\$14,999.94
6. Contractual	\$109,200.00	\$186,084.50	\$339,414.75	\$0.00	\$634,699.25
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$17,457.00	\$14,163.11	\$9,857.89	\$0.00	\$41,478.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$635,982.04	\$626,903.85	\$720,442.59	\$0.00	\$1,983,328.48
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$290,118.12	\$397,659.03	\$287,094.76	\$0.00	\$974,871.91
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$80,946.00	\$47,386.51	\$73,706.63	\$0.00	\$202,039.14
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$1,007,046.16	\$1,071,949.39	\$1,081,243.98	\$0.00	\$3,160,239.53
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$1,007,046.16	\$1,071,949.39	\$1,081,243.98	\$0.00	\$3,160,239.53

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 2 - QRIS Infrastructure

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$707,266.12	\$584,881.00	\$425,620.41	\$0.00	\$1,717,767.53
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$707,266.12	\$584,881.00	\$425,620.41	\$0.00	\$1,717,767.53
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$707,266.12	\$584,881.00	\$425,620.41	\$0.00	\$1,717,767.53

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 3 - QRIS Quality Improvement

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$2,624,280.01	\$5,904,778.61	\$6,494,142.95	\$0.00	\$15,023,201.57
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$2,624,280.01	\$5,904,778.61	\$6,494,142.95	\$0.00	\$15,023,201.57
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$2,624,280.01	\$5,904,778.61	\$6,494,142.95	\$0.00	\$15,023,201.57

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 4 - QRIS Assessments

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$555,536.00	\$603,338.44	\$332,547.34	\$0.00	\$1,491,421.78
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$555,536.00	\$603,338.44	\$332,547.34	\$0.00	\$1,491,421.78
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$555,536.00	\$603,338.44	\$332,547.34	\$0.00	\$1,491,421.78

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 5 - QRIS Public Awareness

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$497,048.82	\$781,654.96	\$402,409.62	\$0.00	\$1,681,113.40
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$497,048.82	\$781,654.96	\$402,409.62	\$0.00	\$1,681,113.40
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$497,048.82	\$781,654.96	\$402,409.62	\$0.00	\$1,681,113.40

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 6 - QRIS Evaluation

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$380,821.00	\$1,574,358.00	\$0.00	\$1,955,179.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$380,821.00	\$1,574,358.00	\$0.00	\$1,955,179.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$0.00	\$380,821.00	\$1,574,358.00	\$0.00	\$1,955,179.00
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$0.00	\$380,821.00	\$1,574,358.00	\$0.00	\$1,955,179.00

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 7 - Community Systems

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$256,318.00	\$280,000.00	\$279,683.19	\$0.00	\$816,001.19
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$256,318.00	\$280,000.00	\$279,683.19	\$0.00	\$816,001.19
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$256,318.00	\$280,000.00	\$279,683.19	\$0.00	\$816,001.19

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

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Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

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Actual Expenditures for Project 8 - Gateways Registry

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$586,626.35	\$649,930.00	\$419,619.40	\$0.00	\$1,656,175.75
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$586,626.35	\$649,930.00	\$419,619.40	\$0.00	\$1,656,175.75
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$586,626.35	\$649,930.00	\$419,619.40	\$0.00	\$1,656,175.75

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

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Actual Expenditures for Project 9 - Professional Development

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$693,346.92	\$1,341,213.00	\$964,345.67	\$0.00	\$2,998,905.59
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$693,346.92	\$1,341,213.00	\$964,345.67	\$0.00	\$2,998,905.59
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$693,346.92	\$1,341,213.00	\$964,345.67	\$0.00	\$2,998,905.59

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

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Actual Expenditures for Project 10 - KIDS

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

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Actual Expenditures for Project 11 - Data Projects

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$304,721.00	\$280,948.96	\$103,494.58	\$0.00	\$689,164.54

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

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Actual Expenditures for Project 12 - Multi-State Instrument Development

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$2,096.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,096.04
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$2,096.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,096.04
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$2,096.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,096.04

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Actual Expenditures for Project 13 - Targeted High Need Communities

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3. Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Training Stipends	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	\$357,260.37	\$1,531,031.88	\$1,462,889.38	\$0.00	\$3,351,181.63
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$357,260.37	\$1,531,031.88	\$1,462,889.38	\$0.00	\$3,351,181.63
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$357,260.37	\$1,531,031.88	\$1,462,889.38	\$0.00	\$3,351,181.63

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Organizational Criteria	Determination
<p>Criteria I: Fiscal and Administrative Capability for Administering an Accrediting Process</p>	Acceptable for Gold Circle of Quality
<p>Criteria II: Administrative Policies and System Evaluation Procedures</p>	Acceptable for Gold Circle of Quality
<p>Criteria III: Accreditation Process</p>	Acceptable for Gold Circle of Quality
<p>Criteria IV: Institution’s Standards for Family Child Care Programs</p>	NAFCC Standards are accepted for ExceleRate Silver or Gold Circle of Quality and programs will be awarded such with verification of additional requirements described below.

ExceleRate Illinois Standards	Determination & Additional Requirements	
	For Silver	For Gold
1 Teaching and Learning	Accepted with additional requirements described below:	Accepted with additional requirements described below:
a. Learning Environment	Accepted	Accepted
b. Safe and Healthy Environment	Accepted	Accepted
c. Interactions	Accepted	Accepted
d. Curriculum and Child Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider must choose and implement curriculum and child assessment tool aligned with IELG/IELDS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider must choose and implement curriculum and child assessment tool aligned with IELG/IELDS.
e. Child Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement.
f. Inclusion of Children with Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement.
g. Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Practice	Accepted	Accepted
2 Family & Community Engagement	Accepted with additional requirements described below:	Accepted with additional requirements described below:
a. Family-Provider Communication and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider offers at least 2 conferences with each family per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider offers at least 2 conferences with each family per year.

b. Connecting and Supporting Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider implements at least 2 <u>family supports</u> monthly & at least 2 formal/informal gatherings annually for families in care to get to know each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider implements at least 3 <u>family supports</u> monthly & at least 3 formal/informal gatherings annually for families in care to get to know each other.
c. Transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement.
3 Leadership & Management	Accepted with additional requirements described below:	Accepted with additional requirements described below:
a. Business Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>BAS</u> self-assessment and <u>CQIP</u> to address any items below 4.0. • Note: Provider must complete ExceleRate-approved training on the Business Administration Scale (BAS) if not previously taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement. Verified on-site by state approved assessor. • Note: Provider must complete ExceleRate-approved training on the Business Administration Scale (BAS) if not previously taken.
b. Ratios	Accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement at the next renewal. Verified on-site by state approved assessor.
c. Continuous Quality Improvement	See 3A	Accepted
4 Qualifications & Continuing Education	Accepted with additional requirements described below:	Accepted with additional requirements described below:
a. FCC Provider Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2018, FCC provider must have Gateways FCC Credential Level 4 or higher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement. • Note: Provider must apply for Credentials as stated on the Overview chart. Provider must meet this standard requirement within the first year of ExceleRate eligibility. • Note: Providers part of a <u>FCC network</u>, see additional option on Overview chart. <p>*Additional requirement to be achieved by 2018.</p>
b. FCC Assistant and Substitute Qualifications (Not applicable if no assistants or substitutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement. • Note: Assistant/Substitute must apply for Credentials as stated on the Overview chart. Provider must meet this standard requirement within the first year of ExceleRate eligibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement. • Note: Assistant/Substitute must apply for Credentials as stated on the Overview chart. Provider must meet this standard requirement within the first year of ExceleRate eligibility.
c. FCC Provider Peer Support	Accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fully implement ExceleRate Illinois requirement.
d. Ongoing Professional Development	Accepted	Accepted

Glossary

Illinois Early Learning Guidelines for Children (IELG) – For children birth to age 3: Provide early childhood professionals and policy makers a framework for understanding child development by presenting information on what children know and should do and what development looks like in everyday life. The main goal of the Guidelines is to offer early childhood professionals a cohesive analysis of children’s development with common expectations and common language. These Guidelines also provide suggestions and ideas on how to create early experiences that benefit all children’s learning and development.

Illinois Early Learning & Development Standards (IELDS) – For children Preschool age to Kindergarten Enrollment Age: Developmentally appropriate set of goals and objectives for young children. Early learners must develop basic skills, understandings, and attitudes toward learning before they can be successful in the K-12 curriculum.

Family supports – Refers to the variety of ways that a provider can be responsive to a family needs. This may include: children’s book/toy lending library, referrals to community resources, sick care for children, extended care during evenings or weekends, social functions for families, transportation to/from the home.

Business Administration Scale (BAS) – Tool used to assess the quality of business practices within the family child care environment.

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP) – Plan developed to assist providers in identifying and achieving improvements to strengthen their program.

FCC Network – An Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) or Head Start FCC network serves as a means of providing peer support, sharing resources, and enhancing professionalism. The goal of the network is to improve the quality of family child care in a specific area, neighborhood, or community by supporting family child care providers. Networks are staffed with paid personnel who offer regular supports and services to meet the unique needs of FCC providers within the network.