



**Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge
Application for Initial Funding
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GEORGIA

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**APPLICATION FOR INITIAL FUNDING UNDER
RACE TO THE TOP – EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE**

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Dear Colleague:

On May 25, 2011, we announced a new \$500 million State-level grant competition, the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC). Since that time, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services have awarded RTT-ELC grants to fourteen States to improve the quality of early learning and development programs and close the achievement gap for children with high needs.

Today, we are releasing the final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for a new RTT-ELC competition, along with the application. We have endeavored to maintain consistency with the 2011 competition, making only small changes to improve clarity and effectiveness of the program. Just as in the first competition, we challenge States to build a coordinated system of early learning and development that ensures that many more children from low-income families and disadvantaged children, from birth to age five, have access to dramatically improved early learning and development programs and are able to start kindergarten with a strong foundation for future learning.

This competition represents an unprecedented opportunity for States to focus deeply on their birth through five early learning and development systems and build a more unified approach to supporting young children and their families — one that increases access and quality and helps ensure that children enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions they need to be successful. The RTT-ELC competition will provide incentives and supports to States that commit to and deliver high-quality early learning and development programs statewide and improve outcomes for children.

The priorities and selection criteria aim to establish a comprehensive approach that better coordinates, implements, and evaluates high-quality early learning and development programs with a focus on giving families the information and support they need to encourage their child's development and learning and to select the best program for their child.

In the last two years, RTT-ELC has been a catalyst for a vigorous national dialogue about how best to reform early learning and development programs and make sure that children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life. This year in his State of the Union address, President Obama called on Congress to expand access to high-quality preschool to every child in America. As part of that effort, the President will propose a series of new investments that will establish a continuum of high-quality early learning for a child – beginning at birth and continuing to age 5. By doing so, the President would invest critical resources where we know the return on our dollar is the highest: in our youngest children.

We are heartened by and grateful for your participation thus far, and will continue having transparent and candid dialogues about early learning. Together, we can improve the capacity of all States to improve early learning programs for high-need children.

Sincerely,

/s/

Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary of Elementary
and Secondary Education,
U.S. Department of Education.

/s/

George H. Sheldon
Acting Assistant Secretary for
Children and Families,
U.S. Department of Health and
Human Services.

I. INTRODUCTION

“Every dollar we invest in high-quality early childhood education can save more than seven dollars later on -- by boosting graduation rates, reducing teen pregnancy, even reducing violent crime. In states that make it a priority to educate our youngest children, ... studies show students grow up more likely to read and do math at grade level, graduate high school, hold a job, form more stable families of their own. We know this works. So let’s do what works and make sure none of our children start the race of life already behind. Let’s give our kids that chance.” (President Obama, State of Union Address, February 12, 2013)

A critical focus of the Obama Administration is supporting America’s youngest learners and helping ensure that children, especially young children with high needs, such as those who are low-income, English learners, and children with disabilities or developmental delays, enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life. A robust body of research demonstrates that high-quality early learning and development programs and services can improve young children’s health, social emotional and cognitive outcomes, enhance school readiness, and help close the wide school readiness gap^{1 2} that exists between children with high needs and their peers at the time they enter kindergarten.^{3 4}

To address these educational gaps, the Administration has identified, as high priorities, strengthening the quality of early learning and development programs and increasing access to high-quality early learning programs for all children, including those with high needs. This commitment to early education is reflected in the RTT-ELC competition that we are announcing in the Notice Inviting Applications (the notice).

On April 16, 2013 Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius announced the RTT-ELC, a \$300 million State-level grant competition to be held in 2013 and authorized under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), as amended by section 1832(b) of the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011, and the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2012 (Title III of the Division F of P.L. 112-74, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012). The Departments are administering this competition jointly. At its core, RTT-ELC demonstrates a strong commitment by the Administration to stimulate a national effort to make sure all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

¹ Camilli, G., Vargas, S., Ryan, S., & Barnett, W. S. (2010). Meta-analysis of the effects of early education interventions on cognitive and social development. Teachers College Record, 112(3), 579-620.

² Reynolds, A.J., Temple, J.A., Ou, S., Arteaga, I.A., & White, B.A.B. (2011). School-based early childhood education and age-28 well-being: effects by timing, dosage, and subgroups. Science, Retrieved from <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/early/2011/06/08/science.1203618.abstract> doi: 10.1126/science.1203618

³ Princiotta, D., Flanagan, K. D., and Germino Hausken, E. (2006). Fifth Grade: Findings From The Fifth-Grade Follow-up of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99 (ECLS-K). (NCES 2006-038) U.S. Department of Education.

⁴ Halle, T., Forry, N., Hair, E., Perper, K., Wandner, L., Wessel, J., & Vick, J.(2009). Disparities in Early Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B). Washington, DC: Child Trends.

Through the RTT-ELC, the Administration seeks to help close the educational gaps between children with high needs and their peers by supporting State efforts to build strong systems of early learning and development that provide increased access to high-quality programs for the children who need it most. This competition represents an opportunity for States to focus deeply on their early learning and development systems for children from birth through age five. It is an opportunity to build a more unified approach to supporting young children and their families--an approach that increases access to high-quality early learning and development programs and services, and helps ensure that children enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions toward learning they need to be successful.

The RTT-ELC competition does not create new early learning and development programs, nor is it a vehicle for maintenance of the status quo. Rather, the RTT-ELC program will support States that demonstrate their commitment to integrating and aligning resources and policies across all of the State agencies that administer public funds related to early learning and development. It will further provide incentives to the States that commit to and implement high-quality early learning and development programs statewide.

Current State early learning and development systems

Many early learning and development programs and services co-exist within States, including Head Start/Early Head Start programs, the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program (pursuant to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.)), State-funded preschool, programs authorized under section 619 of part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and part C of IDEA, and other State and locally supported programs. Each of these programs has its own funding stream and accompanying requirements, standards, expectations, policies, and procedures. Each also has its own unique strengths and makes unique contributions to young children and their families. For States, the challenges to be addressed by RTT-ELC are to sustain and build on the strengths of these programs, acknowledge and appreciate their differences, reduce inefficiency, improve quality, and ultimately deliver a coordinated set of services and experiences that support young children's success in school and beyond.

The RTT-ELC vision for State early learning and development systems

Through the RTT-ELC competition, we intend to fund applications that demonstrate a State's commitment and capacity to building a statewide system that raises the quality of early learning and development programs so that all children receive the support they need to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. A commitment to building school readiness for children entering kindergarten is at the heart of this competition.

The bar to receive an RTT-ELC grant will be high. RTT-ELC is organized around five key areas of reform. These five key areas represent the foundation of an effective early learning and development reform agenda that is focused on school readiness and ongoing academic success. They are central to this competition's priorities, requirements, and selection criteria, and are as follows:

- (A) Successful State Systems;

- (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs;
- (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children;
- (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and
- (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.

The first two of these, (A) and (B), are core areas of focus for this competition. As such, they are referred to throughout the notice as “Core Areas,” and applicants are required to respond to all selection criteria under these Core Areas. The reform areas in (C), (D), and (E) are areas where applicants will direct targeted attention to specific activities that are relevant to their State’s context. In the notice, we refer to these areas as “Focused Investment Areas,” and applicants are required to address each Focused Investment Area but not all of the selection criteria under them. A discussion of the five key areas of reform follows.

A. Successful State Systems

Successful State early learning and development systems are built on broad-based stakeholder participation and effective governance structures. They are guided by clearly articulated goals and strategies designed to deliver a coordinated set of programs, policies, and services that are responsive to the needs of children and families and effectively prepare young children for school success. The RTT-ELC Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 competition will support States that demonstrate a commitment to creating and implementing a successful statewide early learning and development system and that effectively organize and align that system to provide the diversity of services and supports needed by children and families. Such a system can provide continuity and consistent levels of quality across delivery mechanisms and levels of care and education. Thus, under the priorities established for this competition, States must propose and implement ambitious plans for successful State systems of early learning and development that will have broad impact and can--

- Improve program quality and outcomes for young children;
- Increase the number of children with high needs attending high-quality early learning and development programs; and
- Help close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers by supporting efforts to increase kindergarten readiness.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

The RTT-ELC competition will support States that develop a common set of program standards used statewide. This will help align programs such as Head Start, CCDF, IDEA, and Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), and State-funded preschool to create a more unified statewide system of early learning and development. In addition, each State grantee must design and implement a tiered quality rating and improvement system that is based on consistent and demanding statewide program standards and that establishes meaningful program ratings. RTT-ELC promotes broad participation in the State’s tiered quality rating and improvement system across a range of programs, active program improvement, and the

publication of program ratings so that families can make informed decisions about which programs can best serve the needs of their children.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The RTT-ELC competition is based on the premise that effective programs and services for young children must be built on a set of early learning and development standards that define what children should know and be able to do at different stages of development. These standards provide guidelines, articulate developmental milestones, and set expectations for the healthy growth and development of young children. This competition rewards States that will implement high-quality early learning and development standards and comprehensive systems of assessments aligned with these standards. The implementation of these standards and assessments will ensure that early childhood educators have the information they need to understand and support young children's growth and development across a broad range of domains so that significantly more young children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

Improving early learning and development outcomes also requires that children are healthy and supported by their families. Services that address health and family supports are thus critical, and health and family engagement are key elements in high-quality early learning and development programs. RTT-ELC is designed to support States that focus on increasing access to quality programs and services that promote health and engage families in the care and education of their young children.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

In early learning and development settings, nothing matters more to children's success than the adults caring for and teaching them, and the RTT-ELC FY 2013 competition acknowledges the importance of a strong early childhood workforce. Ensuring that children are ready for success in kindergarten depends on well-trained adults who have acquired the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively support the learning and development of every child. Thus, the competition will reward States that work closely with postsecondary institutions and other parties to define a set of workforce competencies that are tied to the State's early learning and development standards. Further, the competition encourages States to increase retention and improve educator quality by supporting their workforce with professional development, career advancement opportunities, differentiated compensation, and incentives to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Collecting, organizing, and understanding evidence of young children's progress across a range of domains is essential to ensuring that early learning and development programs are of high quality and that they meet the needs of every child. States are therefore encouraged to implement comprehensive data systems and to use the data to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies. In addition, through both a selection criterion and a competitive preference priority, States will be rewarded for implementing kindergarten entry assessments statewide that provide information across all domains of early learning and development, inform efforts to close the school readiness gap, and inform instruction in the early elementary school grades.

By organizing this program around the five key reform areas described in this section, the RTT-ELC FY 2013 competition will help lead the way for States to challenge and rethink the status quo. Not every State will receive an RTT-ELC award through this competition, but every State can use this competition as an opportunity to commit to comprehensively strengthening its early learning and development system and ensuring that more children, including those with high needs, have access to high-quality early learning and development programs and services.

II. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Background Information

Before you begin work on your RTT-ELC application, it may be helpful to understand the parts of the application. Each of these is described below.

- Requirements:
 - Eligibility requirements specify what applicants must have in place in order to compete for a grant. Staff from the Education Department (“ED”) and the Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) will make the eligibility determination.
 - Application requirements list the elements that must be included in a complete application.
 - Program requirements specify what applicants must do if they win a grant (e.g., reporting, participating in technical assistance activities, publishing findings).
- Definitions set forth the meaning of critical terms in the notice; defined terms are indicated by initial capitalization.
- Priorities:
 - An absolute priority is a priority that all applicants must address fully in order to win; these will be assessed by peer reviewers as either “yes” or “no.” If an applicant does not meet the competition’s absolute priority, it will not be awarded a grant.
 - A competitive preference priority is one that earns the applicant extra, or “competitive preference,” points.
 - An invitational priority is one that will not be scored, but is of interest to the Secretaries. If an applicant addresses an invitational priority, then the applicant may apply funds from the grant, if awarded, to work associated with this priority.
- Selection criteria are the focal point of the application and the peer review. Applicants write narrative responses to these criteria, and reviewers judge their responses. Selection criteria in this competition may be supplemented by—
 - Evidence, including data tables and additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers; and
 - Performance measures, or data-driven indicators that States complete to define the outcomes they expect to deliver under the grant.
- Finally, scoring rubrics list the maximum number of points that can be earned for each selection criterion and competitive priority; in addition, they include other instructions that reviewers will follow when judging applications. All rubrics that will be provided to reviewers are included in this application, for the applicant’s information.

About the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application

The RTT-ELC application asks you to address a variety of areas. There are two Core Areas that you must address: (A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs. In addition, there are three Focused Investment Areas that address: (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce;

and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress. Within these three Focused Investment Areas, you must select and address--

- Two or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area: (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and
- One or more selection criteria within each of the Focused Investment Areas: (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.

Page Length Recommendations

Within the application, you will notice that there is a recommended page length for your response to each selection criterion; these are indicated in the application narrative box associated with each selection criterion. While you are not required to abide by these page limits, reviewers generally prefer brevity.

We recommend that you limit your total page count (that is, the narrative responses to all selection criteria in section VI) to no more than 150 pages of State-authored text, and that you limit your appendices to no more than an additional 150 pages. For all responses, we request that the following standards be used:

- A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Number each page.
- Set the line spacing for the narratives to 1.5 spacing, and use a 12 point Times New Roman font.

We strongly request that you follow the recommended page limits, although the Secretaries will consider applications of greater length.

Writing Application Responses

The application provides space for you to address the selection criteria and priorities.

Selection Criteria

Each selection criterion may have multiple parts: the narrative, evidence (often including data tables), and performance measures. Not all selection criteria contain all of these pieces.

- **Narrative:** All selection criteria include a narrative section. This is where you write your response to the criterion. Please type your narrative in the text box provided in this application.
- **Evidence:** Some selection criteria ask you to provide specific evidence; this is indicated in the application. You may provide additional evidence for any criterion if you think it will help reviewers evaluate your application. Keep in mind that too much additional information could have the effect of distracting the reviewers from what is critical.

You must provide the evidence as part of your narrative response to the selection criterion, or include it as an attachment in the Appendix. If you put it in an Appendix, you must provide a clear reference to the Appendix within your narrative.

- **Tables:** Many selection criteria ask you to provide specific evidence in data tables; these tables are included in the application immediately following the narrative. The tables provide you with a framework for presenting information and provide reviewers with a consistent way to look at this information. You must complete the tables as part of your response. Feel free to provide additional data, in the form of graphs, tables, or diagrams, if it will help reviewers understand critical facts about your State. You may use the narrative to explain and describe the significance of the data as it relates to your State Plan.
- **Performance measures:** Several selection criteria ask applicants to provide performance measures, generally including baseline data and annual targets for key outcomes the State will deliver over the term of the grant. Tables for the requested performance measures are included in the application immediately following the narrative and data tables (if any). In addition, you may provide additional performance measures, baseline data, and targets for any criteria you choose. Peer reviewers will consider, as part of their evaluation of a State’s application, the extent to which the State has set “ambitious yet achievable” annual targets; the State will be held accountable for achieving these targets, should it win a grant.

Note: If your State does not have data that are requested in the data tables or in the baseline performance measures, indicate “not available” in the table. Use your narrative to provide any additional explanation that may be necessary to make your point.

Appendix

Your application will include an Appendix. The Appendix must begin with a complete Table of Contents that provides reviewers with easy access to any attachment they are looking for. Each attachment in the Appendix must be described in the narrative associated with the relevant selection criterion, together with a rationale for how its inclusion supports the State Plan. Please also include in the narrative a cross-reference to the attachment’s location in the Appendix.

Competition Priorities

The RTT-ELC competition also includes absolute, competitive, and invitational priorities. You must address the absolute priority throughout the application; you do not write a separate response to this priority. The absolute priority must be met in order for an applicant to receive funding.

A State that chooses to address a competitive preference priority may earn extra points under that priority. Follow the instructions associated with each competitive priority that you choose to address. A State may address either one, two, three or all four of the competitive preference priorities.

Invitational priorities extend the scope or reach of the application; applicants are invited to address the invitational priority and apply funds from this grant to it, but do not earn additional points for doing so.

The competition priorities can be found in section VII of the application. Responding to the competitive and invitational priorities is optional.

Competition Description and Scoring Rubric

For information on the competition review and selection process, see (a) the section entitled, Review and Selection Process, in the notice; and (b) section XIV, Scoring Rubric in the application (Appendix B in the notice). In addition, point values have been included throughout the application.

Technical Assistance Planning Workshops

To assist States in preparing their applications and to respond to questions, ED and HHS intend to host a Pre-Application Webinar on September 4, 2013 and a Planning Workshop on September 10, 2013. In these sessions, the Departments will provide potential applicants with an orientation to the application.

Frequently Asked Questions: The Departments will also prepare answers to frequently asked questions, in order to assist States as they complete their applications. These questions and answers will be posted on the RTT-ELC Web site at www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge. We may update the document as needed throughout the competition, so please check the website regularly.

III. DEFINITIONS

Note: All definitions below are taken from the notice.

Children with High Needs means children from birth through kindergarten entry who are from Low-Income families or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, including children who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English learners; who reside on “Indian lands” as that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA); who are migrant, homeless, or in foster care; and other children as identified by the State.

Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) means voluntary, common standards for a key set of education data elements (e.g., demographics, program participation, transition, course information) at the early learning, K-12, and postsecondary levels developed through a national collaborative effort being led by the National Center for Education Statistics. CEDS focus on standard definitions, code sets, and technical specifications of a subset of key data elements and are designed to increase data interoperability, portability, and comparability across Early Learning and Development Programs and agencies, States, local educational agencies, and postsecondary institutions.

Comprehensive Assessment System means a coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments, each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used, that organizes information about the process and context of young children’s learning and development in order to help Early Childhood Educators make informed instructional and programmatic decisions and that conforms to the recommendations of the National Research Council reports on early childhood.

A Comprehensive Assessment System includes, at a minimum--

- (a) Screening Measures;
- (b) Formative Assessments;
- (c) Measures of Environmental Quality; and
- (d) Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions.

Data System Oversight Requirements means policies for ensuring the quality, privacy, and integrity of data contained in a data system, including—

(a) A data governance policy that identifies the elements that are collected and maintained; provides for training on internal controls to system users; establishes who will have access to the data in the system and how the data may be used; sets appropriate internal controls to restrict access to only authorized users; sets criteria for determining the legitimacy of data requests; establishes processes that verify the accuracy, completeness, and age of the data elements maintained in the system; sets procedures for determining the sensitivity of each inventoried element and the risk of harm if those data were improperly disclosed; and establishes procedures for disclosure review and auditing; and

(b) A transparency policy that informs the public, including families, Early Childhood Educators, and programs, of the existence of data systems that house personally identifiable information, explains what data elements are included in such a system, enables parental consent

to disclose personally identifiable information as appropriate, and describes allowable and potential uses of the data.

Early Childhood Educator means any professional working in an Early Learning and Development Program, including but not limited to center-based and family child care providers; infant and toddler specialists; early intervention specialists and early childhood special educators; home visitors; related services providers; administrators such as directors, supervisors, and other early learning and development leaders; Head Start teachers; Early Head Start teachers; preschool and other teachers; teacher assistants; family service staff; and health coordinators.

Early Learning and Development Program means any (a) State-licensed or State-regulated program or provider, regardless of setting or funding source, that provides early care and education for children from birth to kindergarten entry, including, but not limited to, any program operated by a child care center or in a family child care home; (b) preschool program funded by the Federal Government or State or local educational agencies (including any IDEA-funded program); (c) Early Head Start and Head Start program; and (d) a non-relative child care provider who is not otherwise regulated by the State and who regularly cares for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting. A State should include in this definition other programs that may deliver early learning and development services in a child's home, such as the MIECHV; Early Head Start; and Part C of IDEA.⁵

Early Learning and Development Standards means a set of expectations, guidelines, or developmental milestones that—

- (a) Describe what all children from birth to kindergarten entry should know and be able to do and their disposition toward learning;
- (b) Are appropriate for each age group (e.g., infants, toddlers, and preschoolers); for English learners; and for children with disabilities or developmental delays;
- (c) Cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness; and
- (d) Are universally designed and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate.

Early Learning Intermediary Organization means a national, statewide, regional, or community-based organization that represents one or more networks of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State and that has influence or authority over them. Such Early Learning Intermediary Organizations include, but are not limited to, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies; State Head Start Associations; Family Child Care Associations; State affiliates of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; State affiliates of the

⁵ Note: Such home-based programs and services will most likely not participate in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System unless the State has developed a set of tiered Program Standards specifically for home-based programs and services.

Council for Exceptional Children’s Division of Early Childhood; statewide or regional union affiliates that represent Early Childhood Educators; affiliates of the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association; the National Tribal, American Indian, and Alaskan Native Head Start Association; and the National Indian Child Care Association.

Essential Data Elements means the critical child, program, and workforce data elements of a coordinated early learning data system, including—

- (a) A unique statewide child identifier or another highly accurate, proven method to link data on that child, including Kindergarten Entry Assessment data, to and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the coordinated early learning data system (if applicable);
- (b) A unique statewide Early Childhood Educator identifier;
- (c) A unique program site identifier;
- (d) Child and family demographic information, including indicators identifying the criteria that States use to determine whether a child is a Child with High Needs;
- (e) Early Childhood Educator demographic information, including data on educational attainment and State credential or licenses held, as well as professional development information;
- (f) Program-level data on the program’s structure, quality, child suspension and expulsion rates, staff retention, staff compensation, work environment, and all applicable data reported as part of the State’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
- (g) Child-level program participation and attendance data.

Essential Domains of School Readiness means the domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development (including adaptive skills), and social and emotional development.

Formative Assessment (also known as a classroom-based or ongoing assessment) means assessment questions, tools, and processes—

- (a) That are—
 - (1) Specifically designed to monitor children’s progress in meeting the Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (2) Valid and reliable for their intended purposes and their target populations; and
 - (3) Linked directly to the curriculum; and
- (b) The results of which are used to guide and improve instructional practices.

High-Quality Plan means any plan developed by the State to address a selection criterion or priority in this notice that is feasible and has a high probability of successful implementation and at a minimum includes—

- (a) The key goals;
- (b) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up over time to eventually achieve statewide implementation;
- (c) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;
- (d) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;
- (e) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;
- (f) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;
- (g) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable;
- (h) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and
- (i) How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment means an assessment that--

- (a) Is administered to children during the first few months of their admission into kindergarten;
- (b) Covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (c) Is used in conformance with the recommendations of the National Research Council⁶ reports on early childhood; and
- (d) Is valid and reliable for its intended purposes and for the target populations and aligned to the Early Learning and Development Standards.

⁶ National Research Council. (2008). Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446.

Results of the assessment should be used to inform efforts to close the school readiness gap at kindergarten entry, to inform instruction in the early elementary school grades, and to inform parents about their children's status and involve them in decisions about their children's education. This assessment must not be used to prevent children's entry into kindergarten or as a single measure for high-stakes decisions.

Lead Agency means the State-level agency designated by the Governor for the administration of the RTT-ELC grant; this agency is the fiscal agent for the grant. The Lead Agency must be one of the Participating State Agencies.

Low-Income means having an income of up to 200 percent of the Federal poverty rate.

Measures of Environmental Quality means valid and reliable indicators of the overall quality of the early learning environment.

Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions means the measures obtained through valid and reliable processes for observing how teachers and caregivers interact with children, where such processes are designed to promote child learning and to identify strengths of and areas for improvement for early learning professionals. Participating Program means an Early Learning and Development Program that elects to carry out activities described in the State Plan.

Participating State Agency means a State agency that administers public funds related to early learning and development and is participating in the State Plan. The following State agencies are required Participating State Agencies: the agencies that administer or supervise the administration of CCDF, the section 619 of Part B of IDEA and Part C of IDEA programs, State-funded preschool, home visiting, Title I of ESEA, the Head Start State Collaboration Grant, and the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant, the State's Child Care Licensing Agency, and the State educational agency. Other State agencies, such as the agencies that administer or supervise the administration of Child Welfare, Mental Health, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, may be Participating State Agencies if they elect to participate in the State Plan as well as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care.

Program Standards means the standards that serve as the basis for a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and define differentiated levels of quality for Early Learning and Development Programs. Program Standards are expressed, at a minimum, by the extent to which--

(a) Early Learning and Development Standards are implemented through evidence-based activities, interventions, or curricula that are appropriate for each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers;

(b) Comprehensive Assessment Systems are used routinely and appropriately to improve instruction and enhance program quality by providing robust and coherent evidence of—

(1) Children’s learning and development outcomes; and

(2) Program performance;

(c) A qualified workforce improves young children’s health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes;

(d) Culturally and linguistically responsive strategies are successfully used to engage families, help them build protective factors, and strengthen their capacity to support their children’s development and learning. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and adult and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development;

(e) Health promotion practices include health and safety requirements; developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow up; and the promotion of physical activity, healthy eating habits, oral health and behavioral health, and health literacy among parents; and

(f) Effective data practices include gathering Essential Data Elements and entering them into the State’s Statewide Longitudinal Data System or other early learning data system, using these data to guide instruction and program improvement, and making this information readily available to families.

Screening Measures means age and developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable instruments that are used to identify children who may need follow-up services to address developmental, learning, or health needs in, at a minimum, the areas of physical health, behavioral health, oral health, child development, vision, and hearing.

State means any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

State Plan means the plan submitted as part of the State’s RTT-ELC application.

Statewide Longitudinal Data System means the State’s longitudinal education data system that collects and maintains detailed, high-quality, student- and staff-level data that are linked across entities and that over time provide a complete academic and performance history for each student. The Statewide Longitudinal Data System is typically housed within the State educational agency but includes or can be connected to early childhood, postsecondary, and labor data.

Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System means the system through which the State uses a set of progressively higher Program Standards to evaluate the quality of an Early Learning and Development Program and to support program improvement. A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System consists of four components: (a) tiered Program Standards with multiple rating categories that clearly and meaningfully differentiate program quality levels;

(b) monitoring to evaluate program quality based on the Program Standards; (c) supports to help programs meet progressively higher standards (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial support); and (d) program quality ratings that are publically available; and includes a process for validating the system.

Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework means a set of expectations that describes what Early Childhood Educators (including those working with children with disabilities and English learners) should know and be able to do. The Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, at a minimum, (a) is evidence based; (b) incorporates knowledge and application of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards, the Comprehensive Assessment Systems, child development, health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with families; (c) includes knowledge of early mathematics and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and literacy development in young children; (d) incorporates effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement; (e) includes effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors; (f) incorporates feedback from experts at the State's postsecondary institutions and other early learning and development experts and Early Childhood Educators; and (g) includes knowledge of protective factors and effective approaches to partnering with families and building families' knowledge, skills, and capacity to promote children's health and development.

IV. APPLICATION ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS**
Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge
(CFDA No. 84.412)

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): State of Georgia, Office of the Governor	Applicant’s Mailing Address: 203 State Capitol Atlanta, GA 30334																								
Employer Identification Number: 58-0973190	Organizational DUNS: 069230183																								
Lead Agency: Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Contact Name: Bobby Cagle, Commissioner (Single point of contact for communication)	Lead Agency Contact Phone: 404-651-7432 Lead Agency Contact Email Address: bobby.cagle@dec.al.ga.gov																								
<p>Required Applicant Signatures (Must include signatures from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. Insert additional signature blocks as needed below. To simplify the process, signatories may sign on separate Application Assurance forms.):</p> <p>To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.</p> <p>I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):</td> <td>Telephone:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Honorable Nathan Deal, Governor</td> <td>404-463-9403</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:</td> <td>Date:</td> </tr> </table> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):</td> <td>Agency Name: Bright from the</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bobby Cagle, Commissioner</td> <td>Start: Georgia Department of</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative:</td> <td>Early Care and Learning</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Date:</td> </tr> </table> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):</td> <td>Agency Name: Head Start State</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Janice Haker, Director</td> <td>Collaboration Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:</td> <td>Date:</td> </tr> </table> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):</td> <td>Agency Name: Georgia</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dr. John Barge, State Superintendent of Schools</td> <td>Department of Education</td> </tr> </table>		Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):	Telephone:	The Honorable Nathan Deal, Governor	404-463-9403	Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date:	Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):	Agency Name: Bright from the	Bobby Cagle, Commissioner	Start: Georgia Department of	Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative:	Early Care and Learning		Date:	Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):	Agency Name: Head Start State	Janice Haker, Director	Collaboration Office	Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:	Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):	Agency Name: Georgia	Dr. John Barge, State Superintendent of Schools	Department of Education
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):	Telephone:																								
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Dr. John Barge, State Superintendent of Schools	Department of Education																								

Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Keith Horton, Commissioner	Agency Name: Georgia Department of Human Services
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, MD, Commissioner	Agency Name: Georgia Department of Public Health
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Katie Jo Ballard	Agency Name: Governor's Office for Children and Families
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Ronald W. Jackson, Commissioner	Agency Name: Technical College System of Georgia
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Kelly Henson, Executive Secretary	Agency Name: Georgia Professional Standards Commission
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Martha Ann Todd, Executive Director	Agency Name: Governor's Office of Student Achievement
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Teya Ryan, President and Executive Director	Agency Name: Georgia Public Broadcasting
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:

State of Georgia: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application

Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Gretchen Corbin, Commissioner	Agency Name: Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Hank Huckaby, Chancellor	Agency Name: Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Pat Wilson, Chief Operating Officer	Agency Name: Georgia Department of Economic Development
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Amy Mast, Director	Agency Name: Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Gaye Morris Smith, Executive Director	Agency Name: Georgia Family Connection Partnership
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Katie Jo Ballard, Co-Chair	Agency Name: Georgia Children's Cabinet
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:

**** NOTE: As per grant guidelines, this table with original signatures is contained on the CDs on which the application is downloaded.**

State Attorney General Certification

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General Certification

I certify that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions in its application concerning, State law, statute, and regulation are complete and accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation:

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General (Printed Name): Telephone:

Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General : Date:

Accountability, Transparency, and Reporting Assurances

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures that the State will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B and D (Assurances for Non-Construction and Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards, including Davis-Bacon prevailing wages; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders, and regulations.

- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the State will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the State will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.
- The State and other entities will comply with the following provisions of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), as applicable: 34 CFR Part 74 -- Administration of Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations; 34 CFR Part 76 -- State-Administered Programs, including the construction requirements in section 75.600 through 75.617 that are incorporated by reference in section 76.600; 34 CFR Part 77 -- Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations; 34 CFR Part 80 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, including the procurement provisions; 34 CFR Part 81 -- General Education Provisions Act—Enforcement; 34 CFR Part 82 -- New Restrictions on Lobbying; and with the debarment and suspension regulations found at 2 CFR Part 3485.

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Nathan Deal, Governor	
Signature:	Date:

V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The State must meet the following requirements to be eligible to compete for funding under this program:

(a) The State has not previously received an RTT-ELC grant.

(b) The Lead Agency must have executed with each Participating State Agency a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement that the State must attach to its application, describing the Participating State Agency’s level of participation in the grant. (See section XIII.) At a minimum, the MOU or other binding agreement must include an assurance that the Participating State Agency agrees to use, to the extent applicable--

- (1) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) A set of statewide Program Standards;
- (3) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
- (4) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

List of Participating State Agencies:

The applicant should list below all Participating State Agencies that administer public funds related to early learning and development, including at a minimum: the agencies that administer or supervise the administration of CCDF, the section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA programs, State-funded preschool, home visiting, Title I of ESEA, the Head Start State Collaboration Grant, and the Title V Maternal and Child Care Block Grant, as well as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, the State’s Child Care Licensing Agency, and the State Education Agency.

For each Participating State Agency, the applicant should provide a cross-reference to the place within the application where the MOU or other binding agreement can be found. Insert additional rows if necessary. The Departments will determine eligibility.

Participating State Agency Name (Indicate the Lead Agency)	MOU Location in Application	Funds/Program(s) administered by the Participating State Agency
DECAL (Lead Agency)	APPENDIX 22 pg 675	Child Care Licensing CCDF State Administrator State-funded Prekindergarten TQRIS Infant Toddler Initiative Professional Development System
Georgia Head Start State Collaboration Office (Housed at DECAL)	APPENDIX 22 pg 681	Head Start State Collaboration Office

Georgia Department of Education	APPENDIX 22 Pg 702 (Scope of Work: pg 722)	State Education Agency IDEA Part B, Section 619 Title I of ESEA
Georgia Department of Public Health	APPENDIX 22 Pg 718	IDEA Part C Title V Maternal and Child Care Block Grant
Governor's Office for Children and Families	APPENDIX 22 Pg 706	Home Visitation (MIECHV) Georgia Children's Cabinet (State Advisory Council)
Georgia Department of Human Services	APPENDIX 22 Pg 697	TANF SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Medicaid Eligibility Child Welfare Services
Governor's Office of Student Achievement	APPENDIX 22 Pg 686	Statewide Longitudinal Data System
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia	APPENDIX 22 Pg 740	University System of Georgia ECE Postsecondary Coursework and Articulation
Georgia Public Broadcasting	APPENDIX 22 Pg 728	Public Awareness ECE Professional Development
Georgia Professional Standards Commission	APPENDIX 22 Pg 694	ECE Professional Development Registry Verification of Credentials Teacher Certification
Technical College System of Georgia	APPENDIX 22 pg 736	Technical College System ECE Professional Development Articulation
Georgia Department of Community Affairs	APPENDIX 22 Pg 724	Community Development Programs
Georgia Department of Economic Development	APPENDIX 22 Pg 732	State Sales and Marketing Arm New and Expanded Business Development
Georgia Family Connection Partnership	APPENDIX 22 Pg 710	TQRIS Incentive Administrator Network of 159 Community Collaboratives Supporting Healthy Families

Georgia Alliance for Education Agency Heads	APPENDIX 22 Pg 690	Coalition of All Education Agency Heads (Early Learning to Postsecondary)
Georgia Children’s Cabinet	APPENDIX 22 Pg 714	State Advisory Council Community and Family Support

(c) There must be an active Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program in the State, either through the State under section 511(c) of Title V of the Social Security Act, as added by section 2951 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Pub. L. 111-148), or through an eligible non-profit organization under section 511(h)(2)(B).

The State certifies that it has an active MIECHV program in the State, either through the State or through an eligible non-profit organization. The Departments will determine eligibility.

Yes

No

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria are the focal point of the application and peer review. A panel of peer reviewers will evaluate the applications based on the extent to which the selection criteria are addressed.

Core Areas -- Sections (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development. (20 points)

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's—

(a) Financial investment, from five years ago to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from the previous five years to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative how each piece of evidence *demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion*; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

Evidence for (A)(1):

- The completed background data tables providing the State's baseline data for--
 - The number and percentage of children from Low-Income families in the State, by age (see Table (A)(1)-1);
 - The number and percentage of Children with High Needs from special populations in the State (see Table (A)(1)-2); and
 - The number of Children with High Needs in the State who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs, by age, race, and ethnicity. (see Table (A)(1)-3).

- Data currently available, if any, on the status of children at kindergarten entry (across Essential Domains of School Readiness, if available), including data on the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.
- Data currently available, if any, on program quality across different types of Early Learning and Development Programs.
- The completed table that shows the number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the previous five years (2009-2013) (see Table (A)(1)-4) to the present.
- The completed table that shows the number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the previous five years (2009-2013) (see Table (A)(1)-5) to the present.
- The completed table that describes the current status of the State’s Early Learning and Development Standards for each of the Essential Domains of School Readiness, by age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers (see Table (A)(1)-6).
- The completed table that describes the elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-7).
- The completed table that describes the elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-8).
- The completed table that describes the elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-9).
- The completed table that describes all early learning and development workforce credentials currently available in the State, including whether credentials are aligned with a State Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have each type of credential (see Table (A)(1)-10).
- The completed table that describes the current status of postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators (see Table (A)(1)-11).
- The completed table that describes the current status of the State’s Kindergarten Entry Assessment (see Table (A)(1)-12).
- The completed table that describes all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State (see Table (A)(1)-13).

Introduction

For over twenty years, Georgia has developed and continued to refine an early learning and development (ELD) system that improves early education experiences for children and families, prompting greater readiness for and the smooth transition to kindergarten. The cornerstone of Georgia's early childhood system is the state's pre-k program – one of only a few in the country that is universally available (rather than targeted only to children from lower income homes). Since the inception of the nationally renowned Georgia's Pre-K Program more than two decades ago, Georgia has served as a national leader and model for implementing critical school readiness services for young learners. President Obama acknowledged Georgia's important leadership in preschool education when he announced his federal preschool initiative during his 2013 State of the Union address and when visiting a Georgia's Pre-K Program in Atlanta three weeks later. Georgia's leadership in early learning was further documented in May 2013 when U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan held a bipartisan town hall meeting with Governor Nathan Deal and Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed to highlight the President's proposal and discuss the strides Georgia has made in early learning.

Currently, Georgia's ELD system serves 816,769 children birth to five, at least 56%⁷ of whom are children with high needs including those living in poverty, in foster care, who are homeless, who speak languages other than English, and who have suspected or diagnosed disabilities. In Georgia, early education is the *foundation*...a foundation to a comprehensive educational system that has been strengthened, enhanced, and improved through the past two decades.

The theme of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda centers on the state's leveraging and improving the solid ELD foundation, thereby creating an even stronger system where higher quality for all age groups and across all program types translates into increased school readiness outcomes for young children. This agenda and previous legislative and philanthropic investments in quality early education for children from birth through age five will ensure access and delivery of high-quality ELD opportunities, thereby ensuring Georgia can

⁷ The 56% refers to children under age six in Georgia in families with income less than 200% of the poverty level. Other groups of children with high needs are listed in Table (A)(1)-2.

“move the needle” in achievements from cradle to career.

Georgia has a rich history in pioneering high-quality, state-supported early education programs, especially for four year olds. Getting our work with four year olds “right” has allowed the state to carefully expand its priorities in meeting the needs of infants, toddlers, and children with high needs. Georgia’s leaders understand that the state, the ELD industry, and families deserve the opportunity to get it right on the front end of a child’s educational experiences, which means recognizing that this foundation begins at birth. Empirical evidence clearly indicates that the absence of high-quality opportunities for young learners results in greater costs in remediation, with remediation producing less than stellar results (Heckman, 2006).

Evidence of Georgia’s rich history in changing the developmental trajectories of young children and their families is found in numerous activities. One of these activities is Governor Deal’s endorsement of a grade-level reading campaign. As the Governor noted in his 2012 State of the State Address:

We must make a concerted effort to increase the percentage of children reading at grade level by the completion of third grade...Students must “learn to read” in order to be able to “read to learn” and when we fail to invest in our youngest students, we are forced to spend money on remediation for the remainder of their academic careers (Deal, 2012).

This bold statement prompted philanthropic groups in the state to take to heart the Governor’s hopes for Georgia’s children. For example, groups such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation-Atlanta Civic Site, Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students, Atlanta Speech School, Reach Out and Read, Georgia Family Connection Partnership, and other state agencies along with Georgia’s unique independent early education department, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) have augmented the state’s focus on third grade reading resulting in raising the profile of early learning in Georgia. As more and more state stakeholders have concluded, without sufficient investments in early learning, our goal of increasing the number of children meeting the third grade reading goal cannot be met. Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda summarized in this application focuses on increasing the quality of early learning so children enter school with the readiness skills to prepare them for K-12 and beyond.

Although the third-grade reading campaign has heightened awareness of early learning in

Georgia, numerous other efforts and initiatives demonstrate Georgia's commitment to building on and sustaining our strong ELD **foundation** for Georgia's children and families – especially those with high needs:

- Georgia has a separate, legislatively created early care and education department devoted to programs and services for children birth through five. This department, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), created in 2004, houses no less than **six** major federal and state programs: Georgia's Pre-K Program, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Quality Rated (Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System), child care licensing, the CCDF child care subsidy program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. In state fiscal year 2013 (July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013), the total budget for DECAL was \$649,612,199. In fiscal year 2014, the budget increased to over \$681,000,000 suggesting additional commitment from the state to young children and their families.
- Georgia's Pre-K Program provides universal, voluntary access to high-quality learning environments for the state's four-year-old population. Georgia's high-quality Pre-K Program includes standards based instruction, formative assessments, observations of teacher-child interactions, professional learning opportunities for the workforce, and a robust monitoring system to ensure high quality. The program is housed in every county in the state and has served over **1.3 million** children since its inception in 1992. In 2013, **60%** of the state's four year olds were served in the program, and **61.8%** of the children enrolled in the program would meet the operational definition of high need specified in this call for proposals. This includes the 58.5% of Pre-K children classified as low income.
- Georgia's Head Start State Collaboration Office, housed within DECAL, provides for seamless coordination between federally funded Head Start/Early Head Start and the lottery funded Georgia's Pre-K Program and facilitates key data sharing, program planning, and coordination of experiences for Georgia's most vulnerable children and families. For example, in 2013, 189 classrooms effectively combined Head Start and Georgia's Pre-K funds to provide over 4,000 children with blended, high-quality early learning experiences, before and after care, and comprehensive services to meet

the health, mental health, social service, and parent engagement needs of children and families.

- Georgia officially launched a statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, known as Quality Rated, in January 2012. By providing all classrooms in a program with similar services formally offered primarily to the Georgia's Pre-K class (funds for materials, on-site monitoring, and technical assistance), Quality Rated builds on the success of Georgia's Pre-K Program and creates high-quality opportunities for children birth to five. In less than two years, approximately **18%** of all providers have voluntarily applied to participate, including **28.5%** (781) of eligible child care learning centers, **10.4%** (266) of eligible family day care homes, and **14.7%** (34) of eligible group day care homes. Participating programs serve 89,082 children, including **14,481** children receiving subsidies, **4,040** English language learners, **2,454** children identified as having special needs, **1,074** children in foster care, and **336** homeless children. Furthermore, **55%** (433) of the participating child care centers include a Georgia's Pre-K Program and **6%** (48) programs include a Head Start classroom. (See Appendix 2 for September 13, 2013, Quality Rated report.) These figures demonstrate Georgia's accomplishments in actively engaging ELD programs to join the TQRIS – and in welcoming Pre-K and Head Start programs into the system. Governor Nathan Deal has set the expectation that all providers granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs shall be required to participate in Quality Rated no later than June 30, 2017.⁸
- Georgia continues to expand services for children with high needs. In fiscal year 2013, 3,085 children with an individualized education plan (IEP) were served in a Georgia's Pre-K program. This includes children served in 120 specific Georgia's Pre-K inclusion classrooms. These classrooms partner with local special education programs to fund a highly-qualified teacher certified in preschool special education in

⁸ To ensure the availability of safe, healthy, high-quality early childhood options to all families, DECAL is authorized and empowered to establish, maintain, extend, and improve the regulation of early care and education programs by providing consultation and implementation of such programs and by licensing and inspecting periodically all such programs to ensure their adherence to rules and regulations

a Georgia's Pre-K classroom so that children with disabilities have the benefit of learning with their typically developing peers. Additionally 2,504 children with IEPs were served in Head Start classrooms, and Early Head Start served 322 children with individualized family service plans (IFSPs). Many infants and toddlers with IFSPs participate in ELD programs. To meet the unique needs of the early childhood educators serving these children, DECAL provides inclusion specialists through its child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs). These specialists offer training and technical assistance to help families, early childhood educators, and others identify resources, services, and supports to ensure children with disabilities have access to and are successfully included in high-quality early learning and development programs. In 2013, DECAL created a new Rising Pre-K Summer Transition Program, with a strong family engagement component, specifically targeted to three-year-old English language learners. Nineteen classrooms served approximately 260 children during summer 2013. This program was created after data from a Pre-K longitudinal study indicated that English language learners may need additional supports before entering Pre-K (Peisner-Feinberg, et al., 2013—see Appendix 14).

- Finally, Georgia has been innovative in its use of data and research. Evidence of this use of data is found in the design and implementation of a child care licensing and monitoring data system. This system, owned by DECAL, was developed to ensure the state can monitor progress in real time and now provides data to all program areas within DECAL. Additionally, the state has commissioned or conducted high-quality research that has led to the enhancement of Georgia's ELD system (e.g., Maxwell, et al., 2009a, 2009c, and 2010a; Peisner-Feinberg, et al., 2013; see the reports in Appendices 3, 4, 5, and 14). Such enhancements based on research include the development of the state's program for infant toddler care (PITC); the implementation of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) in the state's Pre-K program; and the creation of a Summer Transition Program specifically geared toward English language learners. This commitment to research and data excellence has been a catalyst for program improvement across all divisions in DECAL.

Georgia is using expertise gleaned from over 20 years of implementing a high-quality early education program to strengthen the state’s ELD system (within a TQRIS framework) and “move the needle” for children and families. Monitoring data indicate Georgia has successfully provided quality ELD services every year of its pre-k program. In the state’s Early Learning Challenge agenda, Georgia describes its vision for excellence by extending that expertise to other components of the ELD system – and by strengthening the existing foundation of services and supports for children birth to five. Georgia’s ELD system is designed to ensure children, including children with high needs, are well prepared for the K-12 educational experience and beyond.

Building on Georgia’s strong ELD foundation, the state has identified four broad goals that, once met, will continue to move Georgia forward and ensure that every child is prepared for later educational and life experiences. These goals, along with appropriate strategies and measures, are discussed in more detail in (A)(2). The goals are: 1) Increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs; 2) Improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide; 3) Reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers and increase school readiness skills; and 4) Increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes. These goals form the basis of Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda. The following narrative will demonstrate the effort the state has made in these goals and how additional focus will benefit children and families in Georgia, especially children with high needs.

In summary, an overwhelming body of evidence indicates that Georgia has created an ELD system that is foundational and pivotal for the state’s youngest learners – particularly those with high needs. From years of providing high-quality universal pre-k services (ranked in the top 10 by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) for access and meeting eight out of 10 quality benchmarks⁹ [Barnett, 2012]) and the recent successful implementation of Georgia’s TQRIS, Georgia has the knowledge, skills, and infrastructure to provide large-scale,

⁹ Georgia’s Pre-K Program currently meets eight out of 10 quality benchmarks. In the past the state has met 10 out of 10. The two benchmarks that the state does not currently meet are ratios and class size. SFY12 budget cuts raised class size to 22 with a 1:11 ratio. This is slightly higher than the NIEER benchmarks. Governor Deal and Commissioner Cagle are looking at ways to bring the ratio and class size to pre-2012 levels.

high-quality ELD programs. Projects funded under the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge will be used to strengthen the state's ELD system continuing many of the initiatives outlined earlier, to create more opportunities for children, families, and the workforce, and to help ensure that children are prepared for later educational and life experiences.

(A)(1)(a) Financial Investment

Since 2009, Georgia has continued to make considerable financial investments in the state's high needs birth through five populations, as noted in Table (A)(1)-4. While funding did decrease slightly in fiscal year 2012 as a consequence of the economic downturn, the state continues to provide substantial investments in its youngest learners.

From 2009 to 2011, the state steadily increased funding for Georgia's Pre-K Program from approximately \$333 million to \$355 million. The Georgia Lottery for Education funds both Georgia's Pre-K Program and in-state college tuition through the HOPE Scholarship. Upon taking office in 2011, Governor Nathan Deal realized that steadily increased outlays from both the HOPE Scholarship and Georgia's Pre-K Program had drained previously substantial reserves of lottery funds. Had Georgia continued to spend at the same rate, both programs would have outstripped lottery revenues in two years and would have been bankrupt. Governor Deal spearheaded efforts to curtail spending and bring program costs down to levels that would enable a replenishment of the lottery reserves, thus ensuring continuation of these essential programs for future generations. Since that time, Governor Deal and the Georgia Legislature have stabilized the use of lottery funds and are gradually increasing funding to earlier levels. In 2013, the program was funded at approximately \$300 million. Table (A)(1)-4 details the state spending for Georgia's Pre-K Program.

Georgia invests considerable amounts in professional development. This includes using CCDF funds for programs such as Scholarships (supplementing the HOPE Grants with additional funds to support early childhood educators or for those students not eligible for HOPE Grants), Incentives (supplementing teachers' salaries for earning a higher credential), training conducted through Georgia's Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCR&R), and workshops specifically geared towards infant/toddler teachers. Additionally, the Georgia uses state funds and Race to the Top funds for professional development for all Georgia's Pre-K leads

and assistant teachers.

Georgia continues to invest in programs serving children with high needs. The state has continued funding services for children with disabilities using state contributions for early intervention and special education and related services for children from birth through kindergarten. In 2013, this was approximately \$37 million, up from the previous three years. As the number of children with high needs as increased, Georgia's contributions have increased as well. This is evidenced in the funds, approximately \$4.7 million, the state spent to support the Children 1st screening referral and follow-up system. Additional funds that the state has increased to serve children with high needs are detailed in the section below.

State contributions to TANF total more than \$173 million, and the state met its expected match to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) over this time period with over \$50 million contributed each year since 2009. In serving children in the state's subsidy program, with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Georgia was able to serve a more children and families per month in 2010 and 2011. In 2013, the state has made changes in program administration that has facilitated a movement back to pre-recession totals.

(A)(1)(b) Increasing the Number of Children with High Needs Participating in ELD Programs

According to 2012 census population estimates, Georgia has approximately 816,769 children ages birth to five (U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2013). As Table (A)(1)-1 attests, a majority of these children (55.63% or 454,363) reside in families with incomes under 200% of the poverty threshold and who are considered low income by the RTT-ELC definition ... an increase of almost two percentage points since 2011. According to 2012 census data, 232,309 preschool-age children (ages three to kindergarten entry) were low income (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey). In addition, 24,923 children birth to 5 are homeless, and 5,976 are in foster care. Approximately 16,493 (2%) children from birth to kindergarten entry have been diagnosed with a disability or developmental delay. Since that number (2%) most likely underestimates the true number of children with disabilities or developmental delays, DECAL is significantly increasing the support provided to programs for conducting appropriate screenings. This support will help those classrooms, particularly those serving children birth to three, identify children with disabilities or developmental delays likely

resulting in an increase in the percentage of those children with disabilities or developmental delays. Finally, approximately 119,479 children (14.63%) in Georgia are identified as English language learners (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey).

Georgia continues to expand access to high-quality experiences for children with high needs. For example, the number of children with high needs in Georgia's Pre-K Program (state-funded preschool) has increased from 44,162 in 2009 to 50,496 in 2013, an increase of 12.5%. The Early Head Start and Head Start funded enrollment also has increased from 23,627 in 2009 to 25,396 in 2013, a 7.5% increase. In 2013, Early Head Start, Head Start, and Georgia's Pre-K Program served 79,245 children with high needs. Further analysis shows Head Start and Georgia's Pre-K Program served 93,441 four year olds (66.3% of all four year olds in Georgia), and 59,178 of these children were low income (75.5% of all low-income four year olds in the state). In 2013, 3.78% of Georgia's Pre-K students had an IEP, and 9.76% of Georgia's Pre-K students were identified with limited English language proficiency. Additionally 9.83% of Early Head Start or Head Start students had an IFSP or IEP, and 10.79% of Early Head Start and Head Start students had a primary language other than English. Georgia's Pre-K Program has also changed policy to ensure that children with high needs are being served. Since 2009, the Pre-K expansion formula has considered additional data points that specifically target counties with larger numbers or larger percentages of children with high needs. This includes county level poverty and unemployment data; percentage of children receiving free and reduced lunch; and 3rd grade test scores. Waiting list data for Georgia's Pre-K Program and Head Start was also incorporated into decisions for locating new Georgia's Pre-K classrooms. The result has been that Georgia's Pre-K Program has expanded in areas with a greater number of children with high needs.

Georgia's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) resources allow Georgia to provide subsidies for child care to an average of 60,858 children ages birth to five (13.4% of the total low-income population). In July 2012, in an effort to enroll more low-income children in high-quality programs, DECAL was made lead agency for the CCDF and began administering the subsidized child care program. DECAL has implemented and continues to implement policy changes such as offering subsidy help desk line for families that promotes high-quality care. The subsidy program has increased the number of children receiving subsidies to 60,858 in 2013

from 53,348 in 2012. In fiscal years 2010 and 2011, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding enabled Georgia to serve a more children per month during those years. In 2013, the state moved back to pre-recession totals.

As important as the increase in the number of children provided with child care subsidies is, the greatest gain has been in the number of children attending programs enrolled in Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In September 2013, just one year and eight months after the TQRIS was launched, 14,481 children (24%) receiving subsidy (children with high needs) were served in programs participating in Georgia's TQRIS. This includes 4,040 English language learners and 2,454 children identified with special needs. In July 2013, the state began implementing tiered reimbursement. Higher subsidy rates are paid to one-star (2%), two-star (5%), and three-star (10%) rated programs. At the end of September 2013, rated programs received tiered reimbursement for 3,336 children. The remainder of the 14,481 children receiving subsidies were enrolled in programs that were not yet rated. Selection criterion (B)(1) details Georgia's plan to dramatically increase the programs participating in Quality Rated.

The state provides support to many programs serving homeless and low-income populations. For example, Georgia has contracted with Sheltering Arms, a non-profit ELD program committed to serving more than 3,600 children and families annually in high-quality, affordable settings and to providing additional services for families of children enrolled in their ELD programs. These services include job training through the affiliated Center for Working Families and a Health Navigator service to ensure access to health insurance and to a medical home. Georgia also provides subsidy funds to the Atlanta Children's Shelter and Pre-K funds to Our House, a nonprofit ELD program serving homeless families. Finally, for children who are in foster care, the state pays the market rate to the ELD programs serving the children.

Children with high needs, as defined in this application, include children who live in low-income families. In Georgia, this population includes many children who reside in rural communities, as the state has the fourth largest rural population of children ages birth to five in the nation according to the 2010 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau). Adequately serving children with high needs in rural communities provides unique challenges and opportunities. In many rural areas families do not have a wide range of child care choices. It

is vital that the few child care options offered in these rural areas are of high quality. As described in more detail in selection criterion (A)(2), Georgia's Early Education Empowerment Zones provide intensive services in targeted rural communities to enhance the state's capacity to support high-quality ELD programs.

In summary, 56% of the state's birth to five population is low income, which translates, in raw numbers, to 454,363 children. Conditions across the state (e.g., an Atlanta-based economy with a heavy focus on construction and the housing market) exacerbated the 2008-2009 recession for Georgia's families, and Georgia is still recovering. The projects outlined in Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda will provide additional support to help the state achieve its goals while reducing the achievement gap for children with high needs.

(A)(1)(c) Existing ELD Legislation, Policies, and Practices

Georgia's ELD system is established and embedded in legislation and policy. From the policies of Governor Zell Miller that created Georgia's Pre-K Program to the policies of current Governor Nathan Deal that created Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, Georgia's ELD system has enjoyed wide political support. The following section details Georgia's efforts and gains in strengthening the state's ELD system. To demonstrate the comprehensive and coordinated efforts the state has made in building and refining a strong ELD foundation, this subsection is organized into the following seven areas:

- **Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning:** By combining several ELD programs and entities in one education department and aligning them to Georgia's educational system, the state has demonstrated a commitment to creating aligned and coordinated opportunities for all children...with additional services provided to those with high needs.
- **Georgia Children's Cabinet:** This group, chaired by Georgia's First Lady, connects all departments and agencies serving children in the state. It now serves as the Early Childhood State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education for Georgia.
- **Great Start Georgia:** The Georgia Early Childhood System (ECSOC), also known as Great Start Georgia, is currently housed within the Governor's Office for Children and Families. At this time, seven counties have received federal funding from the

Governor's Office for Children and Families to embed evidence-based home visiting in local systems.

- Georgia's Pre-K Program: This nationally renowned program serves as the cornerstone of Georgia's ELD system and has provided the state with two decades of experience in administering a statewide, scaled, quality program.
- Other High-Quality Programs to Improve Child Care: Though Georgia may be best known for the Pre-K program, over the last five years the state has implemented other high-quality programs that build on the state's licensing system creating additional opportunities for Georgia's children and families.
- Links to K-12: From a coordinated alignment strategy that demonstrates a birth through twenty education system to specific projects designed to improve school readiness for all children in Georgia, the state continually invests in links that promote high quality, increase school readiness skills, and reduce the achievement gap.
- Research for Continuous Quality Improvement: The state has invested resources to conduct or commission research that can provide data and findings used for quality improvement.

The subsections discussed above show comprehensive and detailed improvements in the state's ELD system. Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda will build on these foundational gains and increase access for the state's children and families, especially those with high needs.

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Georgia's ELD system is supported and strengthened by the existence of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), the education agency legislatively created and statutorily mandated to oversee the state's birth-to-five ELD programs. DECAL oversees licensing and regulation of the state's approximately 6,000 child care centers and family child care providers with a licensed capacity of approximately 450,000 children; administers Georgia's Pre-K Program; houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office and an infant and toddler network; administers the federal child care nutrition grants (the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program), and, as of July 1, 2012,

administers the federal Child Care and Development Fund, including the subsidized child care program. The majority of the state's high needs population receives some type of service through one or more of the programs that DECAL administers or oversees. For example, a child may receive nutrition services at his or her child care center while attending a Head Start program or the state-funded Pre-K program. Likewise, more than 98% of children receiving subsidies are enrolled at a child care program licensed by DECAL.

Georgia Children's Cabinet

On July 1, 2004, First Lady Mary Perdue founded Georgia's first Children's Cabinet, consisting of the department heads of all state government departments serving children and families. Subsequently, pursuant to requirements of the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, Governor Sonny Perdue created the Georgia State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care by Executive Order. In 2012, recognizing the considerable overlap of membership and areas of focus, Governor Nathan Deal created the Georgia Children's Cabinet by combining the membership of the two groups. Today, the Georgia Children's Cabinet is composed of the heads of all state agencies that serve the needs of Georgia's children from birth to age 18 and of select community, philanthropic, education, and business stakeholders. The membership conforms to the requirements for State Advisory Councils as prescribed in the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007. The Cabinet regularly reviews the state's strategic plans and work related to children and families across state government and recommends policy and practice to improve outcomes, including the areas of child welfare, economic assistance, health, juvenile justice, and education. Serving in the role of the State Advisory Council, this group also dedicates a portion of every meeting to reviewing the ongoing systemic work designed to improve early childhood education and care.

Great Start Georgia

Through Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funding and funding from the Governor's Office for Children and Families, Georgia has implemented a comprehensive early childhood system, which includes evidence-based, voluntary home visitation as one of the major service strategy to promote maternal, infant, and early childhood health, safety and development and strong parent-child relationships. The framework for Great

Start Georgia reflects the basic activities necessary to support families in communities: outreach and referral, central intake (identification, screening and data management), linkage to community services, and coordination of care among providers, particularly for family with high needs.

In 2010, as the Health Resources and Services Administration awarded Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Grants, the Governor's Office for Children and Families was designated as Georgia's grantee. The goals outlined by the MIECHV Grant program for Georgia were to improve child and family outcomes in Georgia by: strengthening and improving the programs and activities implemented under Title V funding; expanding and improving the coordination of services within at-risk communities; and providing evidence-based home visiting services to those families who are most in need of support by providing safe, nurturing environments for children. Counties targeted by these services were selected through the analysis of a Department of Public Health Home Visiting Needs Assessment as well as Georgia Kids Count data (Georgia Family Connection Partnership, 2013). Areas served by Great Start Georgia have included the following counties: Clarke, Crisp, DeKalb, Glynn, Muscogee, Whitfield, and Houston (Governor's Office for Children and Families, 2011).

Georgia's Pre-K Program

The innovative ideas that resulted in the solid foundation for Georgia's early learning and development system were introduced during Georgia's gubernatorial election of 1990. During that campaign, candidate Zell Miller proposed the creation of the Georgia Lottery for Education, the proceeds of which would be used primarily to fund two distinct projects: a state-funded preschool and college scholarships. A statewide referendum was held in 1992 in which voters approved the Georgia Lottery for Education. That year, a pilot Pre-K program serving 750 low-income children began. In 1995, Georgia's Pre-K Program became universal, meaning the program was open to all children regardless of family income, and by 1996 the program was serving 44,000 children across the state. The program has now served over 1.3 million children and serves approximately 84,000 annually. Georgia's Pre-K Program is available in every county in the state and serves approximately 60% of the state's four year olds.

Several key components of the Pre-K program have contributed to its success and have been a catalyst for Georgia's other ELD programs. First, the program is a true public/private

partnership. The program is funded directly from the state to private child care centers, local school systems, Head Start grantees, colleges and universities, and not-for-profit child care programs. This enables the program to expand quickly without utilizing funds for capital outlay on new buildings or facility expansion and gives families more choices between public schools and private child care programs. Placing Pre-K classes in private centers also puts a high-quality, standards-based program within child care programs serving infants and toddlers across the state smoothing the transition from toddler programs into Pre-K. The 2009 Georgia Quality Studies (Maxwell, et al., 2009a and 2009c) found that quality was higher in Georgia's Pre-K classrooms than other preschool (non-Georgia's Pre-K) and infant/toddler classrooms, suggesting the need for additional attention to licensed child care, other than Pre-K, for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in the state (see Appendices 3, 4, and 5 for study findings).

Second, Georgia's Pre-K is universal and is therefore open to all children regardless of family income. This guarantees access for working families whose incomes might prohibit access to high-quality care when such care often costs more, and it ensures that the program serves a large percentage of the state's four year olds (60%). A large percentage of children served are eligible for income based services, so the program is not denying slots to children who need it the most. Furthermore, research continues to demonstrate "peer effects" for low-income children when they are in classrooms with their more socio-economically advantaged peers (Henry, et al., 2005). Even during tough budget times, Georgia has intentionally chosen to cut other aspects of the program to ensure that the program remains universal.¹⁰

Third, Georgia's Pre-K Program includes requirements relating to high-quality, standards based instruction, and formative and summative assessments. Every Pre-K classroom must have a lead teacher with a minimum of a bachelor's degree in an early childhood field and an assistant teacher with a minimum credential of a Child Development Associate (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2013). For the 2012-2013 school year, approximately 96% of Georgia's Pre-K teachers had a bachelor's or higher degree, and 79% were certified in Early Childhood Education. Currently, teachers are being trained on the new Georgia Early Learning

¹⁰ Rather than reduce the number of children that could be served, making the program a targeted program, or reducing Pre-K to half day, other budget saving measures were enacted. Primarily, this included adding two students per class (20 to 22).

and Development Standards (see (C)(1)) and all classrooms are required to use preapproved curricula that align with the standards. All classrooms use the Work Sampling System, a formative assessment, to document what children are learning and beginning to master by using developmentally appropriate observation and document review and capture. As of the 2013-2014 school year, all Georgia's Pre-K classrooms are using the online version of Work Sampling System (83% were online in 2012-2013). Since 2009, quality in Georgia's Pre-K classrooms has been evaluated using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Each year, over 1,000 classes receive an observation, and every class is observed every two to three years. Since inception, over 95% of Georgia's Pre-K classrooms have received a CLASS observation. This CLASS observation is also consistent with recent mandates from Head Start requiring a comprehensive system of monitoring teacher-child interactions over instruction.

Fourth, Georgia's Pre-K Program provides additional, more intensive services to children with high needs. Additional Pre-K services, including funds for meals and transportation, are provided to the 58.5% of enrolled children identified as lower income by their participation in a means-tested public benefit (i.e., with eligibility based on income) such as TANF, food stamps, CCDF child care subsidy, or Medicaid. Applications for child care subsidy from families whose children are in Georgia's Pre-K Program are routed to a centralized location, and eligible families receive priority funding for wrap-around care. For children with disabilities, Georgia's Pre-K Program has created an inclusion model in collaboration with IDEA Part B to fund specific special education services. As described earlier the inclusion model allows for a third adult to be present during all instructional times. Although many children with disabilities participate in general Georgia's Pre-K classes, this model provides children with disabilities who need additional support the opportunity to attend a Pre-K program. Additionally, Georgia has been able to offer a Summer Transition Program modeled after the Pre-K program but includes additional supports for children with high needs such as second language needs, including wrap-around care funded through the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, Georgia's subsidized child care program.

Fifth, Georgia's Pre-K Program also works closely with Head Start to blend funding to create an ELD environment encompassing the best of both programs. In this model, the Pre-K program pays for the instructional day, and Head Start pays for wrap-around services and

comprehensive services needed for Head Start eligible children and their families. Because both funding streams are used, programs must follow both sets of guidelines or standards. Therefore, the children receive the comprehensive health, mental health, social, and family engagement services of Head Start and instruction guided by the GELDS. GELDS is aligned with the Head Start Outcomes Framework. This braiding of services also makes Head Start funds available to serve more three year olds, making Georgia a national leader in the percentage of three year olds served in Head Start.

In summary, Georgia's Pre-K Program is one of the most successful in the country and has served as a model for other programs nationwide. It has also served as a model for additional services for the birth to five population in the state.

Other ELD Projects

While the state's Pre-K program may be the most visible, Georgia's commitment to ensuring school readiness for its children with high needs is evidenced by a number of other high-quality programs. For example, the Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GA PITC) (see (B)(4)) provides targeted technical assistance, professional development, and mentor training to early childhood educators serving children six weeks to three years of age in a range of settings including family child care homes, group homes, and child care centers. This program was created as a direct result of the Georgia Quality Studies (Appendices 3, 4, 5) that found two thirds of infant/toddler classrooms in the state were rated as low quality. The project has expanded over the past three years and now offers a professional learning experience that incorporates directed reading, peer-to-peer activities, and communities of learning and builds from theoretical content to application in a series of three conferences. Conference participants now include Babies Can't Wait (IDEA, Part C) providers serving children with disabilities. Between 2010 and 2013 the network provided services to over 3,000 early childhood educators. In 2011, the Infant Toddler Network expanded its initiatives to provide mentor teacher training to early childhood educators.

Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (see (B)(1) is the framework for improving and ensuring quality statewide. Quality Rated is administered by DECAL and is available to all licensed, monitored, and/or other programs that receive public funds. The state provides incentives, including tiered reimbursement for children receiving

subsidies, and monitors programs' progression through five key standards related to workforce, health and nutrition, family partnerships, intentional teaching practices, and teacher/student ratios. Additionally, the state's Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GAPITC) and CCR&Rs have been incorporated into the Quality Rated Framework to provide a unified, statewide approach for improving quality and ensuring that all age groups and geographic regions are included. Launched in 2012, Quality Rated, in a short period of time, has increased the number of high-quality options available to all children and families and has improved access to higher quality experiences for children with high needs.

Finally, the above programs have created an incentive structure that improves health and safety in the state's licensed and monitored facilities. First, adherence to basic licensing and health standards is a prerequisite to receiving additional benefits. To participate in Quality Rated and other key programs, licensed programs have to be designated as "compliant" with health and safety licensing rules. The state has created a formula, recently validated in an independent study conducted by Dr. Richard Fiene (Appendix 7), that reviews citations in key areas and annually computes a compliant or non-compliant designation. For ELD programs continually designated as non-compliant, the state offers additional resources to help resolve issues creating the non-compliance and to help providers move to a compliant status; when necessary increased fines for violations are imposed, and revocation of a license is possible. Second, many of the services provided through the state's GAPITC network and Quality Rated are designed to help meet and maintain basic health and safety standards. For example, the initial trainings focused toward infant/toddler care include basic health and safety content, and Quality Rated technical assistance includes components to help programs meet these rules. Third, the professional development offered to all programs through Quality Rated and GAPITC have allowed the state to make key policy changes because they provide outlets for providers to receive additional assistance. These include: 1) raising minimum educational requirements for lead teachers; 2) implementing tiered reimbursement; and 3) increasing fines to programs for violating transportation rules.

In summary, the state has increased the number of programs serving children ages birth to five, which helps provide children with high needs additional access to high-quality services.

[Links to K-12 and Other Services](#)

Statewide support from all sectors has been paramount in Georgia's success in creating a

successful ELD system. This includes links between partners who serve young children and the outside community whose support is necessary for success. In short, the statewide commitment for Georgia's ELD system and for quality ELD experiences transcends traditional boundaries.

For example, there is a link between the state agencies that serve children and families and many of their partners. This is manifested in two groups: the Alliance of Education Agency Heads (AEAH) and the Georgia Children's Cabinet (Cabinet). AEAH unites the heads of all education departments in the state. DECAL is an equal member of the AEAH ensuring that early learning is on par with the K-12 system, Technical College System, and the University System. DECAL is also a member of the Cabinet. The Cabinet, created by Governor Nathan Deal and co-chaired by the First Lady and the Executive Director of the Governor's Office for Children and Families, is composed of the heads of all state agencies that serve the needs of Georgia's children from birth to age 18 and of select community, philanthropic, education, and business stakeholders. The links and alignment of Georgia's systems for children and families has not gone unnoticed: In 2013, Georgia received an A in the "transitions and alignment" category of the annual Quality Counts state rankings compiled by Education Week. In fact, Georgia was the only state to receive checks in all 14 of the transitions and alignment benchmarks, becoming the first state ever to receive a perfect score in this area (Education Week, 2013; Downey, 2013). The role of the AEAH and the Cabinet in Georgia's governance structure is detailed in (A)(3).

Georgia's ELD support system also consists of outside stakeholders, business partners, and community leaders. Since 2010, support for early education and especially Quality Rated has come through business, philanthropic, and non-profit sectors. In 2010 an independent philanthropic organization emerged from an early education commission sponsored by the United Way. The resulting Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) was established to help business, civic, and government leaders maximize Georgia's investment in early learning. GEEARS has been an integral partner in promoting Quality Rated and was instrumental in bringing the 2013 National Business Leader Summit on Early Childhood Investment to Georgia where Quality Rated was highlighted (<http://readynation.org/summit2013>).

The important links between Georgia's early education system and the K-12 system is also recognized by the Georgia School Boards Association and Georgia School Superintendent's

Association in the publication “A Vision for Public Education” quoting: “The first five years of life are critical to a child’s lifelong development. Young children’s earliest experiences and environments set the stage for future development and success in school and life” (2010, from Getting Ready, 2005).

Not only has Georgia invested in linking different departments and groups serving children, the state has also created specific programs to address needs for links. For example, demonstrating its commitment to early learning, Georgia responded to the invitational priority for early learning in its 2009 K-12 Race to the Top application. As a result of this winning application, DECAL has worked with the Georgia Department of Education to pilot four distinct professional development opportunities centered around the CLASS in Georgia’s Pre-K Program. In the current Early Learning Challenge plan, Georgia is using the results from this initiative to create cohort and coaching professional development models for other ELD programs participating in Quality Rated (see (D)(2)). The results from the first year of the evaluation of this professional development initiative are found in Appendix 6.

Additionally, in the past four years, Georgia has made a special effort to focus on a reading on grade level by third grade initiative spearheaded by Governor Nathan Deal. The goal of the campaign is to have all Georgia’s children reading on grade level by third grade – a crucial benchmark in children’s educational trajectory. DECAL is a focal participant in this initiative. Research continues to support the importance in third grade reading as it serves as the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. As part of the innovative work Georgia is doing around this benchmark, the state is currently partnering with the Annie E. Casey Foundation (the Georgia Campaign for Grade-Level Reading; cf. Read, 2012) and the Frontiers of Innovation initiative (a partnership led by Dr. Jack Shonkoff and the Harvard Center for the Developing Child; http://developingchild.harvard.edu/activities/frontiers_of_innovation/). The Casey Foundation and Frontiers of Innovation are investing heavily in Georgia because Governor Deal has made this a key priority, and effective cross-agency and public-private partnerships that facilitate true transformational change have already been established. Georgia is only the second state to receive the Frontiers of Innovation support. Key activities of both partnerships involve the birth to five arena, including data system and standards alignment between birth to five and K-3; identifying focused geographical investment areas in which to expand services; and creating

shared professional development between birth to five and K-3 educators.

Research for Continuous Quality Improvement

Georgia has a history of basing program and policy changes on empirical research. DECAL commissioned the FPG Child Development Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill to conduct a representative study of the quality of Georgia's child care before launching its TQRIS (see Appendices 3, 4, 5 for the executive summaries). The study findings led to the development of the Infant Toddler Network to work more closely with ELD programs to improve the quality of infant and toddler care. Findings from a recently released Pre-K Longitudinal Study (Appendix 14) that indicated that English language learners were entering Pre-K significantly behind their same-age peers led to the creation of a Rising Pre-K Summer Program specifically targeted to this population. Research results from an evaluation of the Rising Pre-K Summer Program will be available in late 2013 (cf. Maxwell, et al., 2011, 2012, and 2013 for findings from previous years; Appendix 37) and will be used to make program revisions for summer 2014. As will be detailed in selection criterion (B)(5), research was also instrumental in the design of Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Over the past two years, Georgia has commissioned studies with rigorous research designs to:

- 1) Measure quality in child care classrooms and family day care homes (Appendices 3 and 4).
- 2) Evaluate the state's Pre-K program (Appendix 5).
- 3) Validate the current system used in determining compliance/non-compliance with the state's health and licensing standards (Appendix 7).
- 4) Conduct a statewide needs assessment (Appendix 8).
- 5) Examine the economic impact of the child care industry on the state (Child Policy Partnership, 2008).
- 6) Review the current resource and referral structure (Appendix 9).

(A)(1)(d) Current Status in Key Areas

The following subsection details Georgia's status in the following areas. Each subsection is summarized here:

- **Early Learning and Development Standards:** Georgia has made significant investments in the development of comprehensive, aligned standards. New standards were developed in 2011 and 2012 and are being introduced throughout 2013 and 2014. Independent national experts Sharon Lynn Kagan and Catherine Scott-Little have found them to be culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate and aligned with other early childhood education programs such as Head Start (see Appendix 28).
- **Comprehensive Assessment Systems (CAS):** Georgia's existing CAS includes strong components, each of which is being expanded as part of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge Plan: child screening measures (embedded in Quality Rated Standards); formative child assessments (required by Georgia's Pre-K, embedded in Quality Rated Standards); measures of environmental quality (required in Quality Rated); and measures of the quality of adult-child interactions in ELD programs (required in Quality Rated, used for professional development in Georgia's Pre-K, used in Georgia's Early Learning Initiative for the K-12 Race to the Top). The state will target early learning challenge funds to align the four assessment types across different programs and age groups. Furthermore, the state will invest in additional assistance to programs on the appropriate use of screening information and class environmental quality information.
- **Health Promotion Practices:** Because the same agency that oversees Quality Rated oversees Georgia's Child and Adult Food Program, the state has been able to embed many health practices into the state's ELD system. Health promotion is embedded in the Quality Rated Standards with all programs required to conduct a self-assessment and create a continuous quality improvement plan based on the self-assessment. Programs may also receive an additional distinction for exceeding health and physical activity requirements. DECAL has also received three Team Nutrition Grants to target resources combating childhood obesity in many rural areas of the state.
- **Family Engagement Strategies:** Georgia has embedded family engagement strategies in many ELD programs and services. Family engagement is incorporated into three Quality Rated Standards, and the state has created a Strengthening Family Partnership Georgia that facilitates a focus on families with high needs. Georgia's Pre-K Program has partnered with Head Start to create additional family engagement opportunities. Finally,

family engagement is also a routine component of Georgia's Pre-K programs as evidenced by the guideline that providers must provide time for families to participate in their child's educational experience.

- **Development of Early Childhood Educators:** Over the last five years, Georgia has made considerable improvements in supporting early educators and increasing the credentials of early childhood educators. Georgia's Pre-K requires a bachelor's degree for lead teachers and a CDA for assistant teachers. In 2012, the lead teacher requirement for all licensed child care programs was raised to a CDA, matching the requirement for new family day care home providers. The state provides professional development resources including Scholarships and Incentives and requires all trainers to be registered and approved in the Trainer Approval System. In addition, the state has supported recent mandates from Head Start requiring higher levels of education completion and specific professional learning in infant and toddler development for teachers who would be working with infants and toddlers in center-based settings.
- **Kindergarten Entry Assessment:** As part of the state's Early Learning Challenge agenda, Georgia is proposing to augment the current kindergarten assessment, the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS). This assessment is given throughout the Kindergarten year and can be augmented to provide developmentally appropriate entry information at the beginning of Kindergarten. Information gleaned from this proposed augmentation will include the Essential Domains of School Readiness.
- **Effective Data Practices:** Georgia has made great strides in data practices and integrating data among the state's ELD programs. A longitudinal data system (SLDS) created for K-12 has been expanded to include P-20 information. This includes Georgia's Pre-K child level data. In fact, in recent months infants and toddlers enrolled in the Head Start program have been assigned a GTID number (Georgia Identification Number) and included in the SLDS. Second, Georgia is in the first phase of a Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) that will match children across programs. Finally, the state has created and implemented its own Licensing/TQRIS data system that links with the Pre-K data system and the Professional Development Registry for early childhood educators.

Early Learning and Development Standards

In 2010, DECAL began an alignment study and revision project of the state's early learning standards. The revision stemmed from the need for higher quality, comprehensive, and better aligned standards with the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) for K-12. DECAL commissioned top scholars in the field, Drs. Sharon Lynn Kagan and Catherine Scott-Little, to conduct a series of analyses (see Appendix 28 for the executive summary of their alignment study). Based on their recommendations and statewide stakeholder feedback (e.g., higher education, child care providers, disabilities providers, business and industry), DECAL developed the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). The GELDS take the place of the standards for birth to three and the Pre-K Content Standards, creating one set of research-based, aligned standards for birth to five. The GELDS cover the Essential Domains of School Readiness including physical development and motor skills, social and emotional development, approaches to play and learning, communication, language and literacy, and cognitive development.

The GELDS were completed in 2012 after extensive input and feedback from key stakeholders across Georgia. In 2013, the state began developing materials and implementing training for the GELDS. An interactive GELDS website launched in June 2013. The site includes 10 informative webinars designed for different stakeholders including teachers, administrators, Quality Rated participants, and families. In the summer of 2013, four two-day GELDS institutes were held in locations throughout the state to introduce the standards to ELD programs. In addition, all DECAL and CCR&R staff have received GELDS training. Currently, all CCR&R Staff, Pre-K teachers, and teachers attending the statewide infant/toddler conferences are being trained in the GELDS. These activities are detailed in (C)(1) and further addressed in Georgia's High-Quality Plan in that section.

Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Georgia has made great progress in creating a comprehensive assessment system that addresses the four components included in such a system.

Screening Measures

The Children 1st system serves as Georgia's Child Find mechanism. Children enter the system in two ways, through birth certificate screening or through referrals from physicians, other professionals or families. Children 1st screens all birth certificate data for risk factors and contacts families of children at risk to offer services which include health and developmental screening, referral, and follow up. Additionally other agencies conducting physical and developmental screenings utilize the Children 1st system as the single point of entry to needed services. Families needing assistance are offered in-home family assessments to identify strengths and needs and to provide information about health, child development, and parenting resources. Families are linked with primary health care providers, as appropriate. The High-Quality Plan for Georgia's data system in (E)(2) includes a plan to incorporate much of this data in system enhancements. Programs participating in Quality Rated receive additional points by demonstrating a system for appropriately using developmental screening instruments and for having policies for sharing developmental information with families for referral and follow up.

Formative Assessment

Georgia's Pre-K Program mandates the use of the Work Sampling System as a formative assessment in all classrooms (<http://www.dec.state.ga.gov/PreK/PreKChildAssessmentProgram.aspx>). Work Sampling System is a nationally recognized formative assessment system that teachers use to document progress across multiple indicators and domains. Work Sampling System rates children as "not yet," "in process," or "proficient" on 55 indicators across all key domains. All items on the Work Sampling System are aligned with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards. Teachers in all Georgia's Pre-K classrooms utilize this assessment system for all children in their class. This means that 60% of the state's four year olds receive a formative assessment before they enter Kindergarten. Teachers use Work Sampling to individualize instruction and to provide guidance to parents. Teachers are trained extensively in using the Work Sampling System for assessing children's skills to document progress and for planning individualized instruction. In addition, DECAL and the Georgia Department of Education have partnered to ensure that assessment data for children dually served in Georgia's Pre-K and IDEA Part B Section 619 can

be shared at both a system and teacher level.

Formative Assessment is also embedded in Quality Rated Standards. Specifically, full points for Standard 4: Intentional Teaching can only be gained by demonstrating the use of formative assessments to link child level skill data to individualized instructional practices. Formative assessments are also used to develop IEPs and IFSPs and track child outcomes in programs funded through IDEA Parts C and B.

Measures of Environmental Quality

In Quality Rated, classroom environmental quality and the quality of teacher child interaction are measured using the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and include the infant-toddler, early childhood, and family child care versions (Harms, Cryer, and Clifford, 2003; Harms, Clifford, and Cryer, 2005; Harms, Cryer, and Clifford, 2007). These scales measure teacher child interactions, health and safety, instructional practices, and learning environment. Programs not only receive an ERS as part of the rating process but also receive technical assistance based on the ERS baseline observation.

Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions

Georgia's Pre-K Program measures teacher-child interactions with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) (Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre, 2008). In the first year of implementation, the state conducted 3,800 CLASS observations (92% of teachers). Teachers receive a CLASS observation every three to four years that includes an in-depth report (Appendix 10). Teachers also receive specific professional development around the CLASS domains and dimensions. Additionally, all Georgia's Pre-K consultants have received extensive training in the CLASS, including training to reliability standards, that guides their approach to technical assistance. This includes additional training in conducting CLASS observations and in a coaching model (My Teaching Partner) that is based on CLASS dimensions (Pianta, et al., 2010). The additional training has been provided as part of Georgia's K-12 Race to the Top grant.

Health Promotion Practices

The federal Child Care and Adult Food Program administered by DECAL facilitates links

between nutrition and other ELD programs. For example, health promotion practices are a distinct standard in Quality Rated, which means that programs are required to conduct a self-assessment around health and physical activity. Results from the self-assessment are used to create a continuous quality improvement plan. In conjunction with the Georgia Department of Public Health, the state's lead agency for childhood obesity reduction efforts, the Georgia SHAPE award was developed to recognize facilities throughout the state that have achieved an overall Quality Rated three-star level and exceeded requirements for nutrition and physical activity. Ten providers were recently recognized during the country's first Farm to Preschool Summit, jointly sponsored by the Department of Early Care and Learning and Georgia Organics.

Additionally, since 2009, DECAL has received three USDA Team Nutrition grants from the United States Department of Agriculture to create and implement Caregivers Promoting Healthy Habits (CPHH): 2009, 2011, and 2013 (Appendix 11). Awards total \$1,020,250. The goal of the CPHH program is to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits by training caregivers and educating parents on the importance of nutrition and physical activity to help reverse the epidemic of obesity and overweight among Georgia's children. CPHH also supports caregivers in developing and implementing wellness policies in their ELD programs. The first grant served a small population in Georgia's poorest rural region. The program proved successful, so DECAL expanded the program to another area of the state. To date the program has served 94 ELD programs reaching over 8,300 infants, toddlers and preschoolers in 38 counties. With new 2013 funding, DECAL is expanding the program to include family day care homes and a farm to preschool component for Georgia's Pre-K programs even further.

With funding from the State Advisory Council grant (grant period ended May 2013), DECAL also commissioned a first-of-its-kind study to assess the incidence rates of fatality and injury in child care settings compared to the incidence rates of fatality and injury among the same age children in the general population. One of the purposes of the study was to enhance the health and safety of children in child care by identifying areas and practices among early care and education professionals that resulted in child fatalities or injuries (Appendix 12). The areas and practices identified in the study will inform topics for professional development and technical assistance. In these initial studies, all data had to be pulled manually, requiring a great deal of staff time. As a result, the agency's data system is being updated to capture all data

necessary to replicate this study each year to assess injury/fatality trends, to improve services and supports that reduce child injury and fatality, and to assess the impact of policy and practice changes designed to address areas of concern.

Finally, since 2005 representatives from local non-profit organizations, state agencies, and federal programs have been working together to increase healthy eating and physical activity among children ages birth through five and among their caregivers. This work group developed a number of resources such as a Healthy Eating for Life website and a curriculum for use by ELD programs.

Family Engagement Strategies

Family engagement strategies are embedded in many of Georgia's ELD initiatives. For example, family engagement principles and/or activities are embedded in three of the five Quality Rated Program Standards. (Standards 2, 3, and 4; Appendix 13 for the Quality Rated Program Standards). These principles are aligned with the Center for the Study of Social Policy's evidence-based Strengthening Families framework which includes five research-based protective factors, (parent resilience, social communication, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development and social and emotional competence of children; Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2007)). Additionally, Strengthening Families Georgia, a statewide partnership that includes national, state, local, and public/private organizations dedicated to embedding the protective factors in services and supports for young children and their families has provided professional development and other supports to early childhood teachers and child-serving agency staff. Strengthening Families Georgia (SFG) is funded by the Governor's Office for Children and Families with the Georgia Association of Young Children (the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children) as the lead agency. The Strengthening Families approach is used in Georgia's Pre-K Program and Georgia's child welfare system. Quality Rated developed online Strengthening Families modules to promote access to Strengthening Families professional development. This system especially emphasizes supporting children in foster care.

Georgia has family collaboratives (housed and legislatively funded under Georgia Family Connection Partnership) that focus on improving the quality of life for children and families. These collaboratives exist in all 159 of Georgia's counties. Georgia Family Connection

Partnership partners with DECAL and other agencies to provide family support services and ensures alignment across many programs for children and families with high needs.

Finally, the Georgia Department of Education and DECAL have worked closely to integrate family engagement standards and to support local schools in including Georgia's Pre-K and Head Start classrooms in their family engagement activities. The agencies have cross-walked the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships (National PTA, 2008), the Strengthening Families protective factors (Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2007), and the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2011).

Development of Early Childhood Educators

Georgia's ELD workforce includes child care center professionals, group day care home providers, Pre-K lead teachers and assistant teachers, family day care home providers, early childhood educators working in IDEA Parts C and B 619, home visitors, and those who support them. Over the past five years, the state has made considerable progress in supporting early childhood educators and increasing the percentage of early childhood educators with credentials and/or college degrees.

Professional development of the workforce includes increasing teacher education requirements; providing high-quality professional learning opportunities; providing financial assistance to attain post-secondary credentials; rewarding educational attainment; and technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching.

The education requirements for early childhood educators in Pre-K classrooms were raised in 2008. The minimum requirement for lead teachers in Pre-K classrooms is a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education; teacher assistants must have one of several early childhood education credentials that include the technical college certificate or technical college diploma attained through the Technical College System of Georgia, an associate degree or higher, or the national, non-academic Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. In the 2012-2013 school year over 96% of Pre-K teachers met the requirement.

In 2009, the standards were raised for family day care home providers, child care center and group day care home directors, and lead teachers in non-Pre-K classrooms. As of July 2009, all new registered family day care home providers must hold a technical college certificate,

technical college diploma, associate degree or higher, or a CDA. Additionally, effective December 2012, early childhood educators working in child care centers and group day care homes were required to hold a technical college certificate, technical college diploma, associate degree or higher, or a CDA.

Also in 2008, a higher education consortium, funded through DECAL CCDF support, developed standards for a Birth through Five Bachelor of Science degree approved for certification by the independent Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Currently five institutions award the Birth through Five Bachelor of Science degree. Instruction aligns with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) as well as the professional development competencies for early childhood educators based on the standards.

To support professionals in earning credentials, Georgia's Scholarships program provides tuition assistance and a stipend each term to eligible professionals pursuing credentials. Since 2003, more than 5,500 professionals have benefited from this professional development program. Eligible recipients may pursue an early childhood education technical college certificate, technical college diploma or associate of applied science through the Technical College System of Georgia, or enroll in a public or private two- or four-year institution.

Among the requirements that teachers must meet to benefit from the Scholarships program are workplace setting requirements to ensure that early childhood educators working in programs serving high-risk populations receive the greatest access. As a result 61% of Scholarships participants worked in facilities that participate in the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program, and more than 21% of participants worked in facilities that serve children whose care is subsidized (more than 25% served) through the CCDF child care subsidy program.

The Incentives Program rewards educational attainment and tenure with bonus payments. Recipients are teachers, directors, or assistants working in licensed child care centers, group homes or registered family day care homes who meet certain tenure, wage, and work site requirements. (see section D-2 for more information) Eligible recipients receive two payments ranging from \$250 to \$1,250 based on the credential earned. In state fiscal year 2012, 1,508 directors, teachers, teacher assistants, and assistant directors were awarded \$952,250.

Georgia defines professional development as facilitated teaching and learning experiences that are continual, transactional, and designed to support the acquisition of

professional knowledge, skills, dispositions, and the application of that knowledge in practice. Ongoing career enhancement through professional learning is provided in Georgia by approved, credentialed trainers. Trainers are vetted and assigned a career level based on their formal education, experience in the field, and training in adult learning by Georgia Training Approval. Ongoing “training for trainers” is available through private providers to ensure a continuous cadre of qualified trainers (see (B)(4) and (D)(2)).

Once approved, every trainer must submit each training module for review and approval. All training must align with one or more of the established professional development competencies for early childhood educators, administrators, school-age care providers, and infant and toddler caregivers. Modules are designated as Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced. Training must reflect ability and linguistic and cultural competence. Proposed modules that do not meet all requirements are not approved.

As of September 2013 more than 500 state-approved trainers offer more than 5,000 different professional learning opportunities to the ELD workforce.

Georgia has a significant rural population with limited access to training sites, and travel and time away from work are potential barriers to ongoing education. This gap in availability is bridged through partnerships with local CCR&R staff. Housed in six regions strategically positioned around the state, CCR&Rs provide professional learning opportunities, free or at minimal costs, to help early childhood educators meet state annual ongoing training requirements. The Technical College System of Georgia, with its 25 campuses ensuring that no Georgian is more than one hour’s commute from a site, also helps meet the need of rural early childhood professionals with a robust schedule of continuing education offerings.

To ensure that DECAL staff continue their own professional development and are able to impart current best practices to the early childhood educators in their areas, each consultant creates an annual personal professional development plan. DECAL relies heavily upon staff to identify gaps in education and training and upon the department’s research team to identify evidence-based strategies that lead to intentional practices by professionals and successful outcomes for the children they teach.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment

Selection criterion (E)(1) articulates Georgia’s High-Quality Plan for augmenting the

current Kindergarten Assessment- Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)- to provide data regarding children's status at kindergarten entry during the first six weeks of school. Georgia assesses children in Georgia's Pre-K Program throughout the year, and the data are shared with kindergarten teachers. Public schools also assess children during the Kindergarten year using GKIDS. Thus, multiple sources of information are available to help guide kindergarten instruction.

As discussed under Comprehensive Assessment System, Georgia's Pre-K Program utilizes a formative assessment, Work Sampling System. The state aggregates and reports this assessment data to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. Currently, DECAL calculates at the end of each school year the percentage of Georgia's Pre-K students who were rated as either "in process" or "proficient" and the percentage who were rated as "proficient" on at least 80% of each of the seven domains assessed in Work Sampling System. For example, 93.2% of all children assessed at the beginning and end of their Pre-K year were rated as "in process" or "proficient" on at least 80% of the language and literacy indicators and 54% were rated as "proficient." Assessment data contained in Work Sampling System is transferred at the end of the Pre-K year and is available to the child's kindergarten teacher to enable individualized instruction from day one. In addition to the success data from Work Sampling System, research evidence from a study on Georgia's Pre-K Program (Appendix 14) further substantiates evidence of children's growth and development from the beginning to the end of the Pre-K year as children make the transition to kindergarten.

Finally, Georgia uses a formative assessment process during the Kindergarten year. This assessment, the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS), is administered throughout the year and provides kindergarten teachers with ongoing diagnostic information about kindergarten students' developing skills and also provides a first grade readiness indicator. Selection criterion (E)(1) details Georgia's plan to augment GKIDS to include a kindergarten entry profile to be completed for each child by the end of the first six weeks of school.

Effective Data Practices

Georgia has made great progress in effectively using data to guide its ELD system. Georgia has worked to integrate data among early learning and development programs. A key initiative of Georgia's State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care was to

design a statewide coordinated child data system that links vital information collected in the state's multiple data systems (see Appendix 15). The first phase of this project was completed in 2012, and the foundation is in place to add additional data sources. A statewide Longitudinal Data System developed for K-12 students has been expanded to include Georgia's Pre-K student demographic and assessment data and recently to include infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in the state's Early Head Start and Head Start programs. This data is made available to Kindergarten teachers, school administrators, and parents. Parents are able to see formative assessment data (Work Sampling System) for only their child. This facilitates additional family engagement as children begin their K-12 experience. Georgia is also completing the first phase of a P-20 State Longitudinal Data System from the first K-12 Race to the Top funding which Georgia received in 2010. Finally, the state has created and maintains a Licensing/TQRIS data system (KOALA) that links with the Pre-K and the Professional Development Registry data systems. Furthermore, the state provides longitudinal data by linking formative assessment data to Georgia's K-12 system and Pre-K program data to the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS).

In the last five years, Georgia has implemented an aggressive data and research agenda. The state completed the first phase of the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) in which children are able to be matched across state programs. This important project facilitates the answering of questions about children that were posed by a group of key stakeholders participating in data round tables. The state built and maintains a robust Licensing/TQRIS data system (KOALA) that links with the Pre-K and the Professional Development Registry data systems. Furthermore, the state provides longitudinal data by linking Pre-K formative assessment data to Georgia's K-12 system and Pre-K program data to the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS).

Conclusion

Georgia has created a strong ELD foundation over the last twenty years that the state's Early Learning Challenge agenda will build upon. Specifically, the state has created efforts to improve school readiness for all children-especially those with high needs. We have offered universal access to a high-quality Pre-K program for four year olds and through our TQRIS are

ensuring quality for infants, toddlers, and other preschoolers not enrolled in Pre-K. We have invested in continuing education for the early childhood workforce through widely available scholarships that cover most of the costs of education. Within DECAL, we integrate licensing, TQRIS, health and nutrition, Head Start, Pre-K, and subsidy to weave together a seamless system of services to provide comprehensive, quality programs for young children and their families. And we measure our successes (and shortcomings), relying on data from our KOALA data system, our in-house research unit, and independent evaluations to drive our continuous quality improvement efforts so that each child in Georgia will eventually have the services he or she needs to start school – and life – ready to succeed.

Table (A)(1)-1: Children from Low-Income¹¹ 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	73,685	55.63%
Toddlers ages 1 through 2	148,369	55.63%
Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry	232,309	55.63%
Total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families	454,363	55.63%

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 55.63% of children 0-5 in Georgia are in families with income less than 200% of the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates).

According to the U.S. Census 2012 Population Estimates, the total number of children 0-5 in Georgia is 816,769 (U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2013). Since low-income data are not available for each year of age, the number reported for each age group above is the total population by age multiplied by 55.63%.

¹¹ Low-Income is defined as having an income of up to 200% of the Federal poverty rate.

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. The State will describe such activities throughout its application.

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 delays¹²	16,493 ^a	2.02%
Are English learners¹³	119,479 ^b	14.63%
Reside on "Indian Lands"	n/a	n/a
Are migrant¹⁴	3,978 ^c	.49%
Are homeless¹⁵	24,923 ^d	3.05%
Are in foster care	5,976 ^e	0.73%
Other as identified by the State Describe:		

All percentages are based on a Georgia 0-5 population of 816,769, following the U.S. Census 2012 Population Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2013)

^a 7,519 children ages 0-2 (1.88% of the population) had an IFSP in federal fiscal year 2013 under IDEA Part C based on December 1, 2012, count. 8,974 children ages 3-5 (2.15% of the population) had an IEP in federal fiscal year 2013 under IDEA Part B, section 619; based on December 1, 2012, count. Of the students served in IDEA Part B, section 619, Georgia's Pre-K reports 3,085 children with an IEP (3.78% of all Pre-K students); 2013 Georgia's Pre-K program data. Early Head Start and Head Start report 2,826 children with an IEP or IFSP (9.83% of all Early Head Start and Head Start students); 2012-2013 Program Information Report.

^b 14.63% of the population 5 to 17 years of age in Georgia speaks a language other than English at home according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. This percentage has been applied to the 0-5 population, for whom this data is not reported. 9.76% of Georgia's Pre-K students are identified by

¹² For purposes of this application, 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).

¹³ For purposes of this application, children who are English learners are children birth through kindergarten entry who have home languages other than English.

¹⁴ For purposes of this application, children who are migrant are children birth through kindergarten entry who meet the definition of "migratory child" in ESEA section 1309(2).

¹⁵ The 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)).

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. The State will describe such activities throughout its application.*

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...
<p>providers as having “limited language proficiency,” defined as “difficulty speaking the English language”; 2013 Georgia’s Pre-K program data. 10.79% of Early Head Start and Head Start students have a primary language other than English; 2012-2013 Program Information Report.</p> <p>^c 0.487% of Kindergarten to Grade 3 students in Georgia in 2011-2012 were eligible for the Migrant Education Program (Georgia Department of Education, Title I, Part C – Migrant Education Program, Child Count for the 2011-2012 School Year). This same percentage has been applied here to the 0-5 population, for whom eligibility is less comprehensively determined (local educational agencies report serving 1,840 migrant children ages 0-5 in 2011-2012 [Consolidated State Performance Report], while Early Head Start and Head Start report a funded enrollment of 350 migrant children in 2012-2013).</p> <p>^d The National Center on Family Homelessness (NCFH) uses the number of students identified as homeless by local educational agencies (LEAs) to estimate the number of homeless children ages 0-5, based on research estimating that 42% of all homeless children are under age 6 (National Center on Family Homelessness, 2011, p. 87). In 2012-2013, LEAs in Georgia identified 34,418 homeless K-12 students, as reported in the Georgia Student Information System. The 0-5 number estimated here follows the NCFH method and assumes the K-12 count represents 58% of all children. In 2012-2013, 670 homeless preschoolers were served by LEAs, while Early Head Start and Head Start report serving 480 homeless children.</p> <p>^e Children 0-5 in foster care during state fiscal year 2013; Georgia’s Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, 2013.</p>		

Table (A)(1)-3: 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.

Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
State-funded preschool Specify: <i>Georgia's Pre-K Program</i> (4 year olds only) Data Source and Year: Program data, 2012-2013 school year	n/a	n/a	50,496	50,496 ^a
Early Head Start and Head Start¹⁶ Data Source and Year: Head Start Enterprise System, 2013	778	2,421	25,550	28,749 ^b
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 Data Source and Year: Federal data counts, December 1, 2012	878	6,641	8,974	16,493
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA Data Source and Year:	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a ^c
Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program Data Source and Year: Maximus CCDF data system, 2013	4,283	21,509	35,066	60,858

¹⁶ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-3: 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.

Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
<p>Other</p> <p>Specify: Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant (MIECHV)</p> <p>Data Source and Year: Georgia Home Visiting Information System (GEOHVIS), 2013</p>	295	511	166	1,116 ^d

^a Georgia’s Pre-K is a universal program, not targeted to special populations, and does not collect child income data nor home language data. The total number of children with high needs in Georgia’s Pre-K is an estimate based on counting all enrolled children who were marked as having an IEP, having limited English proficiency, or participating in a means-tested benefit, as reported by grantee programs to the state in final roster data for the 2012-2013 school year. This count, while actual, is only approximate to the definition of children with high needs. By this method it is estimated that 61.8% of all Georgia’s Pre-K students are children with high needs.

^b Early Head Start and Head Start cumulative enrollment reported; Early Head Start and Head Start funded enrollment is not available by age.

^c Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia’s Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia’s Pre-K classes.

^d MIECHV children active during fiscal year 2013; total includes 114 children with missing birthdates.

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

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

Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	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 children	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 Specify: Georgia's Pre-K	10,262	100	1,322	22,975	78	1,428	14,331
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C ^a	238	12	178	2,689	13	1,055	3,329
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	1,134	16	232	3,003	15	284	4,290
Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA ^b	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program ^c	2,178	149	92	47,918	75	1,647	8,771
Other Describe: Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant (MIECHV)	283	2	53	375	2	17	384

by ethnicity alone:	Number of Hispanic children			Number of non-Hispanic children		
Early Head Start and Head Start ^{17 d}	3,658			25,356		
by race alone:	Number of American Indian or Alaska Native children	Number of Asian children	Number of Black or African American children	Number of Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander children	Number of children of two or more races	Number of White children
Early Head Start and Head Start ^{7 d}	38	132	20,349	56	1,082	5,835

^a Five records were missing race/ethnicity data in IDEA Part C; December 1, 2012, data count

^b Twenty-eight CCDF child records were marked as “refused to answer” on race and ethnicity.

^c Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia’s Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia’s Pre-K classes.

^d Early Head Start and Head Start race and ethnicity data are reported separately in the Program Information Report and are not able to be combined into the federal reporting categories. Two rows have been added above for Early Head Start and Head Start with modified categories to reflect ethnicity alone and race alone. 1,522 children are reported as race of “other” or “unspecified.” Totals also include 265 pregnant women because the Program Information Report does not allow race/ethnicity results to be specified by age.

Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start¹⁸	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Georgia’s Pre-K Program</i>	\$333,389,096	\$341,715,959	\$355,016,653 ^a	\$300,632,586	\$299,232,510
State contributions to IDEA Part C	\$9,636,288	\$9,757,896	\$9,252,959	\$9,141,713	\$9,127,631
State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through kindergarten entry	\$29,250,869	\$27,725,816	\$27,327,312	\$27,891,089	\$28,412,355

¹⁷ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

¹⁸ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total State contributions to CCDF¹⁹	\$54,336,852	\$53,635,538	\$53,449,046	\$51,751,256	\$52,469,641
State match to CCDF Exceeded/Met/Not Met (if exceeded, indicate amount by which match was exceeded)	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met
TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs²⁰	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other State contributions Specify: State funds for Child Care Services (licensing and administration)	\$3,768,843 ^b	\$1,300,492	\$1,174,851	\$1,203,033	\$1,326,179
Other State contributions Specify: HOPE Grants and HOPE Scholarships to students pursuing ECE certificate, diploma, or degree	\$6,374,450	\$8,798,733	\$9,288,484	\$4,467,226	\$3,099,816
Other State contributions Specify: Children 1 st screening referral and follow-up system	\$986,359	\$1,900,337	\$3,923,811	\$2,948,034	\$4,718,332
Other State contributions Title I, ESEA: Georgia Department of Education: biannual parent engagement conferences (sustained by fees)	\$40,000	n/a	\$40,000	n/a	\$40,000
Other State contributions Family Connection Partnership	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Total State contributions:	\$437,982,757	\$417,336,681	\$459,673,116	\$398,234,937	\$398,626,464

¹⁹ Total State contributions to CCDF must include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), State Match, and any State contributions exceeding State MOE or Match.

²⁰ Include TANF transfers to CCDF as well as direct TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs.

Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Philanthropic contributions Specify: United Way of Greater Atlanta: TQRIS, Substitute Teacher Program, Get Ready to Read Program, Early Learning Property Management Program, Partners Advancing Childhood Education	\$12,475,865	\$12,845,738	\$9,520,049	\$9,000,000	\$6,000,000
Philanthropic contributions Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS): TQRIS public awareness	n/a	n/a	\$116,000	\$130,000	\$155,000
Philanthropic contributions Rollins Center/Atlanta Speech School: preschool services to children with disabilities; professional development	\$1,213,655	\$1,230,505	\$1,411,743	\$1,834,397	\$1,914,438
All data are for the state fiscal year, which begins July 1 and ends June 30.					
<p>^a Decrease due to program restructuring in order to ensure long-term sustainability. Although not reflected in the chart, FY 2014 funding is approximately \$312 million, returning to full funding for 180 days of instruction.</p> <p>^b Reduced in subsequent years due to the impact of the Great Recession.</p>					

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

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

Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years ²¹				
	2009	2010	2011 ²²	2012 ¹⁷	2013 ¹⁷
State-funded preschool (annual census count; e.g., October 1 count) <i>Specify: Georgia's Pre-K</i>	44,162	47,640	48,964	50,936	50,496 ^a
Early Head Start and Head Start²³ (funded enrollment)	23,627	25,308	25,672	25,504	25,396 ^b
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 (annual December 1 count)	15,234 C: 5,723 B-619: 9,511	14,325 C: 5,632 B-619: 8,693	15,296 C: 6,015 B-619: 9,281	15,181 C: 6,640 B-619: 8,541	16,493 ^c C: 7,519 B-619: 8,974
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA (total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a ^d
Programs receiving CCDF funds (average monthly served)	63,838	69,505	69,238	53,348	60,858 ^e
Other Describe: Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant (MIECHV)	n/a	n/a	n/a	938	1,116 ^f

^a Georgia's Pre-K enrollment is from final roster data by school year.

^b Early Head Start and Head Start funded enrollment is reported here, as requested. However,

²¹ Include all Children with High Needs served with both Federal dollars and State supplemental dollars.

²² Note to Reviewers: The number of children served reflects a mix of Federal, State, and local spending. Head Start, IDEA, and CCDF all received additional Federal funding under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which may be reflected in increased numbers of children served in 2009-2011.

²³ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

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

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

Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years ²¹				
	2009	2010	2011 ²²	2012 ¹⁷	2013 ¹⁷

Tables (A)(1)-3 and (A)(1)-3b report cumulative enrollment because funded enrollment cannot be reported by age or by race/ethnicity; Program Information Report (PIR).

^c IDEA December 1 counts reported in respective fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

^d Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia's Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia's Pre-K classes.

^e ARRA funding contributed to the increase in the number of CCDF participating children in FY10 and FY11. Policy changes promoting continuity of care contributed to the increase in FY13.

^f MIECHV was not funded prior to 2012.

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

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
<p>In 2010, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) began an alignment study and revision project of the state’s early learning standards. The need for the revision stemmed from the need for higher quality standards and for better alignment with the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) for K-12. DECAL commissioned top researchers in the field to conduct a series of analyses. Based on their recommendations and stakeholder feedback, DECAL developed the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). The GELDS will take the place of the standards for birth to three and the Pre-K Content Standards, creating one set of research-based, aligned standards for birth to five. The GELDS cover all domain of children’s learning and development including Physical Development and Motor Skills, Social and Emotional Development, Approaches to Play and Learning, Communication, Language, and Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, Creative Development, and Cognitive Processes.</p>			

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
<p>State-funded preschool</p> <p><i>Specify: Georgia’s Pre-K^a</i></p>		X	X	X	
Early Head Start and Head Start^{24 b}	X	X	X	X	X

²⁴ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

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
Programs funded under IDEA Part C ^c	X	X			
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619 ^d		X			X
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA ^e	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Programs receiving CCDF funds ^f					
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements Specify by tier (add rows if needed): ^g	X	X	X	X	
State licensing requirements ^h			X		X
Other Describe: Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant (MIECHV) ⁱ	X	X	X	X	

^a Georgia's Pre-K uses Work Sampling Online as the formative assessment in all classes. Pre-K classrooms in TQRIS are sampled for ECERS-R observations. The CLASS assessment is used annually to measure child-adult interactions in a rotating sample of Georgia's Pre-K classrooms.

^b Head Start and Early Head Start employ health and developmental screening, use developmental child assessment tools, and meet Head Start and Early Head Start performance

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
standards regarding the environment as well as use Environment Rating Scales (ITERS-R and ECERS-R). The CLASS is used for measuring adult/child interactions. Other child assessments include Galileo, Teaching Strategies Gold, High Scope, and Work Sampling System.					
<p>^c Screening in IDEA Part C occurs as part of eligibility process. Hearing and vision are screened prior to evaluation. Formative assessment is conducted on all eligible children and used to develop IFSP goals, activities, and strategies.</p> <p>^d Many LEAs conduct screenings under IDEA Part B, section 619 but this is not an activity required by the state Department of Education. LEAs are required to conduct summative assessments to measure progress on the preschool outcomes as required in indicator B-7 of the USDOE/OSEP Annual Performance Report/State Performance Report (APR/SPP).</p> <p>^e Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia's Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia's Pre-K classes.</p> <p>^f These elements are not currently required in CCDF.</p> <p>^g Georgia's TQRIS tiers are assigned based on a point system. Screening measures and formative assessments are required for points at all tiers. All rated programs receive Environment Rating Scale observations (ITERS-R, ECERS-R, FCCERS-R); these instruments include a subscale related to interactions.</p> <p>^h Licensing rules require an adequate amount of varied age-appropriate equipment and activities. Additionally, lesson plans that include specified developmental domains (variety and developmentally appropriate) are required.</p> <p>ⁱ MIECHV includes: comprehensive Core Screening to determine eligibility into program services and home visiting; developmental screenings at appropriate intervals (ASQ & ASQ-SE) on all children within the child care setting; assessments conducted for all evidence-based home visiting models (i.e., Life Skills Progression for families entering Parents as Teachers). In addition, a measure of environmental quality is conducted through the HOME Inventory. Data is collected on program structure, quality, performance measures and all benchmarks.</p>					

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
State-funded preschool Specify: <i>Georgia's Pre-K</i> ^a	X	X	X	X	
Early Head Start and Head Start ^b	X	X	X	X	X
Programs funded under IDEA Part C ^c	X	X	X		
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619 ^d	X	X			
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA ^e	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Programs receiving CCDF funds ^f	X				
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements Specify by tier (add rows if needed): ^g	X ¹	X ²	X ³	X ⁴	

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
State licensing requirements ^b	X		X	X	
Other Describe: Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant (MIECHV) ⁱ	X	X	X	X	

^a Georgia's Pre-K programs are required to follow the health and safety requirements outlines by the licensing agency for the program type as well as local and state safety ordinances. Programs are required to work with the local educational agency (LEA) for developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up. Services are coordinated between the program and the LEA. Programs are required to use the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) for instructional planning and activities. The GELDS include indicators covering health promotion, physical activity, and healthy eating habits. Programs are required to incorporate physical activity, both indoors and outdoors, into the daily routines. Meals served must follow the USDA requirements for licensed child care and elementary schools. The GELDS also include indicators covering health literacy.

^b Head Start and Early Head Start use all of the above in accordance with the Head Start Performance Standards. Mental health is also routinely measured. Other screenings include lead and hematocrit.

^c IDEA Part C programs follow health and safety guidelines during service provision. Screening occurs as part of eligibility process, and service coordination, a required Part C service, ensures referral and follow-up for needed services. Family and child routines are identified as part of service plan and may include health promotion activities.

^d IDEA Part B, section 619 requires a hearing and vision screening.

^e Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia's

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
<p>Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia's Pre-K classes.</p> <p>^f Programs receiving CCDF funds are required to meet requirements for health and safety.</p> <p>^g Minimum health and standard required as per licensing compliance as well as health and safety requirements as outlined in Environment Rating Scales. Screenings, referrals and follow-ups required for points at each tier level for Georgia's TQRIS, Quality Rated. Self-assessment, continuous quality improvement plan and multiple additional criteria cover each of these items in Quality Rated Program Standard 2. Health literacy practices are covered in the self-assessment, continuous quality improvement plan, and additional criteria in Quality Rated Program Standard 2 (see Appendix 7 for a copy of the Quality Rated manual).</p> <p>^h Licensing rules require a communicable disease chart be posted and followed, and there are extensive requirements for both staff and children's hand-washing. There also other requirements around health and hygiene (including diapering, disposal and care of soiled items, etc.). There are extensive requirements for safe infant sleeping that address sleep position, equipment, and environment. Rules require specified amount of outdoor time daily, as well as physical activity specified in lesson plans. Rules require facilities encourage breastfeeding and provide an area for breastfeeding mothers to breastfeed. Rules require that USDA nutritional guidelines be followed, including honoring special diets. Facilities are also required to maintain updated infant feeding plans.</p> <p>ⁱ MIECHV: Benchmark data collected include but not limited to the following: Increase adherence to the AAP-recommended schedule of well-child checks for all enrolled children; Decrease or maintain the percentage of enrolled children and mothers who have visited ER in the past six months; Increase or maintain the percentage of home visits where safety information is provided on injury prevention topics; Increase the rate of women who reduce the amount of smoking their child is exposed to; Increase the percentage of prenatally enrolled mothers who initiate breastfeeding ; Decrease or maintain the percentage of children with injuries requiring treatment; Decrease or maintain the percentage of enrolled children who are suspected victims of maltreatment; Decrease or maintain the percentage of enrolled children who have substantiated reports of maltreatment; Mothers will increase their level of support for their enrolled child's learning and development; Mothers will increase their knowledge of child development and their child's developmental progress; Mothers will increase the level of responsivity and acceptance for their enrolled child; Increase the percentage of referrals for children whose screening indicates a developmental delay in the areas of communication,</p>					

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
language, and emergent literacy; Increase the percentage of referrals for children whose screening indicates a developmental delay in the area of general cognitive skills; Increase or maintain the percentage of home visits where brain building activities are discussed and/or practiced with mothers and children; Increase the percentage of referrals for children whose screening indicates a developmental delay in the area of social-emotional behavior; Increase the percentage of referrals for children whose screening indicates a developmental delay in the area of physical development; Increase or maintain the percentage of enrolled families who are referred to community resources.					

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Georgia's Pre-K</i>	Georgia's Pre-K Program requires ongoing family engagement through family orientation, required parent conferences at least twice a year, and PAC (parent and child) activities.
Early Head Start and Head Start	Early Head Start and Head Start follow the Federal Performance Standards and Regulations in Part 1304 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start regarding family engagement. Head Start and Early Head Start offer parents opportunities and support for growth so that they can identify their own

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State

Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.

Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
	<p>strengths, needs, and interests and find their own solutions. Parents are supported as they identify and meet their own goals, nurture the development of their children in the context of their family and culture, and advocate for communities that are supportive of children and families of all cultures. Building trusting and collaborative relationships between parents and staff allows them to share and learn from each other.</p> <p>Head Start and Early Head Start engage parents in family goal setting through the family partnership agreement process, access to resources and services, services to pregnant women, and parent involvement across all areas of Head Start, including child development, education, health, nutrition, mental health education, community advocacy, transition practices, and home visits. Staff conducts home visits and holds conferences regarding children’s development and screening results and fosters family literacy. Although not a requirement, Georgia Head Start and Early Head Start grantees are vested in utilizing Strengthening Families. They also use the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework.</p>
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	<p>Family engagement and ongoing two-way communication with families are components of Part C service coordination via regular face-to-face and telephone interactions with families; parent participation and involvement in decision-making are required elements of family and child assessment/evaluation, IFSP development and service delivery in each child’s natural environment. Parent education, parent support and parent access to resources and Part C services and professionals are central components of Georgia’s Part C Primary Service Provider service delivery model. Parent support is also provided through transition steps and services as children approach their third birthday in preparation for exiting the Part C system and moving into preschool or other settings.</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State

Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.

Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs are required to include parents in the development of their child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). • LEAs with Parent Mentors* are required to develop family engagement plans and strategies for their districts regarding increase family engagement of parents of children with disabilities. • LEAs participate in the 360 Project, which is a statewide partnership with BFTS/DECAL, Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Title 1, and GaDOE Special Education to develop family engagement plans. • Through the state’s State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), funded by USDOE/OSEP, GaDOE is requiring the development and implementation of specific training workshops for parents of children with autism in targeted areas around the state. • Other current Family Engagement initiatives/ practices in the state include: Parent C.A.F.E.**, Parent Navigator Teams, Parent Mentor Partnership website
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	n/a
Programs receiving CCDF funds	Families have access to their child's program and there is regular, ongoing communication between the program and the family.
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements Specify by tier (add rows if needed):	<p>Minimum requirements for all licensed and registered programs in the state include parent access to the program and ongoing two-way communication with families.</p> <p>Points are received at all tier levels of our TQRIS (Quality Rated) for family engagement including: parent education in child development, outreach to family members, training and transition support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, linkages with community supports and parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development via parent</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<p>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</p>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
	advisory committees (PAC).
State licensing requirements	Parents are required to be granted access to all child care areas while their child is present. Several forms of communication with parents are required by the rules, such as notification of illness or injury, and communicable disease. Facilities are required to encourage parent’s participation in center activities, to advise parents of child’s progress and issues related to the child’s care, and individual practices concerning the child’s special needs. Facilities must encourage the practice of breastfeeding. Parents must be informed of all center policy, practices, and procedures.
Other Describe: Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant (MIECHV)	Family Strategies for Great Start Georgia/MIECHV program include: parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children transition to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, links with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.
<p>*Parent Mentors-are parents of children with disabilities that are hired by LEAs to assist and increase high-quality family engagement for parents of children with disabilities. They serve families of children 3-21 years of age. **Parent C.A.F.E.-Circle of Adults who focus on improving education for children with disabilities.</p>	
<p>Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia’s Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia’s Pre-K classes.</p>	

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials²⁵ currently available in the State				
List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? (Yes/No/Not Available)	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential	Yes	5,894	15%	Awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition, the CDA credential articulates to the technical college.
Technical College Early Childhood Care and Education Certificate of Credit	Yes	3,929	10%	The 24 institutions within the Technical College System of Georgia institutions award Technical Certificates of Credit for programs of study ranging from nine to 25 semester credit hours; certificates articulate to the diploma and degree programs.
Technical College Early Childhood Care and Education Diploma	Yes	2,358	6%	The diploma program, offered through the technical college system, is a 54-55 semester credit hour program of study; it articulates to an associate and/or bachelor degree.
Early Care and Education Associate Degree (AA, AAS)	Yes	4,715	12%	Early Childhood Care and Education Associate of Applied Science (AAS) is 72 semester hours of academic credit that includes occupational coursework, specialized coursework, and general core education.

²⁵ Includes both credentials awarded and degrees attained.

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials²⁵ currently available in the State

List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? (Yes/No/Not Available)	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
Bachelor’s Degrees, including Bachelor of Science in Education, Major in Birth-Five	Yes	5,108	13%	Bachelor’s degree or higher are required for all lead teachers in Georgia’s Pre – K classrooms. Candidates completing the Birth-through-Five preparation program are eligible for certification in both Birth through Kindergarten as well as the Endorsement in Pre-School Special Education (3-5).
Master’s, Specialist, and Doctoral Degrees (M.S., M.Ed., M.A.T., Ph.D.)	Yes	2,358	6%	
Total		24,362	62%	
<p>Georgia’s total current workforce is estimated using child care licensing, Pre-K, Head Start, and special needs program data (including directors, lead teachers, assistant teachers, family child care providers and assistants, group child care providers and assistants, inclusion teachers, early intervention specialists, early childhood special educators, family service workers, and home visitors). Current credential data are estimated using Professional Development Registry (PDR) data, workforce findings from the studies of child care quality in Georgia conducted by the FPG Child Development Institute (Maxwell, et al., 2009a; 2009c; 2010a; Appendices 3, 4, and 5), and workforce findings from the study of the economic impact of the Georgia child care industry (Child Policy Partnership, 2008). The total current workforce is estimated at 39,294, and 62% of the workforce are estimated to hold one of the above credentials. Full workforce credential data will become available by 2017 when all ELD programs are participating in the TQRIS, which requires educators to register in the PDR.</p> <p>The FPG studies of quality captured education levels of directors, lead teachers, and assistant teachers in representative samples of child care centers and Georgia’s Pre-K programs, broken out by infant toddler, preschool, and Pre-K classrooms. They also captured education levels of family child care providers and their assistants. However, the education levels do not capture CDAs, technical certificates of credit, or technical college diplomas, instead measuring “some</p>				

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials²⁵ currently available in the State

List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? (Yes/No/Not Available)	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
<p>college.” The estimates above distribute these educators with some college among those with no credential and those with CDAs, technical certificates of credit, and technical college diplomas.</p> <p>The PDR, a Georgia Professional Standards Commission credentialing system, reports the following degrees/credentials for ELD program directors, lead teachers, and assistant teachers as of 9/16/2013: 1,910 CDAs, 730 technical college certificates, 634 technical college diplomas, 1,131 associate’s degrees, 4,873 bachelor’s degrees (including 414 with a Bachelor of Science in Education, Major in Birth through 5), 2,146 master’s degrees or higher, and 5,014 non-credentialed. The PDR captures active registrants of staff in programs participating in TQRIS, educators in Pre-K classrooms, educators in the tuition assistance program, the salary bonus/educational award program, and all other early childhood educators in the state who voluntarily elect to track their professional development through this system. However, because registration at this time is required for some programs where higher credentials are expected (e.g., Pre-K, Quality Rated) but voluntary for others (e.g., licensed programs), PDR numbers are not representative of the total ELD workforce.</p> <p>An earlier study of the economic impact of the child care industry in Georgia, commissioned by DECAL and begun in 2007, found a total of 61,203 employees in the child care industry, including support staff as well as educators (Child Policy Partnership, 2008). However, research for this study was conducted prior to the national recession.</p>				

Table (A)(1)-11: Summary of current postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators		
List postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators	Number of Early Childhood Educators that received an early learning credential or degree from this entity in the previous year	Does the entity align its programs with the State’s current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials? (Yes/No/ Not Available)
24 Technical College of Georgia Institutions:		
Technical Certificates of Credit: a) Child Development Specialist b) Early Care and Education Basics c) Early Childhood Care and Exceptionalities d) Family Child Care Specialist e) Infant Toddler Specialist f) Early Childhood Program Administration	1,551	Yes
Early Childhood Care and Education Diploma	585	Yes
Early Childhood Care and Education Associate Degrees	413	Yes
Bainbridge College		
Technical Certificates of Credit	0	Yes
Associate of Arts and Associate of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education	0	Yes
Early Childhood Care and Education Diploma	0	Yes
Gainesville State University		
Bachelors of Science in Education, Major in Birth-Five Education	26	Yes
Georgia State University		
Early Childhood Education	166	Yes
Bachelors of Science in Education, Major in Birth- Five Education Birth - 5	12	Yes
Early Childhood Education, M.A.T. and M.Ed.	67	Yes
Early Childhood Education Specialist	9	Yes
Early Childhood and Elementary	2	Yes

Table (A)(1)-11: Summary of current postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators		
List postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators	Number of Early Childhood Educators that received an early learning credential or degree from this entity in the previous year	Does the entity align its programs with the State’s current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials? (Yes/No/ Not Available)
Education, Ph.D.		
Kennesaw State University		
Bachelors of Science in Education, Major in Birth- Five Education	6	Yes
M.Ed., Special Education	17	Yes
Ed.S. Early Childhood Education	0	Yes
Mercer University		
Bachelors of Science in Education, Major in Birth- Five Education	17	Yes
Early Childhood Education-Special Education	99	Yes
Early Childhood Education, M.Ed. and M.A.T,	107	Yes
University of Georgia		
Bachelors of Science in Education, Major in Birth- Five Education	101	Yes
Bachelors of Science in Child Development	145	Yes
Early Childhood Education, M.Ed. and M.A.T.	60	Yes
Child Development, M.S.	7	Yes
Child Development, Ed. S.	4	Yes
Child Development, Ph.D.	9	Yes
Total Academic Credentials	3,403	
Council for Professional Recognition		
Child Development Associate Credential	930	Yes
Total	4,333	
Reporting 2011-2012 academic year. All credentials are ECE unless otherwise indicated (Special Ed, Birth-5, Child Development). Data on state or public colleges and universities extracted from the University System of Georgia’s Data Warehouse “By the Numbers” https://app.usg.edu/portal/page/portal/USG123_10G . Technical college data provided by the Technical College System of Georgia Curriculum Specialist. Child Development Associate information provided by the Council for Professional Recognition.		

Table (A)(1)-12: Current status of the State’s Kindergarten Entry Assessment ***					
State’s Kindergarten Entry Assessment	Essential Domains of School Readiness				
	Language and literacy	Cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development)	Approaches toward learning	Physical well-being and motor development	Social and emotional development
Domain covered? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Domain aligned to Early Learning and Development Standards? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Instrument(s) used? (Specify)	GKIDS	GKIDS	GKIDS	GKIDS	GKIDS
Evidence of validity and reliability? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evidence of validity for English learners? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evidence of validity for children with disabilities? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
How broadly administered? (If not administered statewide, include date for reaching statewide administration)	Statewide	Statewide	Statewide	Statewide	Statewide
Results included in Statewide Longitudinal Data System? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
*** The information in this table is provided for GKIDS, a formative assessment conducted throughout kindergarten. Although it does not produce reportable data during the first six weeks of kindergarten, the information is useful to better understand Georgia’s current kindergarten assessment, on which the new Kindergarten Entry Profile will be developed.					

Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State							
List each data system currently in use in the State that includes early learning and development data	Essential Data Elements <i>Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems</i>						
	Unique child identifier	Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier	Unique program site identifier	Child and family demographic information	Early Childhood Educator demographic information	Data on program structure and quality	Child-level program participation and attendance
Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) ^a	X	X ^a	X	X	X ^a	X	X
Child care licensing (KOALA)	X	X	X	X		X	X
Georgia's Pre-K	X	X	X	X		X	X
Professional Development Registry (PDR)		X			X		
CCDF child care subsidy	X		X	X		X	X
TQRIS (Quality Rated)		X	X	X		X	
Georgia Testing Identifier (GTID)	X						
P-20 State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Georgia Dept. of Education Certified and Classified Personnel Information (CPI)		X			X		
Georgia Dept. of Education Student Class Data Collection	X	X	X	X ^b			
Georgia Dept. of Education FTE Data Collection	X		X	X ^b			
Georgia Dept. of Education Student Record	X		X	X ^b			X ^c
IDEA Part C Information and Billing System (BIBS)	X		X	X		X	X
IDEA Part C child data system for transition to Part B 619 (G-SIG)	X						

Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State							
List each data system currently in use in the State that includes early learning and development data	Essential Data Elements <i>Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems</i>						
	Unique child identifier	Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier	Unique program site identifier	Child and family demographic information	Early Childhood Educator demographic information	Data on program structure and quality	Child-level program participation and attendance
IDEA Part C Parent To Parent directory of early intervention specialists		X			X		
IDEA Part C Skilled Credentialed Early Intervention Specialists (SCEIS) workforce development system		X			X		
Georgia Home Visiting Information System	X		X	X		X	
Children 1 st central intake (SENDSS)	X		X	X		X	X
<p>^a Early childhood educator data are linked from the Professional Development Registry.</p> <p>^b Child demographic information only.</p> <p>^c Aggregate attendance.</p> <p>IDEA, Part B, section 619 reflected in Georgia Department of Education data systems.</p>							

(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals. (20 points)

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes—

- (a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the educational gaps between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative how each piece of evidence *demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion; the State may also include any* additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

Evidence for (A)(2):

- The State's goals for improving program quality statewide over the period of this grant.
- The State's goals for improving child outcomes statewide over the period of this grant.
- The State's goals for closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers at kindergarten entry.
- Identification of the two or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (C).
- Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (D).
- Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (E).
- For each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), a description of the State's rationale for choosing to address the selected criteria in that Focused Investment Area, including how the State's choices build on its progress to date in each Focused Investment Area (as outlined in Tables (A)(1)6-13 and in the narrative under (A)(1) in the application) and why these selected criteria will best achieve the State's ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the educational gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.

Introduction

Georgia’s ambitious and achievable Early Learning Challenge agenda builds on a twenty-year-old foundation of high-quality early learning that was established with the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program. The foundation was strengthened with the establishment of a unique early education department, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), in 2004 (one of only three in the nation). This reform agenda details how Georgia will build on the state’s strong ELD foundation to achieve system level results that benefit children and families statewide. Because children enter the ELD system at different ages and families have diverse choices in the types of care available to them, it is important that the system be strong across all ages and across all the program options. By 2017, Georgia will show measurable differences in ELD quality and child readiness outcomes.

A successful preschool program – touted by President Obama in his 2013 State of the Union speech – and a governance structure that integrates and aligns key programs demonstrate Georgia’s capacity and commitment to “move the needle” in early learning and development. Recent initiatives demonstrate Georgia’s commitment to continue to strengthen the state’s ELD foundation. First, Georgia has implemented the state’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, Quality Rated, thus promoting greater likelihood that all children and families will be able to access opportunities for high-quality early care and education. Second, the state has refined and begun implementing new early learning and development standards, the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) that align with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), provide a more integrated framework for young children’s instruction, and reflect evidence-based practice. Third, Georgia has focused on health and safety regulations by strengthening licensing policies and incorporating enforcement fines (when necessary) around the regulations deemed most crucial for children’s health and safety. Finally, Georgia has initiated an aggressive data and research agenda that provides key data and information for improving the system and ensuring children enter Kindergarten ready to excel. Projects implemented, including research-based initiatives, with the Early Learning Challenge will make a strong system even stronger.

Having demonstrated its commitment to early learning, Georgia is proposing a broad Early Learning Challenge agenda that will further augment quality, increase access, develop opportunities, and implement new measurement strategies for the state's ELD system. The agenda details Georgia's evolving philosophy of investing in quality early education for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and describes how Georgia will continue to implement policies reflecting the belief that all children deserve high-quality ELD opportunities. Embedded in the agenda is a focus on data and research strategies; Georgia has a longstanding commitment to employing current, evidence-based research, including that commissioned by the state, and taking aggressive action based on it.

This agenda corresponds with the state's Quality Rated Logic Model (Appendix 16) and the aligned theory of change that sets an expectation that every child can succeed when provided the opportunity to fully participate in a high-quality, culturally responsive ELD program. The logic model summarizes at a glance the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of Quality Rated. The following graphic details the state's philosophy of using Quality Rated as the driver for change. Since all programs will be required to participate in Quality Rated by 2017, Georgia's overall Early Learning Challenge agenda builds on the supports and investments offered through Quality Rated. It also identifies the essential pre-conditions needed for this change to occur.

<p>Pre-Condition Policy Requiring TQRIS Participation</p>	<p>High Quality ELD System 100% participation in Quality Rated Programs advancing to higher tiers Increase in children with high needs attending higher quality programs.</p>	<p>Improved Child Outcomes</p>
<p>Existing Foundations with Continual Enhancements Strong Licensing Compliance (Basic Health and Safety) GELDS WKC Framework Georgia's Pre-K Program Quality Rated Program Standards Supports for ELD Workforce Supports for ACCESS for Families to High Quality Programs Supports to Support ELD Programs to Met Quality Criteria Aggressive Research and Data Agenda</p>		
<p>The following section outlines the overall goals and strategies of the grant. This is followed by a discussion of the specific projects and activities that align with these goals and strategies. This reform agenda demonstrates Georgia’s commitment to improving quality and ensuring that all children, especially children with high needs, benefit from the state’s strong ELD foundation by having a foundation laid in their lives for success in school and the workforce.</p>		
<p>(A)(2)(a) Ambitious yet Achievable ELD Reform Goals</p>		
<p>Georgia has experience in providing high-quality learning environments, and this reform agenda builds on that expertise. Early Learning Challenge funds will be used to build on the state’s strong ELD foundation.</p>		
<p>As discussed in (A)(1), to ensure that every child in Georgia is prepared for later educational and life experiences, Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda was developed to achieve four broad goals. Below is a description of each goal and strategy, including specific measures (and if applicable, a specific goal) that will be used to gauge the state’s success. The first two goals below align with the first goal specified in the grant application (improving</p>		

quality statewide) and the second two goals below align with next two goals specified in the grant application (improving child outcomes statewide and closing the readiness gap).

1. **Goal 1:** Increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs. While it is important to raise quality statewide, it is especially important to ensure that programs that serve children with high needs are high quality and that families have access to them. Throughout the grant, activities are specifically targeted to encourage providers to serve children with high needs and to encourage parents to choose a program that is higher quality.
 - Strategy: create various program and family supports that ensure children with high needs have **access** to high-quality opportunities for all ages and across all program types.
 - Key Measure(s)/Specific Goals (if applicable):
 - Number and percentage of children receiving subsidies attending a two- or three-star program. Currently, 2% of children receiving subsidies are enrolled in a two- or three-star program. **We will increase this to 50% by 2017** (see Table (B)(4)(c)(2).
 - Number of children identified with special needs and/or developmental disabilities attending a two- or three-star program. Baseline to be determined.
 - Number of children of English language learners attending a two- or three-star program. Baseline to be determined.

2. **Goal 2:** Improve the overall quality of ELD programs and early childhood instruction statewide. A 2009 representative study of quality in Georgia found that quality was lacking across all types of programs and all ages of classrooms. This was especially true for infant/toddler classrooms. While recent Quality Rated data indicate that there is some improvement in quality, the research and science is clear: to effectively impact the outcomes of children, especially those with high needs, the state's ELD quality will have to improve. Several projects proposed in this grant application focus on improving

quality related to ELD environments, early childhood educators, and teacher-child interactions.

- Strategy: Implement and expand new **investment** initiatives to support all types of programs in achieving higher quality and support early childhood educators in increasing their educational and/or credential levels
- Key Measure(s)/Specific Goals (if applicable):
 - % of ELD programs participating in Quality Rated. Currently, approximately 18% of programs are participating (29% of child care centers and 10% of family child care). **By 2017, 100% of ELD programs will be participating.**
 - % of **all** licensed programs rated two or three stars. Currently, approximately 12% of programs participating are rated two or three stars. **By 2017, 55% of programs participating will be rated two or three stars.**
 - % of **all** licensed programs rated two or three stars in the 25 counties with the highest poverty rates. Baseline to be determined.
 - % of early childhood educators who have increased their career level by obtaining a higher degree or higher credential. Currently, approximately 12% of the ELD workforce registered in Georgia's Professional Development Registry have increased their credential/educational level. **This is expected to increase to 18% by the end of 2017.** It is important to note that not only will the percentage increase but also the number of ELD educators registered in the professional development registry (a requirement of Quality Rated).

3. **Goal 3:** Reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers and increase school readiness outcomes. The projects discussed below will facilitate the measurement of the achievement gap, but it is more important to develop projects that will directly reduce the gap between children with high needs and their peers. Therefore, our reform agenda includes expanding assessment systems,

home visiting, enhancing family engagement, and creating Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs) that provide extra support to families, thereby reducing the achievement gap. Georgia will evaluate the implementation of specific projects in the E³Zs to inform the later statewide scale-up. In the K-12 system and in the last few years, Georgia has succeeded in reducing the achievement gap for varying groups of children with high needs. For example, utilizing third grade reading scores, the achievement gap between English language learners and all students has narrowed to an 8-percentage-point gap from a 14-percentage-point gap in 2008, in terms of the percent of students meeting or exceeding the state educational standards (Appendix 17). These projects will produce similar results. The proposed Kindergarten Entry Profile (discussed below) will be used to create a baseline and measure school readiness outcomes and the achievement gap.

- Strategy: Facilitate a system of **integration** by expanding key services that are designed to increase outcomes for children with high needs (statewide) and creating geographically identified zones (E³Zs) with large numbers of children with high needs and aligning key programs and services.
- Key Measure(s)/Specific Goals (if applicable):
 - Number of 2- and 3-star programs in each E³Z.
 - Number of children with high needs in each E³Z zone served in a 2- or 3-star program that offers integrated services.
 - Aggregate differences between children with high needs and their peers on key items from the Kindergarten Entry Profile. To be determined with implementation of the Kindergarten Entry Profile.

4. **Goal 4:** Increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes. The state has made considerable improvements to ensure that children are receiving age appropriate and developmentally and culturally appropriate early learning experiences that are research based and have demonstrated impacts to child outcomes. One of the state's key goals is to continue increasing measurement and data capacity. Georgia's High-Quality Plan to implement a Kindergarten Entry formative assessment and to

expand our capacity to collect and analyze data will provide the state with data that measure children's development and growth before they enter kindergarten. A proposed study related to Quality Rated validation (see (B)(5)) will be used provide child level baseline data.

- Strategy: expand data measurement capacity by implementing strategies that include additional data collection and research methodologies to appropriately evaluate the impact of the state's ELD agenda.
- Key Measure(s)/Specific Goals (if applicable):
 - % of entering kindergartner teachers using the Kindergarten Entry Profile. **By 2017, 100% of kindergarten teachers will be using the KEA.**
 - % of progress made with the Cross Agency Child Data System. This is described further in selection criterion (E)(2).

(A)(2)(b) An Effective Reform Agenda

This section provides additional detail about the state's Early Learning Challenge agenda and includes Georgia's High-Quality Plan for creating Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs), the vehicle that will be used to reduce the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers.

Overall Reform Agenda

As discussed in (A)(1), Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda is based in the philosophy of providing high-quality services on the front end to all children but with additional services to children and families with high needs. This is coupled with state's commitment to use a strong research basis in developing and subsequently evaluating all components of Georgia's ELD system. Specifically, the agenda focuses on four broad strategies: 1) create various program and family supports that ensure children with high needs have **access** to high-quality opportunities for all ages and across all program types; 2) implement and expand new **investment** initiatives to support all types of ELD programs in achieving higher quality and support early childhood educators in increasing their educational and/or credential levels; 3) facilitate a system of **integration** by expanding key services that

are designed to increase outcomes for children with high needs (statewide) and creating geographically identified zones (E³Zs) with large numbers of children with high needs and aligning key programs and services.; and 4) expand data **measurement** capacity by implementing strategies that include additional data collection and research methodologies to evaluate the impact of the state's ELD agenda to inform continuous program improvement. The state has identified twelve projects each with multiple activities that align with one or more of these four strategies. Once implemented, these projects will move the state toward meeting all of the state's ELD Reform Goals. Most importantly, meeting these ELD Reform Goals will ensure that the state has further strengthened Georgia's ELD system and is preparing children to succeed in their K-12 experience, in the workforce and in life.

Each strategy is listed below. Under each strategy are the key efforts that Georgia will undertake. Next to the key efforts, the specific project number and grant section is listed. Following this narrative is a list of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge projects with key activities listed. In the section narratives of the application, the projects are discussed more fully. They are listed here to provide the reader with a general overview. It is important to note that the efforts that the state is implementing are based on sound science and research, past ELD efforts in the state, and where Georgia needs to improve to meet the state's ELC goals.

Strategy 1: Create various program and family supports that ensure children with high needs have ACCESS to high-quality programs. Georgia's ELC state plan and reform agenda is built on the success the state has experienced with Georgia's Pre-K Program and with implementing Quality Rated, our Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. As the state has succeeded in creating opportunities for families to select higher quality programs, our ELC efforts will focus on creating additional opportunities for increased access to higher quality programs. For this strategy, activities listed under Project 3 (Access and Availability) are the key drivers. The activities include:

- Increase the number of ELD programs participating in Quality Rated (Section (B)(1), Project 3).
- Increase the number of Quality Rated programs at a two- or three-star level (Section (B)(2), Project 3).
- Decrease the family co-pay when families select a two- or three-star program

(Section (B)(4), Project 3).

- Create a grant program that pays higher subsidy rates to programs offering the highest level of care (Section (B)(4), Project 3).
- Expand access to a high-quality Summer Transition Program for rising Kindergartners and rising Pre-K students (Section (B)(4), Project 3).

Strategy 2: Implement and expand new INVESTMENT initiatives to support programs in achieving higher quality and support early childhood educators in increasing their educational and/or credential levels. For parents to have access to high-quality programs, the state has to increase the number of high-quality programs. To increase quality, Georgia’s ELC plan focuses on improving program quality, classroom instruction, and teacher credentials. The activities regarding professional development will be the key drivers for this strategy. These activities are listed under Project 5 (Early Learning and Development Standards), Project 7 (Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants), Project 9 (Workforce Knowledge and Competencies) and Project 10 (Supporting Early Educators).

These activities include:

- Create a comprehensive roll out of the newly launched Georgia Early and Development Standards (GELDS) that includes additional resources, tools, and professional development opportunities for child serving agencies, early childhood educators, and families plus an additional alignment with national standards for English language learners and create professional development tools for early childhood educators for working with English language learners (Section (C)(1), Project 5).
- Complete an alignment of the Georgia’s Family Engagement Standards with the Program Standards for Quality Rated and provide professional development on family engagement standards to early childhood educators and launch a family engagement statewide campaign (Section (C)(4), Project 7).
- Revise Georgia’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework and review post-secondary ELD coursework to ensure alignment to the WKC Framework and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards

(Section (D)(1), Project 9).

- Expand DECAL’s existing Scholarships and Incentives programs to increase the number of early care and education professionals moving up a knowledge and career pathway and implement the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy (GPDH) to provide more in-depth professional development opportunities (cohort and coaching models) to help early childhood educators use standards, improve teacher child-interactions, and align instruction with formative assessments. (Section (D)(2), Project 10).

Strategy Three: Facilitate a system of INTEGRATION by expanding key services that are designed to increase outcomes for children with high needs (statewide) and creating geographically identified zones (E³Zs) with large numbers of children with high needs and aligning key programs and services. For this strategy, Georgia is going to expand the state’s comprehensive assessment systems and expand the state’s home visitation program and family engagement activities statewide. Additionally, the state will specifically target areas with large numbers or percentages of children with high needs. We are going to do this by creating Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). In the E³Zs, we will expand specific services and programs and create an integrated service model for children with high needs. An evaluation using Implementation Science Framework (Metz, et al., 2013) will be used to help the state “scale-up” these specific programs and services after 2017. The expansion of assessment and home visiting along with creating empowerment zones with large numbers of children with high needs are the drivers for this strategy. These activities are listed under Project 2 (Early Education Empowerment Zones E³Z), Project 6 (Comprehensive Assessment System), and Project 8 (Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care). Specific activities include:

- Create a Task Force for Comprehensive Assessment to recommend ways to build on the assessment systems in Georgia’s Pre-K Program and Quality Rated and incorporate assessments in other ELD programs (Section (C)(2), Project 6).
- Expand Georgia’s Home Visiting Program, Great Start, by creating home visiting and family engagement hubs in three-star child care centers in each E³Z

(Section (C)(4), Project 8).

- Create E³Zs where additional services for children with high needs are expanded (Section (A)(2), Project 2). Since this a key component of the statewide agenda and incorporates components of all sections, it is discussed in this section.
- Support Head Start and Early Head Start programs in supporting Family, Friend and Neighbor providers in professional development on family engagement strategies (Section (C)(4), Project 8).

Strategy Four: Expand data MEASUREMENT capacity by implementing strategies that include additional data collection and research methodologies to evaluate the impact of the state’s ELD agenda. The state has made significant improvements in our ability to collect, analyze, and leverage data. For this strategy we are going to build on our current data systems and expand our data collection capacity. This data collection capacity will continue to inform our research efforts and facilitate stronger evaluation capacity. Efforts in this area will also facilitate greater family engagement by making data more readily available at the program and child level. Expanding our data collection ability, research capacity, and incorporating a Kindergarten Entry Profile are the drivers behind this strategy. Efforts related to measurement are found in Projects 2 (Early Education Empowerment Zones), Project 4 (Quality Rated Validation), Project 11 (Kindergarten Entry Assessment), and Project 12 (Unified Data System). The specific activities include:

- Expand the quantity and quality of data collected (Section (E)(2), Project 12).
- Incorporate an Implementation Science Framework evaluation to identify drivers for scale-up (Section (A)(2), Project 2).
- Create entry points for providers to enter and use data (Section (E)(2), Project 12).
- Continue Georgia’s Quality Rated Validation Project by implementing two additional phases (Section (B)(5), Project 4).
- Commission a study that examines quality and child outcome links (Section (B)(5), Project 4).

- Augment Georgia’s current formative assessment to implement a Kindergarten Entry Profile (Section (E)(1), Project 11).

Together these activities encompass Georgia’s ambitious reform agenda to accomplish the aforementioned goals. In summary, the table below presents the projects detailed in this grant application. The table is detailed in later sections. It is placed here to provide a context for the grant and how the proposed projects constitute a comprehensive reform agenda.

Successful State Systems	High-Quality, Accountable Programs	Promoting Early Learning Outcomes	Great Workforce	Measuring Outcomes and Progress
<p>Project 1 Grant Management</p> <p>Key Activities: Oversee the Early Learning Challenge agenda.</p>	<p>Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability</p> <p>Key Activities: Revise Quality Rated Standards. Create new incentives for providers to raise quality and parents to choose quality.</p>	<p>Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards</p> <p>Key Activities: Develop training and resources for all stakeholders in the tiers of the professional development hierarchy.</p>	<p>Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies</p> <p>Key Activities: <i>Revise Georgia’s</i> Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. Increase articulation agreements.</p>	<p>Project 11: Kindergarten Entry Assessment</p> <p>Key Activities: <i>Augment Georgia’s</i> current formative assessment to implement a Kindergarten Entry Profile</p>
<p>Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs)</p> <p>Key Activities: Identify four empowerment zones for additional services for children with high needs. Improve ELD infrastructure, Improve ELD quality.</p>	<p>Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation</p> <p>Key Activities: Validate levels of quality and validate impact of Quality Rated <i>on children’s</i> development and growth.</p>	<p>Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System</p> <p>Key Activities: Identify set of common child assessments with professional development and policy guidelines.</p>	<p>Project 10: Supporting Early Educators</p> <p>Key Activities: Expand Scholarships Program and Incentives Program. Implement Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy.</p>	<p>Project 12: Unified Data System</p> <p>Key Activities: Expand the quantity and quality of data collected. Create entry points for providers to enter and use data. Facilitate greater family engagement by making data more readily available at the program and child level.</p>
		<p>Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants</p> <p>Key Activities: Revise Quality Rated Family Engagement Standards. GELDS awareness campaign to families. Targeted professional development to Family, Friend, and Neighbor</p>		

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		caregivers		
		Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-Based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care		
		Key Activities: Implement center-based home visitation in E ³ Zs.		

Early Education Empowerment Zones

Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda also includes a project to target key areas with large numbers of children with high needs (or with a large percentage of children with high needs) and create Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). Working with partners from the Department of Community Affairs and the Department of Economic Development, the state will devote substantial resources to developing infrastructure in these zones to strengthen their early childhood system and support children's development and learning. E³Zs will be created in areas currently underserved with high-quality options. The purpose of the zones is threefold:

1. Increase availability of high-quality ELD options for children with high needs by moving current licensed and publicly funded programs to two or three stars and develop infrastructure opportunities so new three-star programs can develop (see (B) (2)).
2. Integrate new or expanded initiatives in these (soon to be) three-star programs that are specifically focused on children with high needs. These initiatives include Quality Rated supports for providers (Grant Incentives, see (B)(2) and parents (decreasing parent co-pays for parents who choose a higher rated program, see (B)(4)); enhanced professional development opportunities for educators as they teach in a high-quality Summer Program for children with high needs (see (D)(2); and expanded home visiting and family engagement (see (C)(4)).
3. Evaluate the E³Zs using an Implementation Science Framework that will help the state identify drivers for scale-up feasibility of the different components. Quality and Child Outcomes will be measured as part of the research proposed in Georgia's current Quality Rated Validation (see (B)(5)).

Within these zones we will create opportunities for families of children with high needs to access high-quality ELD programs. Key field staff will be located in these zones to facilitate opportunities, oversee the implementation of key initiatives, and coordinate public relations campaigns for high quality.

Increasing Availability of High-Quality Options

Increasing access will be tackled in two ways. First, we will work with all programs, including center based and family child care, currently operating in the area to ensure that they are rated two or three stars by 2017. This means targeting key Quality Rated supports, but also offering additional initiatives and incentives for children and families to choose high-quality options. Second, in many areas, especially economically distressed areas, there are not enough child care options. To exacerbate the problem, existing facilities are currently failing to meet basic health and safety requirements and are in danger of license revocation. Therefore, we will create incentive packages to convince businesses that have demonstrated an ability to operate high-quality facilities to locate in these areas. This unique initiative involves cooperative work between the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Georgia Department of Economic Development, and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to identify and promote usage of existing economic development incentives and new ones developed for the specific purpose of recruiting high-quality ELD programs to build currently lacking infrastructure in areas with large populations of high needs children. Financial incentive packages will leverage existing state benefits (e.g., tax breaks for businesses that create new jobs and low interest loans), include the quality-targeted incentive packages offered through Quality Rated, provide new financial incentives to augment existing ones, and provide ELD programs the opportunity to offer additional services through their program (e.g., home visiting that uses the ELD program as the hub).

One reason the innovative E³Z program will be effective is because of Georgia's existing tax incentives based on job creation. These tax incentives could result in approximately \$2.4M in additional state support through this initiative. For example, under the E³Z program, we anticipate 10 new ELD providers (small businesses) will be created. On average, child care learning centers in Georgia employ 12 staff members. The existing tax credit in most counties under the E³Z program will be \$4,000, per job, per year, for five years.

Below is a sample calculation:

$$10 \text{ centers} \times 12 \text{ employees} = 120$$

$$120 \text{ employees} \times \$4,000 = \$480,000$$

$$\$480,000 \times \text{five years} = \$2,400,000$$

Integrating New and Expanded Initiatives

As discussed above, new and expanded initiatives will be offered in the E³Zs. This includes Quality Rated supports, professional development enhanced opportunities, and expanded home visiting and family engagement activities. Additionally, we will work with the Department of Education in these areas to develop Birth to Eight Teams. These teams will meet in each community and examine further connections to sustain early learning gains in P-3. A key strength of the E³Zs is the alignment of many of these key activities, which allows for intentional and deep integration in areas where such connections have proven challenging because of geography or the populations of children served. For example, a new professional development activity developed to improve Georgia's Early Childhood Workforce is combined with the Rising Pre-K Summer Transition Program. This means that teachers will receive enhanced professional development while working with children with high needs. Similarly, an initiative to offer programs a "grant" to meet higher quality standards while guaranteeing to serve a certain number of children with high needs in high-quality programs is being combined with the Great Start home visiting model. This means that key family engagement strategies will be employed in programs serving large numbers of children with high needs. This integration helps the state meet its Early Learning Challenge goals by creating and expanding initiatives for all age groups and across all program types that will improve school readiness and reduce the achievement gap.

Implementation Science Framework for Evaluation

The E³Zs will serve as the first focal point for implementing many of the proposed projects. Implementation Science Framework will be used in the first two years of evaluating the effectiveness of the work in the E³Zs. This framework will provide the state with key data to illustrate what is needed to "scale up" these projects. Success in small scale project implementation is no guarantee of success when replicating the experience on a larger scale. The Implementation Science Framework (Metz, et al., 2013) will identify the key "drivers" that led to success in each of the E³Zs (recognizing that the drivers may vary from zone to zone). Additionally, Georgia just published a study examining Georgia's current CCR&R system that focused primarily on the technical assistance model the CCR&R staff provide for

Quality Rated. The Implementation Science Framework used in that study has provided a roadmap for Georgia to revise its current technical assistance model and ensure a consistent and evidenced-based technical assistance model for Quality Rated. This demonstrates Georgia's capacity to commission and utilize such research. A copy of the study is found in Appendix 9. Program Quality measures and Child Outcomes will be incorporated as part of the research proposed in (B)(5).

The creation of the E³Zs comes from a theoretical, as well as practical, perspective. The creation encompasses a philosophy based on the importance of focusing on child development at many different interactional levels (family, school, community). This is based on Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Bronfenbrenner, a Russian American psychologist, is best known for developing an ecological systems theory, and as a co-founder of the Head Start program in the United States. His ecological systems theory provides a perspective on the interplay between research and policy to support holistic child development. Bronfenbrenner's theory informs DECAL's reform agenda by overtly recognizing that child development and program implementation research is better informed when policies and practices encourage studies within natural, contextually relevant settings like the E³Zs. This systemic approach links the interactions of a child to his or her family (microsystem), home and school (mesosystem) and community (exosystem) to later positive development. The E³Zs are designed to implement key strategies geared toward family (home visiting), school (professional development), and community (infrastructure development) with the expectation that successful implementation will yield increased school readiness outcomes and thereby reduce the achievement gap.

In short, the E³Zs are designed to target key projects to areas of high needs and/or communities with large numbers (or percentages) of children with high needs. Working with partners from the Department of Community Affairs and the Department of Economic Development, the state will devote substantial resources to developing infrastructure in these zones and then link and align activities from other sections specifically related to quality, professional development, and family engagement. By focusing on the empowerment zones, we will be able to measure and demonstrate the impact to inform an overall statewide agenda, while having a deep and immediate impact on a high number of children with high needs. This trifecta of investment: economic infrastructure development, three-star program development,

and specific services geared toward children with high needs will facilitate the types of early learning opportunities that increase school readiness and reduce the achievement gap. Because this strategy, related to integration, transcends the various sections and underpins the state's reform agenda, the High-Quality Plan for empowerment zones is listed in this section.

High-Quality Plan for Project 2: Georgia's Early Education Empowerment Zones (Project Two)

(a) Key Goals

1. To identify four Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs).
2. To create 10 new high-quality ELD programs in the E³Zs by 2016.
3. To improve the quality of ELD programs in the four E³Zs.
4. To commission and complete an evaluation to measure overall implementation for intervention and project scale-up (using the Implementation Science Framework).
5. To incorporate new or expanded initiatives in E³Z programs.
6. To ensure that the E³Z programs operate in a culturally competent framework and address the needs of English language learners through specific initiatives.
7. To create a Birth to Eight Team in each E³Z to facilitate how the state can measure, monitor, and sustain ELD gains in P-3.
8. Ultimately, to ensure that children with high needs in the E³Zs receive high-quality early care and education that supports their families and strengthens their skills before they enter Kindergarten.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans (Project 2)

Activity 1 (Zone Identification): DECAL will identify four Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs) in the state using combined data from the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Community Affairs, the Department of Early Care and Learning, and the Department of Education. One zone will be a large metropolitan county in the Atlanta area; one zone will be a county with a mid-size city with two to three contiguous rural counties, and the final two zones will be two areas of six to seven rural counties each. This selection of variously situated counties will enable testing of the initiatives in diverse communities and with families and children of multiple socio-economic circumstances and

high needs profiles. Key data points and geomapping will be used to identify the areas that are the most underserved. Data points will include poverty rates, unemployment rates, and per capita income data. DECAL will also incorporate key access data (Pre-K wait lists, CCS compliance designations) and educational data (standardized testing scores, % of children with IEPs) from the Georgia Department of Education.

Activity 2 (Infrastructure Development): DECAL will partner with the Georgia Department of Economic Development and Georgia Department of Community Affairs to identify potential infrastructure investors in the areas with the ultimate goal of ensuring that 10 new three-star programs are located in the E³Zs by 2017 (two in three of the E³Z zones; four in the urban E³Zs). If possible we will work with existing programs; however, in counties that will make up the zones, we may need to facilitate infrastructure development and work with private or not for profit partners to locate in these areas. Working with the previously mentioned state partners, an incentive package structure will be created that builds on the incentives offered in Quality Rated, promotes use of existing economic development incentives, and augments those incentives with new ones to facilitate the development of new high-quality programs. The incentive package structure will include existing low-interest loans for capital spending, tax credits for new jobs created, and assistance from the economic development liaison to maximize available benefits. By working with providers who have consistently demonstrated the capability to operate high-quality early childhood education programs, DECAL will provide technical assistance to ensure that the program is three-star rated by the end of the first year. Additional financial incentives created through grant funds will be awarded in response to plans submitted by the providers for targeted investments in employee wages, benefits, training and education, and supplies and equipment that can be directly linked with increased quality. The Department of Community Affairs will utilize their established public relations and stakeholder engagement strategies to build community support.

Activity 3: Improve the quality in all ELD programs in the E³Zs so that by 2017, 90% of licensed and monitored programs are two or three stars. This will include: 1) utilizing existing professional development resources and incentives to ensure that all programs in the E³Zs are fully compliant with basic health and safety requirements and criteria related to Quality Rated; and 2) building on the current Quality Rated bonus packages to bring all

compliant programs to two or three stars. (see (B)(1) and Appendix 18 for a description of Quality Rated Bonus Packages)

Activity 4: Use an Implementation Science Framework to conduct an evaluation that will provide key data for eventual “scaling up.” The evaluation will be conducted concurrently with the other E³Z activities. The evaluation will help identify the “drivers” that are producing results and will be used to identify any challenges occurring as the activities in the zones are being implemented. Key evaluation activities may include participant observation (zone meetings with community partners) and interviews with key participants, including teachers and parents.

Activity 5: Create and/or expand current initiatives targeted to families of children with high needs. This includes: 1) increasing key Quality Rated incentives (grants for meeting higher quality standards and guaranteeing a certain number of slots for children receiving subsidized child care); 2) enhancing professional development experiences (cohort and coaching models developed to provide early childhood educators with enhanced instructional and critical thinking skills); and 3) expanding home visiting and family engagement through Georgia’s Great Start Program that will use child care centers as hubs for home visiting.

Activity 6: As part of Georgia’s efforts to ensure that Quality Rated Program Standards are culturally competent and address the needs of Georgia’s English language learners (see (B)(1) for the statewide effort in this endeavor), Georgia will expand the Rising Pre-K Summer Transition Program. This program began in the summer 2013 based on the first year results of the Pre-K Longitudinal Study that found English language learners were entering Pre-K more than one standard deviation behind their peers on key assessments (see Appendix 14). Therefore, DECAL designed a program with lower adult: child ratios and instruction in English (Lead Teacher) and Spanish (Assistant Teacher). Implementation and program quality results will be available by December 2013. This program will continue to be offered in selected locations statewide.

Additionally, the Rising Kindergarten Summer Transition Program will also be expanded in the E³Zs. This program, implemented for the past four years, has demonstrated significant child level gains for each year of the program (the evaluation of the fourth year will be released in December 2013). The program is designed for children who did not attend Georgia’s Pre-K or who need additional assistance to be more prepared for Kindergarten.

Activity 7: Create a Birth to Eight team in each E³Z to facilitate measuring and sustaining gains from ELD to P-3. This group will further engage community stakeholders and ensure that the state is continuing a strong birth to age 8 alignment.

Activity 8: Ensure that families of children with high needs receive support to access high-quality care. To support families selecting higher quality programs, the parent co-pay will be substantially reduced. This is detailed in (B)(3).

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Identity four Early Education Empowerment Zones		
Aligned Goal: To identify Four Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs).		
The Early Education Empowerment Zones enable the state to focus on key geographical areas in which to align activities and services. Key poverty, education, and program data will be used to create zones where children and families are currently underserved.	E ³ Zs	Use lessons learned in the E ³ Zs to replicate in other areas with concentrations of children with high needs.
Activity 2: Create 10 new three-star programs		
Aligned Goal: To create ten new high-quality early learning and development programs in the E ³ Z by 2016.		
As difficult as it is for families to find high-quality programs, it is equally difficult for ELD providers to establish businesses in areas with high unemployment rates, low per capita income, and high poverty rates. The grant will be used to encourage a climate whereby potential high-quality providers will take advantage of existing tax credits and incentives and also to create additional incentives. Incentives will include higher subsidy rates (Tiered Reimbursement), access to targeted financial incentives, access to an economic development liaison, and training assistance for new staff.	E ³ Zs	Use lessons learned in the E ³ Zs to replicate in other areas with concentrations of children with high needs.
Activity 3: Improve Quality in all E³Zs		
Aligned Goal: To improve the quality of ELD programs in the four E ³ Zs.		
Families of children with high needs are often presented with limited options when selecting high-quality ELD options. This activity, along with activity 2 will increase the number of high-quality options available to families of children with high needs. Programs that are not compliant with basic health and safety cannot participate in Quality Rated. This project will provide ELD programs with resources for additional training and professional development. Over the past three years, the state has made great gains in improving compliance and publicizing the importance of compliance. Since compliance data will be used to identify the E ³ Zs, these activities may need to be	E ³ Zs	Activities for programs that are not compliant are ongoing. Activities that are successful in the E ³ Zs will be replicated in other areas.

<p>incorporated in the first years of implementation. Programs not compliant by January 2017 will be subject to licensing revocation.</p>		
<p>Activity 4: Evaluation Aligned Goal: To commission and conduct an evaluation to measure overall implementation for intervention and project scale-up (using Implementation Science Framework)</p>		
<p>Implementation Science will provide the framework for potential scale-up. This framework will help the state identify the drivers needed for scale-up success.</p>	<p>E³Zs</p>	<p>Data from this evaluation will be used for future scale-up</p>
<p>Activity 5: Integrate Other Initiatives Aligned Goal: To incorporate new or expanded initiatives in E³Zs</p>		
<p>One of the key components of the E³Zs is the integration services and initiatives. The ELC activities conducted as part of the E³Zs are integrated in a way that will benefit children, families, and providers at all levels. Families of children with high needs often need additional services above and beyond what is found in child care. Projects designed in other sections will be implemented in these zones first.</p>	<p>E³Zs</p>	<p>Use lessons learned in the E³Zs to replicate in other areas with concentrations of children with high needs.</p>
<p>Activity 6: Address Cultural Competence and Create Additional Activities for English Language Learners Aligned Goal: To ensure that ELD programs in the E³Zs operate in a culturally competent framework and address the needs of English language learners through specific initiatives.</p>		
<p>The first activity task is addressed in (B)(1) with the revision of Quality Rated standards. The second task is to expand the Rising Pre-K Program to meet the needs of English language learners. The Pre-K Longitudinal Study found that English language learners were entering Pre-K significantly behind their peers. The activity specifically addresses this readiness gap by providing key educational services before children enter Pre-K.</p>	<p>E³Zs in areas with large numbers of English language learners (or a high percentage of English language learners).</p>	<p>These classes are offered in various parts of the state. Additional classes will be in E³Zs.</p>
<p>Activity 7: Create a Birth to Eight Team Aligned Goal: To create a Birth to Eight Team in each E³Z to facilitate how the state can measure, monitor, and sustain ELD gains in P-3.</p>		
<p>The overall theme of the grant is to strengthen and build on the state's ELD foundation. This activity will ensure that the work accomplished on the ELD foundation is seamlessly transferring to K-3.</p>	<p>E³Zs</p>	<p>Use lessons learned in the E³Zs to replicate in other areas with concentrations of children with high needs.</p>
<p>Activity 8: Access to High-Quality Care Aligned Goal: Ultimately, to ensure that children with high needs in the E³Zs receive high-quality early care and education that supports their families and strengthens their skills prior to kindergarten entry.</p>		
<p>A key goal of the grant is to ensure that families of children with high needs are selecting high-quality options. This activity will provide financial supports by reducing the parent co-pay. It is specifically addressed in (B)(3).</p>	<p>E³Zs</p>	<p>Use lessons learned in the E³Zs to replicate in other areas with concentrations of children with high needs.</p>

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Zone Identification								
Identify the four E ³ Zs	X	X						
Activity 2: Infrastructure Development								
Create investment incentive packages	X	X	X					
Identify potential E ³ Z investors to develop new programs		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Identify locations for E ³ Z new programs		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Create public awareness campaign for families and communities	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Activity 3: Improve ELD Quality								
Compliance TA Project (Project 3, (B)(2))	X	X	X					
Expand New Quality Rated Initiatives and Supports (Project 3, (B)(2))	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 4: Implementation Science Evaluation								
Identify evaluator	X							
Data collection		X	X	X	X	X		
Finalize report						X	X	
Activity 5: Align Projects								
Quality Rated projects (Project 3, Sections (B)(2-5))	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional development opportunities (Project 10, Section (D)(2))			X	X	X	X	X	X
Expand home visiting and family engagement (Project 8, Section (C)(4))			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 6: Address Cultural Competency								
Review Quality Standards (Project 3, Section (B)(1))	X	X	X					
Identify Rising Pre-K Programs (Project 3, Section (B)(4))	X		X		X		X	
Offer Rising Pre-K Program (Project 3, Section (B)(4))		X		X		X		X
Activity 7: P-3 Work Group								
Identify members and begin meeting			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 8: Parent Co-Pay								
Implement co-pay (Project 3, Section (B)(4))		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

One DECAL staff person (1 FTE) will be responsible for overseeing the project, and a Business Operations Specialist will be responsible for working with local community leaders and stakeholders to promote economic development and best business practices within each zone. The Department of Community Affairs will house two positions; one will assist the Business Operations Specialist in raising awareness about resources available to industries and

small businesses, and one will be responsible for administering and monitoring the grants issued for infrastructure development. Each of the E³Zs will have a DECAL project coordinator (4 FTE).

(e) Financial Resources

Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones E³Z **Selection Criterion:** A2

Project 2 targets geographical areas with large numbers of children with high needs (or with a large percentage of children with high needs) to create Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). Georgia will devote substantial ELC resources to developing infrastructure in these zones. E³Zs will be created in areas that currently lack high-quality ELD programs. These zones will be managed by DECAL and activities from different projects will be implemented in these zones including Center Based Home Visitation and Professional Development cohorts.

Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones E³Zs

Selection Criteria: A2

Total Project Budget: \$4,128,347

	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$2,588,507
Participating State Agency	Department of Community Affairs	\$1,539,840
Participating State Agency	Department of Economic Development	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

1. Goals listed in (A)(2)(a)
2. Quality Rated Family Engagement Standards
3. Race to the Top Evaluation
4. Spreadsheet from identifying other zones
4. CCR&R Evaluation
5. Rising Kindergarten Evaluation

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

While there are not specific performance measures for this High-Quality Plan, it is related to the performance measures discussed elsewhere in Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda. This includes increasing the number of ELD programs in the upper tiers of Quality Rated and serving children with high needs in two- and three-star programs.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

It is expected that all licensed programs and/or programs receiving public funds in the E³Zs participate. Additionally, home visiting and family engagement expansions in activity five will work with the family, friend, and neighbor care providers who serve children receiving subsidies. Georgia's Pre-K providers will provide the Rising Pre-K services.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

The E³Zs are specifically designed to address services to children with high needs. The zones are identified by using key data points that include poverty rates, unemployment rates, and per capita income data. DECAL will also incorporate key access data (Pre-K wait lists, CCS compliance designations) and educational data (standardized testing scores, % of children with IEPs) from the Georgia Department of Education.

Additionally, projects are designed to meet the needs of populations of children with high needs. The projects include expanded home visiting (low income) and the Rising Pre-K program (English language learners).

(A)(2)(c) Rationale for Selected Criteria in Focused Investment Areas

Georgia will address selection criteria (C)(1), (C)(2), and (C)(4), (D)(1) and (D)(2), and (E)(1) and (E)(2). These criteria were selected because they build upon Georgia's strong and successful ELD foundation and many of the state's current initiatives and programs.

With funds from the RTT-ELC, Georgia will create a more unified, coordinated approach to support children and families with high needs and to increase access to high-quality programs thereby promoting school readiness. The four strategies outlined above (access, investment, integration, and measurement) are all specifically designed to meet the overall ELC goals: improving quality, increasing access, and reducing the achievement gap. The selection criteria that Georgia will address accomplish this by taking a multi-faceted

approach to understanding and improving school readiness for children with high needs. Building upon the state's current systems, Georgia can utilize research-based information to strengthen a sustainable ELD system that will be a model for other states committed to the potential of their youngest citizens.

Focused Investment Area (C): Early Learning and Development Outcomes

Georgia is addressing selection criteria (C)(1), (C)(2), and (C)(4).

Focused Investment Area (C) leverages the work that has been done in the last two years to strengthen the ELD system and has the most impact on school readiness for children with high needs. Selection criterion (C)(1), Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards, is focused on the appropriate development, dissemination, and utilization of standards. Standards are foundational to ensure that children are being taught in high-quality ELD programs. Georgia has made great progress in this area. We have developed standards with documented vertical (birth-to-5 to K-3) and horizontal alignment (Georgia Performance Standards, Head Start, Work Sampling System [Georgia's Pre-K formative assessment]) and have begun the training, dissemination, and implementation process. Early Learning Challenge funds will facilitate the state's offering more professional development and expanding training beyond early childhood educators (though this is the primary audience). We also propose providing more in-depth professional development opportunities (cohort and coaching models) to help providers use standards, improve teacher child-interactions, and align instruction with formative assessments. Expanding the dissemination of the standards will especially benefit children with high needs because it helps ensure that ELD instruction is based in the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS).

Georgia is also responding to (C)(2), Supporting effective uses of comprehensive assessment systems. Building on the assessment systems in Georgia's Pre-K Program and Quality Rated, we will undertake an ambitious agenda to incorporate assessment in other ELD programs. This is important for children to have ELD experiences that effectively design instruction to meet their individual needs and to have their learning environments assessed. Furthermore, this gives the state the opportunity to expand screening services in Georgia's Pre-K Program and other ELD programs.

Georgia is not responding to (C)(3). (C)(1) and (C)(2) strongly address health and developmental outcomes. Georgia has chosen to focus on addressing child health and developmental needs through implementing standards and comprehensive assessments rather than as a separate initiative.

(C)(4), family engagement, is selected so that Georgia can expand family engagement activities and incorporate them with other projects. Families are a child's primary educator and the projects proposed under (C)(4) will strengthen partnerships and ensure that families are more than collaborators in their child's education. This will also help the state reduce the achievement gap. This is especially important because this specifically emphasizes families served by home visitation programs and children served in family, friend, and neighbor care.

The projects outlined in these sections will help the state meet its goals. Increasing the use of standards, assessments, and appropriate family engagement activities will improve the quality of ELD programs and hence the experience of children with high needs attending those programs. The impact on quality will then improve school readiness thereby reducing the achievement gap.

Focused Investment Area (D): A Great Early Education Workforce

Focused Investment Area (D) addresses workforce outcomes. Georgia's professional development system enhances the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the state's ELD workforce. Over the past five years, Georgia has raised the educational standards for Georgia's Pre-K Program and early childhood educators. These policy changes have been accompanied by an expansion of existing professional development supports that increased the level of financial aid to student-professionals; rewarded their educational attainment; rewarded licensed programs participating in Quality Rated for employing credentialed staff; and, ensured the consistent availability of high-quality training and professional development opportunities for continued professional growth. The expanded supports have the dual goal of retaining a well-prepared, qualified workforce.

Under selection criterion (D)(1), Georgia describes how its existing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework will be revised to reflect current research and the recently revised Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). Future professional development opportunities will be vetted for their alignment with the revised

workforce knowledge and competencies; research-based best practices in assessments; and working with children with high needs. Georgia has partnered with the higher education community to make available a series of progressively higher credentials beginning with an entry-level credential offered through the technical colleges, to the Birth to Five bachelor of science degree awarded by five four-year institutions. Georgia's Professional Development Registry, revised in 2010, will increase data collection activity to further track individual professional development; import registrant's professional development data through data-sharing agreements and links; identify gaps in knowledge and competencies; track trends in credentials attained; track longevity and tenure; and track indicators of positive work environment supports, such as wages, benefits, and professional development resources, across the industry.

Selection criterion (D)(2) focuses on enhanced quality training, professional development, formal post-secondary education, and financial incentives and policies that Georgia offers to the state's ELD professionals. Georgia is addressing both (D)(1) and (D)(2) because the state has a solid and robust history, particularly over the past twelve years, of addressing workforce competency; the Early Learning Challenge will allow continued enhancement and expansion of these efforts. Both are addressed because the state administrators and stakeholders recognize the impact of workforce competencies and workforce training and educational opportunities on quality instruction and child outcomes.

A key strategy in Georgia's overall plan is investment in the workforce and improving quality. To meet the goals in these two areas, it is imperative that the state make address the criteria in both (D)(1) and (D)(2). The projects outlined in (D)(1) will strengthen the framework of Georgia's ELD workforce. The projects outlined in (D)(2) will build from that framework and specifically address needs of the state's ELD workforce. By increasing the investments made in the framework and the workforce itself, the state will improve overall ELD quality which will translate into improved child outcomes and will contribute in reducing the achievement gap.

Focused Investment Area (E): Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Focused Investment Area (E) is about measurement. Because Georgia has a foundation that includes the necessary materials to create a valid and reliable Kindergarten Entry profile

and expand the current data system to measure participation in many of the state's ELD programs, Georgia is writing to both selection criteria. To best understand the impact of the ELD system on children's outcomes, Georgia needs a data system that can track not only rated programs within the TQRIS system but also track children with high needs enrolled in rated programs. Such a system coupled with a Kindergarten entry profile will allow Georgia to measure Kindergarten readiness and the factors that contribute to readiness. (E)(1) addresses Kindergarten readiness and (E)(2) addresses data. As the narrative describes, Georgia will be able to augment its current Kindergarten assessment to create a Kindergarten Entry Profile. This assessment, using a format familiar to Kindergarten teachers, will be aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards and will provide teachers and other educational leaders with the knowledge that will help them understand children's development within the first two months of entering Kindergarten.

Second, Georgia has a data system that is currently being expanded to collect more child-level data that will provide the state with key information about children's outcomes. With funds from the RTT-ELC, Georgia will expand this data system to include data from other programs. This will help the state understand what programs best prepare children for Kindergarten and beyond. The specific data projects proposed will expand our data collection capacity, which will continue to inform our research efforts and facilitate stronger evaluation capacity. Activities for this project include expanding the quantity and quality of data collected and creating entry points for providers to enter and use data. Efforts in this area will also be used to facilitate greater family engagement by making data more readily available at the program and child level.

The projects outlined in (E) are crucial to the state meeting its overall ELC goals. These projects specifically relate to the measurement strategy. The Kindergarten Entry Profile will help the state understand the status of children's growth and development at Kindergarten entry. This key data point will assure linkages to the K-3 system and help the state identify areas where the ELD strategy can be strengthened. The projects outlined in (E)(2) will build on the state's already strong ELD data foundation and provide the state with key data points that can identify where children need additional supports and where there may be quality gaps. The data collected in these two projects will help the state meet its overall Early Learning Challenge goals around improving quality, school readiness, and the achievement gap.

Additionally, Georgia is responding to the three competitive priorities that require additional narrative. We meet the criteria for Competitive Priority Two by revising the definition of family child care homes. Homes that care for more than two children will not be required to be licensed and monitored. This means that they will be required to participate in Quality Rated by 2017. All other licensed/monitored and/or publicly funded programs are required to participate by 2017. For Competitive Priority Four, we have identified an achievable agenda to increase our efforts for sustaining ELD gains through elementary grades. Georgia has made great efforts between Georgia's Pre-K Program and Kindergarten; the plan will leverage the connections made between these two programs. Additionally, the state is making considerable efforts to ensure that all children read on grade level by 3rd grade. The High-Quality Plan builds on these efforts. Finally, given Georgia's vast rural population, the state is responding to this priority. Two E³Zs are targeted to these areas, and the state is ensuring that rural counties are included in all of the projects proposed in this application. The responses to the three competitive priorities demonstrate Georgia's commitments to improving quality (increasing the requirements of licensed programs and incorporating all in the state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System), improving school readiness (assuring commitments to K-3 linkages and children in rural areas), and reducing the achievement gap (both the quality improvements and assurances of supports to rural areas.)

Identification of the two or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (C):

Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (D) the State is choosing to address

- (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.

Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (D):

Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (D) the State is choosing to address

- (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.

Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (E):

Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (E) the State is choosing to address

- (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.

(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State. (10 points)

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation in and commitment to the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability, and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children’s cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, each Participating State Agency, and the State’s Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve 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 planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOUs or other binding agreements between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations; representatives from the disability community, the English learner community, and entities representing other Children with High Needs (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; public television stations, and postsecondary institutions.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative how each piece of evidence *demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion*; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed*. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (A)(3)(a) and (b):

- For (A)(3)(a)(1): An organizational chart that shows how the grant will be governed and managed.
- The completed table that lists Governance-related roles and responsibilities (see Table (A)(3)-1).
- A copy of all fully executed MOUs or other binding agreements that cover each Participating State Agency. (MOUs or other binding agreements should be referenced in the narrative but must be included in the Appendix to the application).

Evidence for (A)(3)(c)(1):

- The completed table that includes a list of every Early Learning Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State that indicates which organizations and councils have submitted letters of intent or support (see Table (A)(3)-2).
- A copy of every letter of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils. (Letters should be referenced in the narrative but must be included in the Appendix with a table.)

Evidence for (A)(3)(c)(2):

- A copy of every letter of intent or support from other stakeholders. (Letters should be referenced in the narrative but must be included in the Appendix with a table.)

(A)(3)(a) Governance Structure: Introduction – A Solid Foundation for Grant Governance

The governance of Georgia’s Early Learning and Development (ELD) system is solidly anchored in Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). Georgia is one of the few states in the country with a department of state government dedicated solely to the ELD needs of children age birth to five, their families, and the ELD professionals who serve them. DECAL was created by the Georgia General Assembly in 2004 to develop, implement, and administer programs to enhance the well-being of Georgia’s youngest citizens and to build a solid foundation for school readiness.

This coordinated, centralized governance structure has resulted in a more efficient system for supporting and enhancing children’s ELD needs and for more effectively serving state policy makers, ELD providers, and families through one department of state government.

DECAL houses and is responsible for:

- Georgia’s Pre-K Program
- Licensing child care centers, group, and home-based child care
- The federal Child Care and Development Fund including Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, which handles child care subsidies, and the quality set-aside funds
- Federal nutrition programs (the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program)
- Quality Rated, Georgia’s tiered quality rating and improvement system
- The Head Start State Collaboration Office
- Oversight of Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and collaboration with private, nonprofit, for profit, and advocacy organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education

DECAL is headed by a Commissioner who is appointed by and reports directly to Georgia’s governor, thereby underscoring the importance of children’s early learning and development to the state’s executive leadership. DECAL is supported by an advisory board, the Board of Early Care and Learning, composed of one representative from each of Georgia’s 14

congressional districts appointed by the Governor. The board meets at least four times per year and advises/supports the work of the department; statutorily, the board is responsible for approving DECAL’s budget and for promulgating rules and regulations.

(A)(3)(a)(1): Grant Management and Collaboration

Georgia



Governor

Georgia General Assembly

**Georgia’s Children’s Cabinet/
State Advisory Council
(Birth to College)**

Includes Participating State Agencies defined in the grant; members of SAC required by Head Start Reauthorization; and other agencies that serve Georgia’s children and families.

Board of Early Care and Learning

**GA Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
Lead Agency RTT-ELC**

- Georgia’s Pre-K Program
- Child Care Licensing
- TQRIS/Quality Rated
- Head Start State Collaboration Office
- Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care
- Child Care and Development Fund (includes child care subsidies; CCR&Rs; School-Age Care; Infant/Toddler)
- CACFP/SFSP
- Quest for Quality Inclusion
- (Proposed in grant) Home Visiting Based in ELD Programs

RTTELC Advisory Committee
1 Grant Manager, 1 Research Specialist,
1 Grant Liaison,
One member per PSA, United Way, GEEARS, 2 family representatives, 2 ELD providers

**4 RTT ELC Subcommittees
(ACCESS; INVESTMENT; INTEGRATION; MEASUREMENT)**
Membership composed of families, stakeholders, ELD educators, ELC Grant Manager, and ELC Grant Liaison

**Alliance of Education Agency Heads (AEAH)
(P-20 System)**

- Department of Early Care and Learning
- Department of Education
- Board of Regents
- Technical College System of Georgia
- Student Finance Commission
- Professional Standards Commission
- Governor’s Office of Student Achievement

Key:
Reports to

Advises

Full size copy of this graphic is located in Appendix19

While responsibility for governing Georgia's ELD system rests with DECAL, the department works closely with the Georgia General Assembly, with other state child serving agencies, with the business and philanthropic communities, with child advocacy organizations, and with ELD private professional organizations. DECAL also collaborates with the agencies serving children with disabilities under IDEA Parts C and B, Section 619. Two unique entities on which DECAL's commissioner serves and with which DECAL works closely are the Georgia Children's Cabinet and the Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads. Because the missions and goals of the Georgia Children's Cabinet and the Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads align, and even in some places overlap, with DECAL's mission and goals, the members of these respective entities rely heavily on each other for advice and coordination of efforts. Also, the work of these unique entities provides a context of a continuum of care and education for Georgia's children within which DECAL's work fits and within which the work funded by the ELC grant will fall.

Georgia Children's Cabinet (Cabinet):

On July 1, 2004, First Lady Mary Perdue founded the First Lady's Children's Cabinet, consisting of all state government department heads leading departments focused on children. Subsequently, pursuant to requirements of the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, Governor Sonny Perdue created the Georgia State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care by Executive Order. In 2012, recognizing the considerable overlap in membership and areas of focus, Governor Nathan Deal created the Georgia Children's Cabinet by combining the membership of the two groups. Today, the Georgia Children's Cabinet is composed of the heads of all state agencies that serve the needs of Georgia's children from birth to age 18 and of select community, philanthropic, education, and business stakeholders. See Appendix 20 for current membership of the Cabinet.) The membership conforms to the requirements for State Advisory Councils as prescribed in the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007. The Cabinet regularly reviews the state's strategic plans and work related to children and families across state government and recommends policy and practice to improve outcomes, including the areas of child welfare, economic assistance, health, juvenile justice, and education. Serving in the role of the State Advisory Council, this group also dedicates a portion of every meeting to reviewing the ongoing systemic work designed to improve early childhood education and care. The Cabinet meets every two months. Currently, the Cabinet is co-chaired by First Lady Sandra Deal, a

retired elementary school teacher, and Katie Jo Ballard, Executive Director of the Governor's Office for Children and Families.

The Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads (Alliance):

The Alliance is Georgia's P-20 Council and is composed of the heads of the state's seven education agencies (Appendix 21 Alliance Membership). The heads of Georgia's education agencies work collaboratively to ensure a more seamless educational experience for Georgia's students from prekindergarten through K-12 to higher education and the work force. In its report, "Quality Counts" released in January 2013, Education Week awarded Georgia a score of 100 in the "transitions and alignment" category, the first state ever to receive a perfect score in this area. Georgia's Alliance began the work related to transitions and alignment between K-12 education, early learning, higher education, and the world of work. Regular updates and discussions in Alliance meetings have contributed to building an informed and trusting atmosphere that facilitates ready collaboration across agencies. The Alliance meets monthly.

While not having direct roles in the governance of Georgia's ELD system, the Cabinet and the Alliance serve as important advisors to DECAL's work by providing valuable perspective from various state and private partners. This perspective will be invaluable in accomplishing the work proposed in this grant application. Members of the Cabinet and the Alliance will be involved in determining the membership of the committees and subcommittees that will advise the work of the grant. For that reason DECAL's Commissioner will request time on the agendas of the Cabinet's and the Alliance's regularly scheduled meetings to update their members on the progress of the grant's projects. The DECAL Commissioner's Office will work directly with the appropriate support personnel for the Cabinet and Alliance to ensure time is included in the agendas for these high level updates.

While DECAL will be the lead agency for the ELC grant, responsibility for managing the grant will rest with select ELC staff members housed at DECAL, who will be advised and supported by an ELC Advisory Committee and ELC Subcommittees.

DECAL will use grant funding to hire the following staff to manage the implementation of the grant: 1. ELC Grant Manager; 2. ELC Research Specialist; and 3. ELC Grant Liaison.

The ELC Grant Manager will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the grant which will include, but not be limited to: scheduling and facilitating meetings of the Advisory Committee; serving as liaison between the Lead Agency and the Advisory Committee;

maintaining status of each project and regularly reporting to the Lead Agency; facilitating decision making and conflict resolution; fulfilling federal reporting requirements; managing the Grant Liaison; and serving as an ex-officio member of each Subcommittee. The Grant Manager will also work with the DECAL Finance Unit to maintain awareness of the grant budget to ensure that vendors/contractors are expending funds in a timely manner. If necessary, the Grant Manager or Grant Liaison will communicate with vendors/contractors to keep invoices/expenditures on track. Required qualifications for this position will be a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education or related field, experience in project management, and effective verbal and written communication skills. Preferred qualifications include background in ELD and/or social services for children; conflict resolution/consensus building, and federal grant management and reporting. The Grant Manager will report directly to the DECAL commissioner or his designee.

The ELC Research Specialist will be responsible for implementing and overseeing the validation process for Quality Rated, Georgia's tiered quality rating and improvement system; for overseeing, collecting, and maintaining performance measures for each of the proposed projects; and for providing the Grant Manager with accurate, timely data for reporting to the ELC Advisory Committee, DECAL leadership, and the U.S. Department of Education. Required qualifications for this position will be a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education or a research-based discipline, effective verbal and written communication skills, and proficiency in Excel, SPSS, or Stata computer programs. The ELC Research Specialist will work in conjunction with and report to DECAL's Director of Research and Evaluation.

The ELC Grant Liaison will be responsible for supporting the ELC Subcommittees, which will include, but not be limited to: scheduling and facilitating meetings of the Subcommittees; serving as liaison between the Advisory Committee and the Subcommittees; maintaining status of each grant project; helping to resolve hindrances/barriers to the progress of each project; facilitating communication about the grant internally and externally in conjunction with DECAL's Chief Communications Officer; and serving as an ex-officio member of each Subcommittee. The Grant Liaison will work with the Grant Manager to communicate as needed with vendors/contractors to keep invoices/expenditures on track. Required qualifications for this position will be a bachelor's degree in education, English, or communications and experience in project management; meeting scheduling/coordination; and effective verbal and written

communication skills. The ELC Grant Liaison will report to the ELC Grant Manager.

DECAL will convene an ad hoc committee composed of stakeholders and representatives from the Cabinet and the Alliance to identify the membership of the ELC Advisory Committee. The ELC Advisory Committee will work closely with the ELC Grant Manager to ensure that Georgia's ELD Reform Agenda is being accomplished by the successful implementation of the grant projects. The Advisory Committee will be composed of no more than 20 members: one representative from each Participating State Agency, United Way, Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS), two family representatives, and two ELD providers. The Advisory Committee will maintain an overall knowledge of how each project is progressing. While the Grant Manager will be responsible for making decisions relating to the daily implementation of the grant projects, the Advisory Committee may be called on to advise the Grant Manager on any major operational decisions that arise as the projects are being implemented. Major decisions will be made by consensus facilitated by the ELC Grant Manager. If or when conflict arises at any level of the grant governance, the Advisory Committee may be called on to advise the Grant Manager in resolving the conflict. If the conflict cannot be successfully resolved by the Grant Manager and Advisory Committee, resolution will rest with the DECAL commissioner in consultation with members of the Cabinet and the Alliance as needed. The Advisory Committee also will identify the members of the ELC Subcommittees and work with the Grant Manager and Grant Liaison to convene and orient the Subcommittees to their tasks. The members of the Advisory Committee will be volunteers, but the members who are not state employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other ancillary travel expenses when travel to meetings is required. Family representatives, ELD educators, and ELD providers will also receive a stipend for attending. The ELD programs for which the ELD educators work will receive funds to pay for substitute teachers to enable the regular teachers to attend the Advisory Committee meetings. The Advisory Committee will meet a minimum of every three months; more meetings may be convened if needed. Schedules for these meetings will vary to accommodate the various members of the committee, i.e., families, business people, ELD Educators, ELD Administrators, etc. When possible and appropriate, technology may be used for convenience of committee members and to minimize travel expenses.

The ELC Subcommittees, which will be composed of families, ELD stakeholders, ELD providers, and ELD educators, will support the work of the grant by providing a different

perspective to the grant projects. There will be four Subcommittees, advisory in nature, each focusing on one of the four strategies incorporated into the grant: Access, Investment, Integration, and Measurement (previously discussed in detail in selection criteria (A)(1) and (A)(2)).

The Access Subcommittee will review the work of the relevant grant projects to ensure that the projects are resulting in increased access for each and every child, especially children with high needs, to high-quality ELD experiences in all areas of the state.

The Investment Subcommittee will ensure that the projects are resulting in increased investment for sufficient resources and professional learning opportunities for the state's ELD workforce.

The Integration Subcommittee will review the grant's progress to ensure that key programs and services for Georgia's children and families are being aligned and integrated with Georgia's educational standards and other programs.

The Measurement Subcommittee will ensure that the work of the grant is resulting in new or enhanced existing data systems and that the grant includes a research agenda that measures the impact and outputs of the projects.

Each Subcommittee will be composed of no more than 10 members representing stakeholders; families, especially families of children with high needs; ELD administrators; and ELD educators. The ELC Grant Manager and the ELC Grant Liaison will serve as ex-officio members of each committee. The members of the Subcommittees will be volunteers, but members who are not state employees will be reimbursed for mileage when travel to meetings is required. Family representatives and ELD educators will also receive a stipend for attending. The ELD programs for which the ELD educators work will receive funds to pay for substitute teachers to enable the regular teachers to attend the Subcommittee meetings. The Subcommittees will meet twice a year. These semiannual meetings will include an update on the overall progress of the grant; then each Subcommittee will meet independently where they will be guided through activities to solicit feedback on grant projects from their Subcommittee's perspective: Access, Investment, Integration, or Measurement. The meeting will conclude with the Subcommittees' assessment of the grant's progress relating to these four strategies including recommendations as needed. Schedules for these meetings will vary to accommodate the various members of the Subcommittees, i.e., families, business people, ELD Educators, ELD Administrators, etc.

The Subcommittees are not responsible for carrying out the work of the project; their role is to help ensure that the work of the grant aligns with the four strategies underlying the grant. The actual work of the grant will be accomplished by staff members from the various Participating State Agencies or other partners identified in other sections of this grant application. Their work, however, will be amply supported by the ELC Advisory Committee and the ELC Subcommittees.

As the graphic of Georgia's ELD Governance System illustrates, DECAL, the ELC Advisory Committee, and the ELC Subcommittees are intentionally structured to reflect the layered, complex milieu of collaborative partnerships aimed at integrating optimal feedback from the maximum number of stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families.

(A)(3)(a)(2): Governance Roles and Responsibilities

Following are the governance related roles and responsibilities of the key players in Georgia's ELC grant proposal:

Lead Agency – DECAL: As the Lead Agency for the grant, DECAL will hire and house the grant management positions of ELC Grant Manager, ELC Research Specialist, and ELC Grant Liaison. The DECAL commissioner will regularly communicate the status of the grant to Georgia Children's Cabinet and Georgia's Alliance of Education Agency Heads and solicit advice relating to the grant as needed. The DECAL commissioner will convene an ad hoc committee to identify the members of and convene the ELC Advisory Committee. If consensus for major decision making or if conflicts cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Advisory Committee, the DECAL commissioner will intervene. Ultimately, responsibility for successful implementation of the ELC grant in Georgia will rest with DECAL.

The Georgia State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (Council): The Council, originally created by Executive Order of Georgia's Governor in 2009, became part of the Georgia Children's Cabinet in 2012. The relationship between the Lead Agency and the Cabinet has been described earlier in this section. The Cabinet will serve in an advisory role to the governance of the ELC grant as needed.

Participating State Agencies: Each Participating State Agency (those mandated in the grant and those that choose to participate) are represented throughout the governance model.

Participating State Agencies will be among the members of the ad hoc committee convened by DECAL's commissioner to create the ELC Advisory Council. The ELC Advisory Council will include one representative from each of the Participating State Agencies. The ELC Subcommittees will include representatives from the Participating State Agencies and other ELD stakeholders. Consequently, the Participating State Agencies will be actively involved in decision making, conflict resolution, and project guidance and support.

The State's Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA: The State's Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA is housed in the Georgia Department of Public Health, one of the grant's Participating State Agencies. The Georgia Department of Public Health is a member of Georgia Children's Cabinet, which will serve in an advisory role to the ELC grant. Because of the relationship between the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA and the Georgia Department of Public Health, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA will provide advice as needed.

Other Partners: In some cases, DECAL will enter into Memorandums of Understanding with entities other than Participating State Agencies (e.g., the Georgia Family Connection Partnership) to accomplish the work of a particular project. All entities directly involved with implementing a project proposed in this grant application will have input into grant governance at some level in the governance model.

Families/Parents: DECAL's commissioner firmly believes that people impacted by the state's policies, procedures, and programs should have input into the creation and implementation of those policies, procedures, and programs. To that end, DECAL regularly engages various groups of stakeholders, including families/parents, through a system of stakeholder advisory committee meetings during which participants can talk directly to the commissioner about issues relating to their group or community. Over 200 citizens from a variety of roles are currently engaged in the stakeholder advisory network. For the ELC grant families/parents of Georgia's children, especially families/parents of children with high needs or with developmental disabilities, will be included in the membership of the ELC Advisory Committee and EACH of the ELC Subcommittees.

(A)(3)(a)(3): Decision Making and Conflict Resolution

The responsibility for decision making and for resolving conflicts or disputes will rest

with the ELC Grant Manager in consultation with the Advisory Committee as needed.

Decision Making – Policy: If the decision that must be made involves policy, the Advisory Committee will relate the needed decision to the Lead Agency including the situation out of which the need for a decision arose and the Advisory Committee’s recommendations for the decision. If authority to make the policy decision lies within the purview of DECAL, the DECAL commissioner will be responsible for making the decision. If the policy decision involves another state agency, the DECAL commissioner will work with his peer(s) in the appropriate state agency(ies) to make the decision. If DECAL and the appropriate state agency(ies) cannot reach a satisfactory decision, the decision will go to the Governor or his designee for his input and decision.

Decision Making – Operational: If the decision that must be made involves the operations or implementation of a grant project, the ELC Grant Manager will be responsible for decision making. If requested by the Grant Manager, the Advisory Committee may advise the Grant Manager about the decision. If after consulting with the Advisory Committee the Grant Manager cannot reach a satisfactory decision, the DECAL commissioner will make the decision.

Conflict/Dispute Resolution: If or when a conflict or dispute arises at the operational/implementation level of a project, the ELC Grant Manager will be responsible for helping to resolve the conflict or dispute; the ELC Grant Manager may request advice from the ELC Advisory Committee. If the conflict or dispute arises at a higher level in the governance structure, i.e., the Advisory Committee, the ELC Grant Manager will work to resolve the conflict. If the Grant Manager cannot resolve the conflict satisfactorily, the DECAL commissioner will decide how to resolve the conflict. If necessary, the Governor or his designee will be the final arbiter.

(A)(3)(a)(4): Involving Appropriate Representatives in Planning and Implementation

Under the governance model for Georgia’s ELD System and the ELC Grant, representatives from Participating State Agencies, ELD providers, parents and families, including parents and families of children with high needs, and other key stakeholders will be actively involved in advising the implementation of the activities proposed in this grant application. Each of these groups will be included on the ELC Advisory Committee and on the ELC Subcommittees that will serve as active advisors to the ELC grant management staff.

(A)(3)(b) Commitment of Participating State Agencies

(A)(3)(b)(1) Memoranda of Understanding

(A)(3)(b)(2) Scopes of Work

(A)(3)(b)(3) Signatures

Signed Memoranda of Understanding and Scopes of Work are located in Appendix 22.

(A)(3)(c) Commitment of Stakeholders

(A)(3)(c)(1)

Letters of Intent/Support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations are located in Appendix 23.

(A)(3)(c)(2)

Letters of Intent/Support from ELD stakeholders, policy makers, ELD advocates, legislators, etc. are located in Appendix 24.

High-Quality Plan to Establish Commitment to the State Plan from PSAs and Stakeholders

(a) Key Goals

1. To effectively manage Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge grant.
2. To meaningfully communicate with and involve key stakeholders in shaping and successfully implementing the grant.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: To identify and hire necessary personnel to successfully manage the day-to-day operations of the grant.		
Aligned Goal: 1		
To ensure that the grant is implemented in accordance with the grant application and state and federal guidelines to accomplish the goals of the grant	As the Lead Agency where these positions will be housed, DECAL will be responsible for this activity.	N/A
Activity 2: Engage key stakeholders in advising the grant management team to help ensure the successful implementation of Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge grant.		
Aligned Goal: 2		

<p>To ensure that DECAL and the grant management team have adequate and appropriate support and advice as they implement the grant.</p> <p>To ensure that people impacted/affected by the grant projects have a voice in informing project implementation, e.g., ELD providers, educators, and families, especially families of children with high needs.</p>	<p>As the Lead Agency, DECAL will work with stakeholders to ensure appropriate composition of advisory committee and subcommittees.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 3: Provide a high level overview and updates at regularly scheduled meetings of the Georgia Children’s Cabinet/SAC and the Alliance of Education Agency Heads Aligned Goal: 2</p>		
<p>To ensure that, at a high level, the work of the ELC grant is coordinated and aligned with the work of state entities with similar missions, goals, and customers.</p>	<p>In conjunction with the chairs of the GCC and AEAH and other personnel who set the agendas for these meetings.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Hire personnel								
Post job positions; schedule interviews	X							
Hire and orient staff	X							
Management staff fulfill job responsibilities	Ongoing							
Activity 2: Stakeholder engagement								
Meet with key stakeholders to determine membership of ELC Advisory Committee		X						
Invite people to join ELC Advisory Committee		X						
ELC Advisory Committee identifies membership of ELC Subcommittees		X						
Invite people to join ELC Subcommittees		X						
Advisory Committee and Subcommittees begin work	Ongoing							
Activity 3: Provide ongoing updates to GCC and AEAH								
Receive a commitment from Children’s Cabinet and AEAH for time on each agenda to update groups on status of grant	X							
Begin reporting at regularly scheduled meetings of the GCC and the AEAH		X	Ongoing					

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

Activity	Party/Parties Responsible for Implementing Activity	Key Personnel Assigned to Activity
Activity 1: Hire personnel	DECAL	DECAL Commissioner/ Human Resources unit
Activity 2: Stakeholder engagement	DECAL leadership involved with grant design	ELC Grant Manager; ELC Grant Liaison
Activity 3: Provide ongoing updates to GCC and AEAH	DECAL Commissioner	Special Assistant to DECAL Commissioner/Support staff for GCC/AEAH

(e) Financial Resources

Project 1: Grant Management

Selection Criterion: A3

Project 1 outlines the governance of the ELC grant. The responsibility for managing the grant will rest with select ELC staff members housed at DECAL, who will be advised and supported by an ELC Advisory Committee and ELC Subcommittees. DECAL will use grant funding to hire the following staff to manage the implementation of the grant: 1. ELC Grant Manager; 2. ELC Research Specialist; and 3. ELC Grant Liaison.

Project 1: Grant Management		
Selection Criteria: A3		
Total Project Budget: \$1,943,197		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$1,610,715
Participating State Agency	All required agencies serve on the Children's Cabinet	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

Each piece of evidence below demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion by demonstrating the support from the ELD community at large including but not limited to: Governor Nathan Deal, Legislators, Participating State Agencies, Other child serving agencies (Division of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities), Early Learning Intermediary Organization, Georgia Children's Cabinet (formerly the State Advisory Council), ELD provider

professional organizations, advocate, business and philanthropic communities, Head Start,

Evidence for (A)(3)(a) and (b):

- For (A)(3)(a)(1): An organizational chart that shows how the grant will be governed and managed. (Appendix 19)
- The completed table that lists Governance-related roles and responsibilities (see Table (A)(3)-1).
- A copy of all fully executed MOUs or other binding agreements that cover each Participating State Agency. Evidence for (A)(3)(c)(1) (Appendix 22)
- The completed table that includes a list of every Early Learning Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State that indicates which organizations and councils have submitted letters of intent or support (see Table (A)(3)-2). (Appendix 23)
- A copy of every letter of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils. (Appendix 23)

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

Needs of the different types of ELD programs in Georgia including licensed and registered child care learning centers, group day care homes, family day care homes, Early Head Start, Head Start and informal child care will be addressed in the governance structure as representatives of the different types of ELD programs will be represented on the ELC Advisory Committee and the ELC Subcommittees.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

Needs of children with high needs in Georgia including, but not limited to, children from low-income families, children with developmental disabilities, English learners, and foster children will be addressed in the governance structure as families of children with high needs and organizations that serve children with high needs will be represented on the ELC Advisory Committee and on each of the ELC Subcommittees.

Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities	
Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)	Lead Agency; administer the day-to-day operations of the grant through the Grant Manager, Research Specialist, and Grant Liaison. Maintain communication about the grant with Alliance of Education Agency Heads and Georgia Children’s Cabinet.
Georgia Head Start State Collaboration Office	Serve in an advisory role as a member of Georgia Children’s Cabinet and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)	Lead agency for Kindergarten Entry Assessment; serve in an advisory role as a member of Georgia Children’s Cabinet; the Alliance of Education Agency Heads; and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH)	Serve in an advisory role as a member of Georgia Children’s Cabinet and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS)	Serve in an advisory role as a member of Georgia Children’s Cabinet and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Governor’s Office for Children and Families (GOCF)	Lead agency for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting grant; serve in an advisory role as a member of Georgia Children’s Cabinet and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA)	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the Alliance of Education Agency Heads and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (BOR)	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the Alliance of Education Agency Heads and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the Alliance of Education Agency Heads and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Department of Economic Development	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Professional Standards	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the Alliance of

Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities	
Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
Commission (GaPSC)	Education Agency Heads and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP)	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads (AEAHA)	Serve in an advisory role to DECAL commissioner and the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Georgia Children’s Cabinet	Serve in an advisory role to DECAL commissioner and the ELC Coordinating Committee. Includes membership of the Georgia State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care.
Georgia Public Broadcasting	Serve in an advisory role as a member of the ELC Coordinating Committee.
Other Entities	
State advisory council on early childhood education and care	Now part of the Georgia Children’s Cabinet; see notation above.
State Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA	Represented by the Georgia Department of Public Health; serve in an advisory role as a member of Georgia Children’s Cabinet and the ELC Coordinating Committee.

Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable)	
List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State	Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)?
Black Child Development Institute (BCDI)-Atlanta Affiliate	Y
Georgia Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (GACCRRA)	Y

Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable)	
List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State	Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)?
Georgia Association on Young Children (state affiliate of NAEYC)	Y
Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities	Y
Georgia Child Care Association	Y
Latin American Association	Y
Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS)	Y
Georgia Head Start Association	Y
Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education (GPEE)	Y
Georgia Student Finance Commission	Y
United Way of Metro Atlanta	Y
Voices for Georgia’s Children	Y

(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant. (15 points)

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration funding; MIECHV program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help

achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

The State's response to (A)(4)(b) will be addressed in the Budget Section (section VIII of the application) and reviewers will evaluate the State's Budget Section response when scoring (A)(4). In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to (A)(4)(a) and (A)(4)(c) and may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

Evidence for (A)(4)(a):

- The completed table listing the existing funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan (see Table (A)(4)-1).
- Description of how these existing funds will be used for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.

Evidence for (A)(4)(b):

- The State's budget (completed in section VIII).
- The narratives that accompany and explain the budget, and describe how it connects to the State Plan (also completed in section VIII).

Introduction

Coordination and collaboration among Georgia's state agencies has allowed us to align and integrate policies and public resources across multiple federal, state, local, and private funding streams to build a strong, high-quality early learning and development system and deliver services to all families and children, especially children with high needs to improve outcomes. **The Early Learning Challenge affords us the opportunity to boldly reexamine and evaluate how the state spends existing funds to achieve positive outcomes for children, to expand the state's plan to bring additional funding into the system to support the infrastructure, and to make permanent changes to enhance and improve existing programs.** The budget and sustainability plan proposed demonstrates Georgia's commitment and initial efforts to rethink how the considerable financial investments can be best directed close the achievement gap for the state's high needs birth to five populations.

In section (A)(4)(a), Georgia provides information about existing funds which will be used to support the state plan and how our re-examination of funds due to the Early Learning Challenge will help the state system of early care and education operate more effective on a permanent basis. In section (A)(4)(b) and Section VIII, Georgia presents the detailed budget by project and State Participating Agency. The narrative describes how the state will efficiently and effectively use the existing funds and grant funds achieve the goals in the state plan. In section (A)(4)(c), Georgia provides our strategies for sustaining the work after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of children with high needs served will be maintained and expanded.

Georgia has assembled a group of interwoven projects that collectively impact school readiness needs for the state's children with high needs. These projects address school readiness from a multi-faceted approach, targeting improvement for the state's vast network of Early Learning Development programs (including child care centers, family and group day care homes, Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start, Special Education Preschool), implementing projects that address what children are being taught in Early Learning and Development (ELD) programs and how they are being taught, ensuring that families and teachers are included, and focusing on the specific high-needs population crucial to impacting school readiness for the state. Some projects

are focused at the state level; however, others target local programs in communities across the state. It is important that the work of these RTT-ELC projects, taken as a whole, will result in better outcomes for children and families across the state and especially in communities with concentrated needs.

Each project has been carefully designed to align, coordinate, and expand work that is currently being implemented across the state. Furthermore, each project contains sustainability components that will continue to impact Georgia's children with high needs long after the grant ends.

As will be shown in the upcoming narratives, Georgia's ELD system has a long history of reflective practice, effectively using research and data to make statewide decisions and impact classroom environments and instruction. The RTT-ELC will continue that tradition. Data, research, and evaluation are woven into each project and will inform the state in measuring the overall impact of RTT-ELC.

Georgia's ELD leaders are excited at the opportunity to implement the following projects. In these economic times, it is crucial that the quality early learning and development programs be available to all children in the state, especially those children with high needs. The implementation of these projects will promote school readiness for all Georgia children, including children with high needs.

(A)(4)(a) Use of Existing Funds to Support the RTT-ELC State Plan

Georgia has devoted substantial state funding, as well as federal funding, to build and strengthen our Early Learning and Development system, to support ELD programs statewide in delivering services to children and families, and to support the delivery of local health, education, and social services to strengthen Georgia's children and families. In this section, we describe the existing funding streams that are key to supporting the early childhood infrastructure and meeting the goals of the state plan. However, **Georgia does not stop there; instead, we intend to employ the Children's Cabinet to boldly reexamine and evaluate how we expend existing funds to achieve positive outcomes for children, to expand our plan to bring additional funding into the system to support the infrastructure, and to make permanent changes to enhance, improve and extend existing programs.**

We do not intend to simply augment existing state and federal funds with the RTT-ELC grant funds to speed up improvements to our ELD system and return to status quo when the grant funding ends. Instead, we intend to transform how we invest in the system to have lasting impact, redirect existing funds to focus on projects that directly relate to improved outcomes for children and families, and build a broader awareness of the value of early childhood investments.

As described in (A)(3)(1), though the responsibility for governing Georgia's ELD system rests with DECAL, the department works closely with the Georgia General Assembly, with other state child serving agencies, with the business and philanthropic communities, with child advocacy organizations, and with ELD private professional organizations. DECAL also collaborates with the agencies serving children with disabilities under IDEA Parts C and B, Section 619. DECAL's commissioner serves on and works closely with the Georgia Children's Cabinet and the Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads. Because the missions and goals of the Georgia Children's Cabinet and the Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads align with DECAL's mission and goals, the members of these respective agencies rely heavily on each other for advice and coordination of efforts. The work of these two organizations provides the context of a continuum of care and education for Georgia's children within which DECAL's work fits.

The Georgia Children's Cabinet, which is composed of the heads of all state agencies that serve the needs of Georgia's children from birth to age 18 and select community, philanthropic, education and business stakeholders, regularly reviews the state's strategic plans and work related to children and families across state government. The Children's Cabinet recommends policy and practice to improve outcomes, including the areas of child welfare, economic assistance, health, juvenile justice, and education. Serving in the role of the State Advisory Council, this group also dedicates a portion of every meeting to reviewing the ongoing systemic work designed to improve early childhood education and care.

The members of the Children's Cabinet lead the agencies that receive federal, state and private funds shown in Table (A)(4)-1. **The Children's Cabinet will boldly reexamine and evaluate how we use these existing funds, strategize better ways to integrate and leverage public and private funds, examine research and evaluation data from the RTT-ELC projects and services, and redirect existing funds to transform the way we invest in the**

system to achieve improved outcomes for children and families.

The discussion below describes how existing funds are used to support the projects to achieve the goals in the state plan and how the funds are linked to the RTT-ELC five key areas of reform.

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) supports six major initiatives, which, in turn buttress the work of the ELC State Plan. Together, these projects will sustain high-quality ELD programs, ensure that children with high needs have access to high-quality ELD programs, promotes the continued development of the knowledge and skills of the early childhood workforce, and ultimately improves the school readiness of children when they enter kindergarten.

1. Quality Rated is Georgia’s tiered quality rating and improvement system designed to increase the quality of ELD programs thereby enhancing children’s development and promoting school readiness; increase family’s understanding and demand for higher quality; and increase professional development opportunities, benchmarks and rewards for a range of early childhood educators and programs. Quality Rated is linked to the RTT-ELC reform area “High-Quality, Accountable Programs” and is the driver for achieving the state plan goals. CCDF funding for Quality Rated supports Project 3, Quality Rated Access and Availability, and Project 4, Quality Rated Validation. CCDF is used to provide the infrastructure for Quality Rated including the program administration, environment rating scale observations, technology, reporting and evaluation, and collaboration and coordination. Quality Rated will help Georgia achieve two goals in the State Plan: Goal 1, increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs, and Goal 2, improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide. This promotes access to high-quality programs for children with high needs.

2. Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies deliver a range of services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “High-Quality, Accountable Programs” and “A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce.” CCDF funding for the child care resource and referral agencies supports Project 3, Quality Rated Access and Availability, and Project 5, Early Learning and Development Standards. The child care resource and referral agencies provide professional development, coaching and technical assistance for Georgia’s TQRIS, Quality

Rated, to early childhood educators in ELD programs across the state. Agencies also offer professional development on the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) to early childhood educators, family, friend, and neighbor providers, and families. The child care resource and referral agencies also promote access to high-quality programs for families: All GA Kids, the statewide referral center, provides information and referrals to ELD programs for families and consumers and the inclusion coordinators in each of the child care resource and referral agencies work to promote and increase high-quality inclusive child care options for children with disabilities and their families in their communities. Child care resource and referral services will help Georgia achieve two goals in the State Plan: Goal 1, increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs, and Goal 2, improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide. This promotes access to high-quality programs for all children with a focus on children with high needs.

3. Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care provides services linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “High-Quality, Accountable Programs” and “A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce.” CCDF funding for the Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care supports Project 3, Quality Rated Access and Availability, Project 2, Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs), and Project 5, Early Learning and Development Standards. CCDF is used to deliver professional development, coaching, mentoring, technical assistance, mini-grants, and an interactive website to support early childhood educators working with infants and toddlers to improve the quality of care for children ages birth to three. Technical assistance, professional development, including coaching and mentoring, will be provided in the E³Zs to assist ELD programs participating in Quality Rated. Statewide professional development engages and empowers early childhood educators who teach infants and toddlers to use the GELDS. The Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care will help Georgia achieve two goals: Goal 1, increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs, and Goal 2, improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide.

4. Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System delivers a range of services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform area “A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce.” CCDF funding for the system supports Project 10, Supporting Early Childhood

Educators. The Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System supports the ELD workforce by ensuring the quality of professional development opportunities by approving the individuals who supply professional development and approving the content of the course work; funding the Professional Development Registry allowing all early childhood educators to track their training, credentials, and certification; providing the Scholarships program to help early childhood educators pay tuition and fees to obtain credentials and degrees; and providing the Incentives retention program to financially reward early childhood educators who earn credentials and degrees and remain in the ELD program. The Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System will help Georgia achieve Goal 2: improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide.

5. Childcare and Parent Services provides services using CCDF funding which are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” and “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children.” CCDF funding supports Project 2, Early Education Empowerment Zones,” and project 3, Quality Rated. Childcare and Parent Services assists eligible families by providing subsidies to help families afford ELD programs and tiered reimbursement for families choosing ELD programs that are Quality Rated (Georgia’s TQRIS). The program serves working families with low incomes; teen parents attending school; or children who are homeless, in state custody or in protective services. Higher reimbursement rates (tiered reimbursement) are paid to Quality Rated ELD programs to encourage programs to attain higher quality, thereby improving access for children with high needs. Childcare and Parent Services will help Georgia achieve Goal 3: reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers.

6. Child Care Services, a division of DECAL, delivers a range of services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform area “High-Quality, Accountable Programs.” Child Care Services promotes the health and safety of children served in all licensed and registered ELD programs through licensing and monitoring; investigating alleged violations of health and safety rules; providing technical assistance and professional development; and promulgating rules, policies and procedures for child care centers, family day care homes and group day care homes. Child Care Services also monitors family, friend and neighbor providers who receive subsidies. CCDF funding used by Child Care Services supports Project 2, Early Education Empowerment Zones to

increase the number of licensed ELD programs in the E³Z communities. Child Care Services will help Georgia achieve Goal 1: increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs.

State-Funded Preschool: Georgia’s Pre-K Program provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” and “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children.” Georgia’s Pre-K Program provides funding for 84,000 four year olds to attend a high-quality, universal early learning and development program the year before they enter kindergarten. The program serves children in a full day, full school year calendar. These state funds from the Georgia Lottery for Education provided high-quality classroom-based preschool services to approximately 60% of Georgia’s four-year-old population. Of these children, 59% are from families who receive means-based services. Research demonstrates that children in Georgia’s Pre-K exhibited significant growth during their pre-k year across all domains of learning, including language and literacy skills, math skills, general knowledge, and behavioral skills (Peisner-Feinberg, et al., 2013).

These funds support high-quality ELD programs for children with high needs the year before they enter kindergarten, focused specifically on promoting school readiness and strengthening children’s skills at kindergarten entry. Funds also support ongoing professional development of Pre-K teachers and administrators, which supports Project 10, Supporting Early Childhood Educators. Georgia’s Pre-K Program also supports Project 3, Quality Rated Access and Availability and Project 12, to help Georgia achieve Goal 1, increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs, and Goal 4, increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes.

Head Start Collaboration Office provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” and “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children.” The Head Start Collaboration Office funding will continue to build and sustain collaborative partnerships between Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant Head Start, other Early Learning and Development programs and state agencies to improve the quality of services for children and families with low incomes. This funding has assisted Georgia in establishing data-sharing agreements with all 31 Head Start grantees in the state. These collaborations build a more integrated and comprehensive service delivery system to improve

families' access to services and to promote a high level of programmatic quality, which supports several projects: Project 2, Early Education Empowerment Zones, Project 3, Quality Rated Access and Availability and Project 12, Unified Data System, which will help Georgia achieve Goal 1, increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs, and Goal 4, increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes.

Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant Head Start provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” and “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children.” Head Start funding will continue to support high-quality ELD programs and comprehensive services for families with low income and children with disabilities to support children’s skill at kindergarten entry. Funds are used for screening and formative assessments; health and nutrition; social services; and parent education and engagement. Georgia has successfully braided Georgia’s Pre-K funding and Head Start funding to deliver comprehensive services to four-year-old children in 120 classroom. Georgia’s Pre-K funding supports the 6.5 hour instructional day; Head Start funding supports screening, health, nutrition, social services and parent education and engagement. Head Start services support Project 6, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, and Project 12, Unified Data System, which will help Georgia achieve Goal 1, increase the availability of high-quality programs for families of children with high needs, and Goal 4, increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes.

Title I of ESEA provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform area “Measuring Outcomes and Progress” and supports Project 11, Kindergarten Entry Assessment, and Project 12, Unified Data System. Title I funding focused on ensuring that all children meet state academic standards and is focused on local education agencies serving children in poverty. Funding supports direct services and resources for students and families that will help Georgia achieve Goal 3: reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers.

Title II of ESEA provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Measuring Outcomes and Progress,” and supports Project 11, Kindergarten Entry Assessment. Title II funding provides teacher preparation and professional development to ensure that Georgia’s teachers are qualified and that technologies are integrated into the classrooms serving

communities with high needs populations. Professional development related to the testing, deployment and ongoing use of the Kindergarten Entry Assessment will help Georgia achieve Goal 4: increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes.

IDEA, Part B, Section 619 provides preschool special education services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children,” and “Measuring Outcomes and Progress.” Services support Project 6, Comprehensive Assessment Systems. IDEA, Part B, Section 619 funding provides special education and related services to children with disabilities ages three to five years old in the least restrictive environment through local education agencies. Funding supports services through Individualized Education Programs that will help Georgia achieve Goal 3, reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers, and Goal 4, increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes.

IDEA, Part C provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children,” and “Measuring Outcomes and Progress.” IDEA, Part C funding supports Georgia’s interagency service delivery system, Babies Can’t Wait, for infants and toddlers (children ages birth to three years) with developmental delays or disabilities and their families to identify and address health, behavior, and the developmental needs to improve child and family outcomes and support school readiness. These services supports Project 6, Comprehensive Assessment Systems and Project 12, Unified Data System. Babies Can’t Wait services are provided in the child’s natural environment including ELD programs. Funding also supports professional development on the use of comprehensive assessments to support the identification and intervention for children with developmental delays or disabilities and to provide appropriate services for children and families. IDEA, Part C will help Georgia achieve Goal 3, reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers, and Goal 4, increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes.

Title V, Maternal and Child Health Block Grant provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children,” and “Measuring Outcomes and Progress.” Title V funding supports a myriad of initiatives designed to promote optimal health, reduce disparities,

combat infant mortality, prevent chronic conditions, and improve access to quality health care, especially for those with low incomes or limited availability of care. The Department of Public Health implements family-centered, community-based, systems of coordinated care for children with special health care needs; and provides toll-free hotlines and assistance in applying for services to pregnant women with infants and children who are eligible for Medicaid. Children 1st identifies and screens children (ages birth to five) at risk for poor health and developmental outcomes, refers them to appropriate services and monitors their health status. Children 1st supports Project 6, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, and Project 12, Unified Data System. Title V funding also provides home visiting services, Great Start Georgia, which incorporates developmental screening, parent education and parent-child interaction to identify and address health, behavior, and the developmental needs to improve child and family outcomes by implementing evidence-based home visiting service strategies and expanding the coordination of services within at-risk communities. Great Start Georgia supports Project 2, Early Education Empowerment Zones, Project 6, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, and Project 12, Unified Data System. Title V services will help Georgia achieve Goal 3, reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers, and Goal 4, increase measurement capacity for program quality and child outcomes.

Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program provides services that are linked to the RTT-ELC reform areas “Successful State Systems,” “Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children,” and “Great Early Childhood Education Workforce.” Striving Readers funding builds on the state’s infrastructure developed with Reading First and Early Reading First to implement a comprehensive, birth-through-grade-12 approach to literacy in economically distressed communities with low socio-economic status families. Evidence-based professional development and technical assistance are provided to administrators, teachers, including ELD programs, and families; a major focus of professional development is using data to inform instruction. This supports Project 10, Supporting Early Childhood Educators and Project 12, Unified Data System. Classrooms are equipped with extensive literacy resources to promote children’s engagement with text and create opportunities for children to meet reading benchmarks. Striving Readers will help Georgia achieve Goal 3: reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers.

Race to the Top/ K-12 Reform funding supports new strategic approaches to school improvement. The P- 20 Statewide Longitudinal Data System, called GA AWARDS, is the education data system that extends from preschool to post-secondary education, aligning with the RTT-ELC reform area “Measuring Outcomes and Progress” and supports Project 12, Unified Data System. GA AWARDS has been made available to researchers to mine the data and answer critical educational policy and evaluation questions. Key research topics and advocacy areas include: (1) effectiveness of educator preparation programs; (2) effectiveness of strategies and interventions implemented within the State’s RT3 proposal, and (3) educational background of students who experience the least difficulty in transitioning to college.

Georgia responded to the Race to the Top/K-12 Reform invitational priority, “Improving Early Learning Outcomes,” and received \$1.4 million to design and implement professional development strategies that improve the quality of teacher-child interactions in Georgia’s Pre-K Program using the Classroom Assessment and Scoring System (CLASS), which links to the RTT-ELC reform area “Great Early Childhood Education Workforce.” The Improving Early Learning Outcomes funding increases the knowledge, skills, and education of early childhood educators, which supports Project 10. Race to the Top/K-12 Reform will help Georgia achieve Goal 2, improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide, and Goal 3, reduce the achievement gap between young children with high needs and their same-age peers.

The **Georgia Lottery for Education** provides financial support to students for post-secondary studies through the HOPE program, which supports the RTT-ELC reform area “A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce.” HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally) is Georgia’s scholarship and grant program to help eligible students attend Georgia’s public and private colleges and universities and public technical colleges. Funding for the HOPE program supports Project 10, Supporting Early Childhood Educators. Since the HOPE program began in 1993, over \$7 billion have been awarded to more than 1,643,000 students in Georgia. In state fiscal year 2012, over \$530 million was dispersed in HOPE grants and scholarships for 211,325 students.

The HOPE Scholarship is based on a student achieving and maintaining a prescribed grade point average. The HOPE Grant is available to residents of Georgia who enroll at any

Georgia technical college to earn a certificate or diploma, regardless of high school graduation date or GPA upon graduation. Many of the Technical Certificates of Credit can be obtained online, and the HOPE Grant helps early childhood educators pay for the cost of the credentials while they continue to work in ELD programs. This program is fully funded by the lottery.

Georgia has recently made some improvements on the HOPE Scholarship, including a 3% increase in award amounts for the 2013-2014 school year. Georgia has also continued to ensure that part-time students are eligible for the HOPE Scholarship.

Beginning the fall semester of 2013, Governor Nathan Deal proposed and the General Assembly approved, adding funding to the HOPE Grant for the Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grants (SIWDG). This grant provides funding for three career areas identified as high demand careers for Georgia. One of the career area is early childhood education. The grant provides \$500 for eligible students enrolled in Early Childhood Care and Education and taking nine or more credit hours. Students enrolled in Early Childhood Care and Education programs but taking eight credit hours or less will receive \$250. These amounts are in addition to the amounts normally provided under the HOPE Grant.

The HOPE program will help Georgia achieve Goal 2: improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide.

State and Foundation funds are used by **Family Connection Partnership** to provide the infrastructure and deliver services to local Family Connection Collaboratives in each of Georgia's 159 counties. Each collaborative serves as local decision-making body for its community and develops and implements plans to improve results in five areas: healthy children; children ready for school; children succeeding in school; strong families, and self-sufficient families to improve child and family outcomes and reduce the achievement gap. The Family Connection Partnership's work is linked to RTT-ELC reform areas "High-Quality, Accountable Programs," and "Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children." Family Connections supports Project 3, Quality Rated, and Project 5, Early Learning and Development Standards. Family Connections will help Georgia achieve Goal 2: improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide.

Foundations, Corporations and Private Funders recognize that the quality of early learning and development programs in our state matters...to our children, our families, our

education system, our economy, and our future. These foundations, corporations, and funders support Quality Rated, Georgia's tiered quality rating and improvement system, and support the state's efforts to increase the number and percentage of children with high needs who are enrolled in high-quality early learning and development programs. As outlined in Section (B)(1), these funds support Project 3, Quality Rated, and will help Georgia achieve Goal 2: improve the overall quality of early learning programs and early childhood instruction statewide.

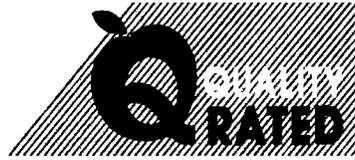
United Way of Greater Atlanta supports a number of networks and programs to provide children and their families with resources to improve their chances at success. This includes supporting early childhood development, child care subsidies, and professional development. Projects include Early Reading First, Get Ready to Read, Babies Born Healthy, and Early Learning Property Management. The United Way of Greater Atlanta provides funding for Quality Rated to help ELD programs improve learning environments, attain higher ratings, and sustain long-term quality by supporting bonus packages that include professional development, materials, and equipment.

Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) promotes school readiness for children from birth through five. Leveraging strategies informed by research, policy, and practice, GEEARS focuses on physical, emotional, academic, and communication skills. GEEARS serves as a bridge for Georgia's families, business community, and policy leaders to promote high-quality, evidence-based programs and systems; engage in a public education campaign to foster parental involvement and increase public awareness and support; and promote increased quality, accessibility, and affordability of early childhood care and education. GEEARS facilitates the public awareness campaign for Quality Rated, Georgia's tiered quality rating and improvement system.

The Zeist Foundation addresses the needs of at-risk children and families in the areas of education, health and human services, and arts and culture. The Zeist Foundation provides funding to Quality Rated to improve the quality of ELD programs and promote access for children with high needs.

The Cox Foundation provided over \$1 million in marketing placements for the Quality Rated public awareness campaign. Creative production of the Quality Rated public awareness campaign was provided by Turner Broadcasting.

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choose the right early education program for your child



PNC funds professional development early childhood educators in Quality Rated ELD programs. IBM donated Young Explorer computer stations to three-star Quality Rated ELD programs serving children with high needs.

Voices for Georgia's Children is a nonprofit child policy and advocacy organization that envisions a Georgia where children are safe, healthy, educated, employable, and connected to their family and community. Voices, along with thirteen partners, sponsor Georgia's Pre-K Week annually the first week of October. During Georgia's Pre-K Week, legislators visit over 150 Pre-K classrooms in their communities, reinforcing their interest in high-quality early education.

Please refer to the chart, Summary of Georgia's RTT-ELC Projects Supported with Other Funds, which aligns the existing funding streams with the RTT-ELC projects and the goals of the state plan.

(A)(4)(a): Use of Existing Funds to Support the RTT-ELC Plan																
Summary of Georgia's RTT-ELC Projects Supported with Other Funds																
Funding Stream & Agency	A. Successful State Systems Projects		B. High Quality, Accountable Programs Projects		C. Promoting Early Learning Outcomes Projects				D. Great Workforce Projects		E. Measuring Outcomes & Progress Projects		State Plan Goals			
	1) Grants Management	2) L Z	3) Quality Rated Access & Availability	4) Quality Rated Validation	5) GE EDS	6) Comprehensive Assessments	7) Family Engagement	8) Center-Based Home Visiting	9) Workforce Knowledge & Competencies	10) Supporting Educators	11) KLA	12) Data	1) Increase availability	2) Improve quality of ELD	3) Reduce the achievement gap	4) Increase measurement
CCDF: DECAL. <i>Quality Rated</i>			X	X									X	X		
CCDF: DECAL. <i>Care Resource de Regional</i>			X		X								X	X		
CCDF: DECAL. <i>GA Program for Infant & Toddler Care</i>		X	X		X								X	X		
CCDF: DECAL. <i>Professional Dev. System</i>									X					X		
CCDF: DECAL. <i>Childcare de Private Services</i>		X	X											X		
CCDF: DECAL. <i>Child Care Services</i>	X												X			

(A)(4)(a): Use of Existing Funds to Support the RTT-ELC Plan																
Summary of Georgia's RTT-ELC Projects Supported with Other Funds																
Funding Stream & Agency	A. Successful State Systems Projects		B. High Quality, Accountable Programs Projects		C. Promoting Early Learning Outcomes Projects			D. Great Workforce Projects		E. Measuring Outcomes & Progress Projects	State Plan Goals					
	1) Grants Management	2) F/Z	3) Quality Rated, Access & Availability	4) Quality Rated Validation	5) GLEDS	6) Comprehensive Assessments	7) Family Engagement	8) Center-Based Home Visiting	9) Workforce Knowledge & Competencies	10) Supporting Educators	11) KIA	12) Data	1) Increase Availability	2) Improve quality of ELD	3) Reduce the achievement gap	4) Increase measurement
State-Funded Preschool: DECAL, Georgia's Pre-K Program			X						X							X
Federal Head Start Collaboration Grant: DECAL		X														
Federal Head Start: Grantee Agencies						X							X			
Title I, ESEA: Ga. Department of Education											X				X	
Title II, ESEA: Ga. Department of Education												X				X
IDEA, Part B, Section 619: Ga. Department of Education						X									X	X

(A)(4)(a): Use of Existing Funds to Support the RTT-ELC Plan Summary of Georgia's RTT-ELC Projects Supported with Other Funds																
Funding Stream & Agency	A. Successful State Systems Projects		B. High Quality, Accountable Programs Projects		C. Promoting Early Learning Outcomes Projects			D. Great Workforce Projects		E. Measuring Outcomes & Progress Projects	State Plan Goals					
	1) Grants Management	2) F/Z	3) Quality Rated Access & Availability	4) Quality Rated Validation	5) GFIDS	6) Comprehensive Assessments	7) Family Engagement	8) Center-Based Home Visiting	9) Workforce Knowledge & Competencies	10) Supporting Educators	11) KEA	12) Data	1) Increase Availability	2) Improve quality of ELD	3) Reduce the achievement gap	4) Increase measurement
IDEA Part C: Ga. Department of Public Health Title V & State Funding: Ga. Department of Public Health. <i>Children 1st</i>						X					X			X	X	X
Title V: MIECHV: Governor's Office for Children and Families. <i>Great Start Georgia</i>		X				X								X	X	
Striving Reader's, Ga. Department of Education										X		X			X	

(A)(4)(a): Use of Existing Funds to Support the RTT-ELC Plan																
Summary of Georgia's RTT-ELC Projects Supported with Other Funds																
Funding Stream & Agency	A. Successful State Systems Projects		B. High Quality, Accountable Programs Projects		C. Promoting Early Learning Outcomes Projects			D. Great Workforce Projects		E. Measuring Outcomes & Progress Projects	State Plan Goals					
	1) Grants Management	2) F/Z	3) Quality Rated Access & Availability	4) Quality Rated Validation	5) GET DS	6) Comprehensive Assessments	7) Family Engagement	8) Center-Based Home Visiting	9) Workforce Knowledge & Competencies	10) Supporting Educators	11) KFA	12) Data	1) Increase Availability	2) Improve quality of ELD	3) Reduce the achievement gap	4) Increase measurement
RTT K-12 Reform. Ga. Department of Education											X				X	
Ga. Lottery for Education. Ga. Student Finance Commission									X				X			
State & Private: Family Connections Partnership			X		X									X		
Foundations, Corporations & Private Funders			X											X		

(A)(4)(b) Use of Grant Funding

Detailed information about the use of the RTT-ELC funds is provided in the Budget Summary Tables and Budget Narratives in Section VIII. See Budget Narrative 1 for a list of projects and activities, along with the corresponding selection criteria and cost organized by Participating State Agency.

(A)(4)(c) Sustainability

Georgia has a long history of supporting and funding early learning and development programs through both executive and legislative support as demonstrated through:

- 20 years of a universal, statewide Pre-K Program focusing on school readiness for all of Georgia’s four year olds
- Dedication of lottery funds to early learning and development
- Dedication of lottery funds to the HOPE program for post-secondary studies
- Creation of a single department dedicated to services for children birth to age five
- Consolidation of both federal and state funding streams focused on supporting young children to DECAL
- Active, enthusiastic support of Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS

In addition, Georgia has been able to secure generous support from public/ private partnerships. Over \$6 million has been donated to support the Quality Rated, Georgia’s tiered quality rating and improvement system.

Yet it was imperative that Georgia purposely and thoughtfully planned for sustainability of projects when creating the State Plan. To ensure that much of the work funded by the ELC grant could be sustained and to ensure that the number and percentage of children with high needs served by ELD programs in the state will be maintained or expanded, Georgia employed four strategies. Each strategy is discussed; a table provides a listing of each project and the funding stream that will be used to sustain the project.

1. Invest in building tools, systems, and resources that only incur a one-time cost but will have a lasting impact.

Many projects proposed invest in moving systems and processes online, such as the data projects to improve the Cross Agency Child Data System and build the Training Registration system into a unified, online system. Other projects propose strategic taskforce work that will connect early learning content to build a more seamless system for children and early childhood educators as proposed in our projects with standards, assessment, and workforce competencies.

The Cross Agency Child Data System and the Training Registration system will be maintained by DECAL at the same annual cost level required to maintain existing systems. The strategic taskforce work proposed in our projects with standards, assessments, and workforce competencies will be completed. Stakeholder engagement in the development and completion of these tools, systems, and resources will ensure they meet the needs of Georgia's diverse families, early childhood educators, and ELD programs and will help promote their statewide use.

2. Redirect existing funds to focus on the ELC projects and activities that are shown to increase access to high-quality programs for children with high needs, are directly related to increasing program quality, and are linked to increased skills for school readiness for children at kindergarten entry.

As outlined in (A)(2), Georgia will use Implementation Science to determine the drivers that identify projects that are most impactful. Through the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs), Georgia will be able to focus services on the areas of the state with the highest needs while also determining which projects will be the most feasible and productive for "scale up" statewide. As discussed in (A)(4)(a), the Children's Cabinet will examine research and evaluation data and recommend ways to redirect existing funds to transform the way we invest in the system to achieve improved outcomes for children and families. This will allow Georgia to target funding to the wisest investments for the greatest impacts.

Georgia's Quality Rated will be maintained and supported with the existing state and federal CCDF and the generous support from public/private partnerships.

During the grant period, many early childhood educators will obtain higher credentials, diplomas, or degrees. The investment in their professional development will have a lasting impact. However, ongoing support for early childhood educators to increase knowledge and

skills will continue to be provided using the current state and federal CCDF.

3. Building broader public awareness of the value of early childhood investments

With the 20-year history of its Pre-K Program, Georgia's citizens have been witness and have rallied support for Pre-K services; however, there is an ongoing need to maintain and expand the support of the importance of the birth to age five period of development. Through Quality Rated, Georgia has seized this opportunity, leveraging the support from private partnerships to launch a statewide public awareness campaign in 2013. The ELC grant would allow Georgia to build broader public awareness. Georgia feels that increasing public awareness of the value of early childhood investments is critical to sustainability. By the end of the grant period, families and the public will be more aware of the importance of the birth to age five period for children's growth and development and will be aware of the importance of choosing Quality Rated ELD programs.

4. Commitment from the ELD community as shown by the letters of support

As demonstrated by the quantity and diversity of the support, Georgia has a statewide commitment from the early learning community to implement the State Plan. Letters from over 90 of partners and stakeholders express their commitment and support for building and maintaining an integrated ELD system. Relationships between and among these partners are strong. Collaborative partnerships and engaged stakeholders strengthen the ELD system and allow Georgia to leverage services and resources to assist vulnerable families and improve outcomes for children.

The table below will provides a listing of each project, the sustainability strategy, and the funding stream that will be used to sustain the project.

(A)(4)(c) Sustainability				
Georgia's Sustainability Plan				
A. Successful State Systems	B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs	C. Promoting Early Learning Outcomes	D. Great Workforce	E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress
<p><u>Project 1</u> Grant Management</p> <p>Sustainability: Project completed by the end of the grant period. Governance structure maintained.</p>	<p><u>Project 3:</u> Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability</p> <p>Sustainability: Existing CCDF state and federal funds; private funds.</p>	<p><u>Project 5:</u> Early Learning and Development Standards</p> <p>Sustainability: Project completed by the end of the grant period. Maintained ongoing by Department of Early Care and Learning using CCDF state and federal funds; <i>Georgia's Lottery for Education funds-Georgia's Pre-K Program</i> funding</p>	<p><u>Project 9:</u> Workforce Knowledge and Competencies</p> <p>Sustainability: Project completed by the end of the grant period. Ongoing maintenance by Department of Early Care and Learning using CCDF state and federal funds, <i>Georgia's Lottery for Education funds-HOPE Scholarship, HOPE Grants</i></p>	<p><u>Project 11:</u> Kindergarten Entry Assessment</p> <p>Sustainability: KEA completed by the end of the grant period. Georgia Department of Education will use state and federal funds to support the ongoing use and administration of the KEA.</p>
<p><u>Project 2:</u> Early Education Empowerment Zones E³Z</p> <p>Sustainability: Project completed; data informs ELD system improvements.</p>	<p><u>Project 4:</u> Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation</p> <p>Sustainability: Validation complete; data used to inform system improvements. Maintained ongoing by Department of Early Care and Learning using CCDF state and federal funds.</p>	<p><u>Project 6:</u> Comprehensive Assessment System</p> <p>Sustainability: Project completed; Maintained ongoing by CCDF state and federal funds; <i>Georgia's Lottery for Education funds-Georgia's Pre-K</i> funding; Department of Public Health state funds; IDEA Parts C and B state and federal funds.</p>	<p><u>Project 10:</u> Supporting Early Childhood Educators</p> <p>Sustainability: Project completed. Ongoing support for early childhood educators by Department of Early Care and Learning using CCDF state and federal funds; <i>Georgia's Lottery for Education funds-HOPE Scholarship, HOPE Grants, and Georgia's Pre-K Program</i> funding.</p>	<p><u>Project 12:</u> Unified Data System</p> <p>Sustainability: Projects completed. Data feeds continued by each agency. Department of Early Care and Learning maintains data systems using state lottery and state and federal CCDF.</p>

(A)(4)(c) Sustainability				
Georgia's Sustainability Plan				
A. Successful State Systems	B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs	C. Promoting Early Learning Outcomes	D. Great Workforce	E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress
		<p><u>Project 7:</u> Family Engagement Community Grants</p> <p>Sustainability: Project completed; resources infused into communities. Ongoing maintenance by Department of Early Care and Learning using CCDF state and federal funds.</p>		
		<p><u>Project 8:</u> Supporting Families through Center-Based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care</p> <p>Sustainability: <i>Governor's Office for Children and Families</i> continues home visiting using MIECHV; data informs ELD system improvements.</p>		

Georgia has demonstrated its expertise and capacity to build a statewide ELD system; its capacity to sustain programs and services that the research and evidence show are effective; and its commitment to building school readiness (A)(1). Georgia's ELD system is designed to ensure that children are well prepared for the K-12 educational experience and beyond. With the help of RTT-ELC funding, Georgia will strengthen the existing foundation of services and supports for children birth to five, extend the other components of the early childhood system,

and make and sustain permanent changes to enhance and improve programs. Transforming the way we invest in the system will ensure sustainability and will ensure that the number and percentage of children with high needs served by ELD programs in the state will be expanded.

Table (A)(4)-1 Existing other federal, state, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.

Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015^a	Fiscal Year 2016^a	Fiscal Year 2017^a	Total
CCDF, State: DECAL	\$51,751,256	\$52,469,641	\$52,607,271	\$52,607,271	\$209,435,439
CCDF, Federal: DECAL	\$187,348,787	\$184,319,903	\$181,395,230	\$181,395,230	\$734,459,150
State-Funded Preschool: DECAL <i>Georgia's Pre-K Program</i>	\$289,222,657	\$299,232,510	\$312,173,630	\$312,356,030	\$1,212,984,827
State Funds: DECAL Child Care Licensing, Monitoring, and Technical Assistance	\$1,200,00	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$4,800,000
Federal Head Start State Collaboration Grant DECAL	\$218,750	\$218,750	\$218,750	\$218,750	\$875,000
Federal Head Start* to Grantees	\$202,883,041	\$206,374,697	\$202,247,203	\$202,247,203	\$813,752,144
Title I, ESEA: Georgia Department of Education	\$481,120,684	\$507,653,229	\$507,653,229	\$507,653,229	\$2,004,080,371
Title II of ESEA Georgia Department of Education	\$58,431,591	\$47,323,575	\$47,323,575	\$47,323,575	\$200,402,316
IDEA, Part B, Section 619: Georgia Department of Education	\$319,801,048	\$341,035,390	341,035,390	341,035,390	\$1,342,907,218
IDEA, Part C: State contributions Georgia Department of Public Heath	\$9,141,713	\$9,127,631	\$9,140,982	\$9,140,982	\$36,551,308
IDEA, Part C: Federal Contributions Georgia Department of Public Health,	\$14,489,756	\$14,618,917	\$13,312,382	\$13,312,382	\$55,733,437
Children 1st: State Funding Georgia Department of Public Health Point of entry for early identification of and referrals for children with special needs.	\$4,718,319	\$4,718,319	\$4,718,319	\$4,718,319	\$18,873,276

Table (A)(4)-1 Existing other federal, state, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.					
Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015^a	Fiscal Year 2016^a	Fiscal Year 2017^a	Total
Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program: Governor’s Office for Children and Families: Home visiting and Great Start Georgia service.	\$2,570,377	\$3,635,264	\$3,635,264	\$3,903,062	\$13,743,967
TANF: Federal Contributions DHS, Family assistance, employment services	\$330,741,739	\$330,741,739	\$368,035,000	\$368,035,000	\$1,397,553,478
TANF: State Contributions DHS, Family assistance, employment services	\$173,368,527	\$173,368,527	\$173,368,527	\$173,368,527	\$693,474,108
USDA/CACFP: DECAL, Team Nutrition Grants	\$0	\$337,885	\$0	\$0	\$337,885
CACFP: DECAL, Meals and snacks for eligible children ages birth to 18	\$99,545,550	\$94,035,113	\$99,545,550	\$99,545,550	\$392,671,763
Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program: Georgia Department of Education, GA will receive approximately \$27M this year. 95% is sub-granted to LEAs. The amount shown is dedicated to serve the birth to five population.	\$3,847,500	\$3,847,500	\$3,847,500	\$3,847,500	\$15,390,000
Race to the Top: Georgia Department of Education, Classroom Assessment and Scoring System (CLASS)	\$432,531	\$508,781	\$465,183	Sustain	\$1,406,495
Statewide Longitudinal Data System: Georgia Department of Education	\$5,951,527	\$6,338,039	\$5,303,039	Sustain	\$17,592,605
HOPE Grants: Georgia Student Finance Commission, Scholarships for students pursuing an ECE certificate, diploma or AA degree.	\$3,447,994	\$3,547,553	\$3,547,553	\$3,547,553	\$14,090,653

Table (A)(4)-1 Existing other federal, state, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.					
Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015^a	Fiscal Year 2016^a	Fiscal Year 2017^a	Total
State Strategic Industries Workforce Grants: Georgia Student Finance Commission, 4,000 Grants for Early Childhood Education Students	\$3,895,621	\$3,895,621	3,895,621	3,895,621	\$15,582,484
USDA/CACFP: DECAL, Team Nutrition Grants	\$0	\$337,885	\$0	\$0	\$337,885
State & Private Funds: The Family Connection Partnership	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$800,000
Foundation: United Way of Greater Atlanta: TQRIS, Substitute Teacher Program, Get Ready to Read Program, Early Learning Property Management Program, Partners Advancing Childhood Education	\$9,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$ 6,000,000	\$27,000,000
Private philanthropic grant funds: Rollins Center for Language & Literacy; Atlanta Speech School, East Lake Early Learning Academy	\$386,000.00	\$294,438.00	\$302,833.00	\$307,102.00	\$1,290,373.00
Private philanthropic grant funds: Rollins Center for Language & Literacy; Atlanta Speech School: Read Right from the Start: Y Project	\$1,208,397.00	\$700,000.00	\$800,000.00	\$900,000.00	\$3,608,397.00
Private philanthropic grant funds: Rollins Center for Language & Literacy; Atlanta Speech School: Read Right from the Start: Sheltering Arms Project	\$240,000.00	\$550,000.00	\$700,000.00	\$700,000.00	\$2,190,000.00
Private philanthropic grant funds: Rollins Center for Language & Literacy; Atlanta Speech School: Read Right from the Start Rollins Online learning project	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$3,000,000.00

Table (A)(4)-1 Existing other federal, state, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.					
Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015^a	Fiscal Year 2016^a	Fiscal Year 2017^a	Total
Foundation: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students: TQRIS Public Awareness	\$130,000	\$155,000	\$295,000	\$185,000	\$765,000
Foundation: Zeist Foundation	\$0	\$50,000	To be determined	To be determined	\$50,000
Foundation: Cox Foundation TQRIS Public Awareness	\$0	\$1,000,000	To be determined	To be determined	\$1,000,000
Corporate: PNC TQRIS Professional Development	\$0	\$200,000	To be determined	To be determined	\$200,000
Corporate: Turner Broadcasting TQRIS Creative Production-Messaging, Images, TV & Radio	\$0	200,000	To be determined	To be determined	\$200,000
Corporate: IBM TQRIS Young Explorer Computers	\$0	\$52,000	To be determined	To be determined	\$52,000
Corporate: 22squared-phone app for Family Referral Center	\$0	\$25,000	To be determined	To be determined	\$25,000
Totals	\$2,255,293,365	\$2,299,312,907	\$2,343,664,198	\$2,338,643,276	\$9,236,913,746
^a Fiscal Year 2015-2017 amounts are projections.					
*Head Start funding also includes Early Head Start and Migrant Head Start.					

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (10 points)

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative how each piece of evidence *demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion*; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs* are considered and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (B)(1):

- The completed table that lists each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State and the elements that are included in those Program Standards (Early Learning

and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, Qualified Workforce, Family Engagement, Health Promotion, Effective Data Practices, and Other), (see Table (B)(1)-1).

- To the extent the State has developed and adopted a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System based on a common set of tiered Program Standards that meet the elements in selection criterion (B)(1)(a), submit--
 - A copy of the tiered Program Standards;
 - Documentation that the Program Standards address all areas outlined in the definition of Program Standards, demonstrate high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards, and are linked to the States licensing system; and
 - Documentation of how the tiers meaningfully differentiate levels of quality.

Introduction

Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, is the framework that is improving quality statewide and is increasing the number of high-quality options available to children and families. Though it is embedded in all of Georgia's ELD strategies (access, investment, integration, and measurement), it serves as the implementation driver for improving access to higher quality experiences for children with high needs. It is through Quality Rated that such access will be ensured for children in every county in the state.

Quality Rated was officially launched in January 2012 and now, as of September 2013, includes over 17.5% of all eligible ELD providers, including 28% of child care centers, 10% of family day care homes, 14% of group day care homes, 433 Georgia's Pre-K providers, and 48 Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. In less than two years, families and children in 83% of the counties across the state now have a Quality Rated option in their community. To ensure the availability of safe, healthy, high-quality ELD options to all families, the Department of Early Care and Learning is authorized and empowered to establish, maintain, extend, and improve the regulation of early care and education programs by providing consultation and implementation of such programs and by licensing and inspecting periodically all such programs to ensure their adherence rules and regulations. Therefore, Governor Nathan Deal **has set the expectation that all providers granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs shall be required to participate in Quality Rated no later than June 30, 2017.**

Below, subsection (B)(1)(a) explains how Quality Rated is based on a set of tiered program standards that include all necessary elements. Subsection (B)(1)(b) explains how Quality Rated has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence that lead to improved learning outcomes. Finally, subsection (B)(1)(c) explains how Quality Rated is linked to the state licensing system for ELD programs, including the state's bold plan to include all programs in Quality Rated – thus increasing access for children with high needs. After a brief summary, Georgia's High-Quality Plan to improve its already strong Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement system is outlined.

Brief Overview of Quality Rated

Embedded in Quality Rated is a philosophy that recognizes the individuality and uniqueness of providers as well as a belief that all types of programs can and will improve quality with adequate support and flexibility. Four key elements comprise Quality Rated (standards, supports, financial incentives, and consumer education), and these elements reflect that philosophy and demonstrate a commitment from the state to create a quality system that is both collaborative and supportive. It is through careful and methodical design along with research studies and feedback that Quality Rated will measurably increase access to higher quality programs for children and families. The four elements are described below:

- 1) **Standards.** Quality Rated includes multiple standards in professional development, nutrition and physical activity, family engagement, intentional teaching practices, ratios and group sizes, and an independent quality observation. A detailed description of these standards is included below. It is the culmination of standards that lead to a 1-, 2-, or 3-star rating. This rating informs families and the public about the level of quality a program provides. Accountability and monitoring components are embedded in Quality Rated to determine how well programs meet and continue to meet the standards (More information about the program standards, as specified in the ELC application, is provided in a later section of (B)(1)).
- 2) **Supports** for programs and professionals to encourage participation and improve quality. Supports include ongoing professional development, on-site technical assistance, assistance in developing a Quality Rated portfolio, and a live “hotline” to immediately respond to any issues a program may have.
- 3) **Financial incentives** to help programs improve learning environments, attain higher ratings, and sustain long-term quality. All Quality Rated levels are supported by incentive packages that include training, materials, and equipment; and tiered reimbursement for programs serving children receiving subsidy.
- 4) **Consumer education** that informs families and the public about the importance of quality in early and school-age care and education. Georgia, like many other states, uses stars to indicate the levels of quality and inform and educate families.

Easy and widespread access to information about ratings is important to families, businesses, and the public. Information on ELD program ratings is available on the DECAL and Quality Rated website or through the 1.888.ALLGAKids referral phone number.

The development of Quality Rated's program standards began in 2006. Georgia's rigorous approach in developing the standards provides key evidence that the standards demonstrate and reflect quality. The development included several steps: First, an in-depth literature review was conducted, and two statewide stakeholder feedback groups (one to develop the standards and one to review them) were convened. The stakeholder feedback groups included early care and education faculty from colleges and universities, faith-based program representatives, ELD program administrators and teachers from centers and family day care homes, special education faculty, child care resource and referral staff, DECAL and GaDOE staff, and many more. The work of these two stakeholder groups was then reviewed by a national expert committee (composed of Judy Collins, Judy Langford, and Joan Lombardi). Once the standards were developed, they were subjected to an independent, research study conducted in Georgia by scholars from the FPG Child Development Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill. (Appendix 25) The recommendations produced by this process were the basis of the Quality Rated standards that were formally adopted. Even after the standards were formalized, Georgia conducted focus groups, practiced rating programs, and ensured alignment with Head Start and the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) Standards.

In summary, Quality Rated systemically approaches, assesses, improves, and communicates the level of quality in Georgia's early education programs. The purposefulness in creating and implementing Quality Rated has been nationally recognized for an ongoing commitment to stakeholder engagement, public and private investment, and research-based standards. Since its launch in January 2012, Quality Rated has been and continues to be a source of pride for the state.

(B)(1)(a) TQRIS based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards

Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early childhood educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices

Based on the approach described below (and discussed in (B)(5)), Georgia's rating system centers on standards that are measurable and organized in a way that meaningfully differentiates program quality levels across 1-, 2-, and 3-star levels. These standards reflect high expectations of program excellence informed and aligned with the Head Start and NAEYC Standards. Furthermore, they represent meaningful research-based quality levels beyond Georgia's required foundation of licensing compliance (Appendix 26). Quality Rated's Program Standards are organized into two categories that examine structural and process quality within ELD settings. Structural quality is measured using a program portfolio that supports continuous quality improvement plans and requires documentation of how programs have met the criteria within the Program Standards, and process quality is measured during an unannounced site visit using the appropriate Environment Rating Scales.

1) Early Learning and Development Standards / Georgia's Intentional Teaching Practices

In June 2013, Georgia introduced a revised set of high-quality, research-based early learning standards for children birth to age five called the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) (Appendix 27). The GELDS are the result of a two-year alignment study (Appendix 28) and revision project that began in 2010. The alignment study was conducted by national experts, Drs. Sharon Lynn Kagan of Teachers College at Columbia University and Catherine Scott-Little of University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The GELDS cover all essential domains of school readiness and address what children birth to kindergarten should know and be able to do as well as their disposition toward learning.

The GELDS are foundational to Quality Rated. Programs receive points based on their use of GELDS in the lesson planning and assessment process. Training and technical assistance on the appropriate use of the standards is being coordinated by Georgia State University and supported in the field by Georgia's child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&R), Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) and The Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GAPITC).

The GELDS are specifically and purposefully embedded in Standard 4: Intentional Teaching Practices. Programs under review in the QRIS cannot receive full points at even the lower tiers of Quality Rated unless they can demonstrate that their curricula and lesson plans align with the GELDS. This is in line with recommendations to embed GELDS in lower levels of TQRIS rather than including them at only the middle or upper tiers (Smith, Robbins, Stagman, & Kreader, 2012). The GELDS are also reflected in Standard 1 where programs receive points for their annual professional development plans. GELDS training, offered at no cost, is part of Georgia's state approved training. The GELDS and the training associated with them are discussed in further detail in (C)(1).

2) A Comprehensive Assessment System

Georgia's current Comprehensive Assessment System is intended to provide information about the process and context of young children's learning and development. This information is to help ELD professionals make informed instructional and programmatic decisions that foster optimum learning and development for each and every child. Programs that can appropriately incorporate child assessment at all levels will provide higher quality experiences that benefit children with high needs. Georgia's Quality Rated includes requirements for screening, for formative assessment, for measures of environmental quality, and for measures of the quality of adult-child interactions.

Quality Rated criteria includes requirements for both screening and formative assessment. Programs seeking higher ratings must use assessments and screenings routinely and appropriately to generate specific child level data that informs instructional practices. Specifically, programs do not receive full points for Standard 4: Intentional Teaching Practices systems are discussed further in (C)(2), and specific information can be found in the Quality Rated Manual. As part of Georgia's continual ELD quality improvement, the state is moving toward a more intentional use of screening and assessment as described in (C)(2).

Quality Rated's classroom environment and teacher-child interaction are measured using the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessment instruments. The ERSs cover a series of global measures including, but not limited to, teacher child interactions, health and safety, instructional practices, and learning environment. Georgia utilizes the scales appropriate for family child care (Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised [FCCERS-R]; Harms, Cryer, and

Clifford, 2007), infant toddler care (Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised [ITERS-R]; Harms, Cryer, and Clifford, 2003), and preschool settings (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised [ECERS-R]; Harms, Clifford, and Cryer, 2005). Programs not only receive an ERS as part of the rating process but also receive technical assistance around an ERS baseline observation that is administered prior to the writing of the quality improvement plan that informs technical assistance. This provides programs the opportunity to work on elements of their program where they have scored low below quality expectations to learn how to use classroom assessments in their continuous quality improvement process.

3) Early Childhood Educator Qualifications

A qualified early care and education workforce is a critical part of Quality Rated. Early childhood educator qualifications are captured in Quality Rated Standard 1: Director and Teacher Qualifications. To demonstrate Georgia's investment and commitment to early childhood educators, a key benchmark in measuring quality, 35% of the total portfolio points are captured in this standard. A qualified workforce is necessary to improve quality of classroom environments and experiences for children. Without a qualified workforce, families of children with high needs are limited in their access to high-quality programs.

Quality Rated standards align with and are supported by Georgia's professional development system (see selection criterion (D)(2)) that encompasses the Georgia Professional Development Registry (Appendix 29), Georgia's Workforce and Knowledge Competency Framework (Appendix 30), Career Levels/Pathway (Appendix 31), and Trainer and Training Approval Process (Appendix 32) For this standard, all administrators and teaching staff must be registered in the Georgia Professional Development Registry (PDR) and have an assigned career level as certified by Georgia's Professional Standards Commission. Credentials and qualifications are verified through the PDR. Quality Rated's strict requirement for teachers to meet minimum credentialing requirements at the lowest tier and to be registered in the state's PDR system allows for the collection of data for ongoing workforce analysis including the advancement of our workforce to higher credentials.

4) Family Engagement Strategies

Family involvement in their child's education is paramount to positive child outcomes. For programs to meet the needs of their children and families, it is paramount that meaningful

family engagement takes place. For this reason, family engagement is a key component in Quality Rated. Without it, Quality Rated cannot improve access to high-quality programs for children with high needs. Georgia is using Quality Rated as a mechanism to provide information, institute program self-assessments around family engagement, and offer additional professional development to support a greater commitment to engage all families, especially ELD programs that serve children with high needs, in all early learning settings.

In Quality Rated, Standard 3 is solely devoted to practices around engaging families as partners in their child's education. This standard relies heavily on the research-based Strengthening Families assessment tool that aligns with the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors: Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Support, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, Social and Emotional Competence (Appendix 33). The Center for the Study of Social Policy's (CSSP) Strengthening Families Team has partnered with Mosaic Network, Inc., to create online tools to support programs and jurisdictions implementing Strengthening Families. An online version of the Strengthening Families self-assessment includes an action planning tool to help programs turn self-assessment results into simple action plans that are used in the Quality Rated assessment. The Strengthening Families framework is also used in home visiting programs and by the Georgia Department of Human Services child welfare division. Quality Rated criteria related to family engagement includes requirements for parent and teacher conferences, opportunities for parents to participate in the program through parent advisory activities, and the establishment of parent resource areas. Points awarded for this standard are based on the level of commitment to family engagement demonstrated and supported by the ELD program and requires that programs invest in continuous quality improvement around family engagement. This standard along with the professional development standard of Quality Rated also intentionally requires an overt attention to cultural and linguistic competency as related to family support. Funds from the ELC grant will be used to enhance this Program Standard as described in selection criterion (C)(4).

5) Health Promotion Practices

To fully benefit from the early education opportunities presented in the learning environment, children need to be healthy and safe. Georgia's child care licensing requirements cover basic health and safety practices. All programs participating in Quality Rated must be

compliant with child care licensing prior to receiving a rating of one, two or three stars. This ensures that all Quality Rated programs have consistently addressed practices that support health promotion including: nutrition requirements, medication administration, prevention of communicable illnesses, and child abuse and neglect prevention and recognition.

Program Standard 2: Child Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity is solely devoted to health promotion practices. This standard requires a program to utilize a self-assessment (selected by the state) and develop a continuous quality improvement plan that builds on their current health, safety, and nutrition practices and identify areas for improvement. Specifically, points are assessed for this standard based on completing the Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity Assessment (Appendix 34), a written improvement plan, and accompanying evidence that the program has met each of the criteria within the standard. Finally, the metrics used to evaluate the environment (e.g., Environment Rating Scales) add additional evidence to the provider's adherence to health standards.

6) Effective Data Practices

Effective data practices are approached from two levels, the ELD program level and the state level. A goal of Quality Rated is to encourage programs to collect and utilize data to support program improvements, child outcomes, and family support needs. Selection criterion (C)(2) of the grant outlines the professional development related to the collection and use of this type of data.

Providing ELD programs with data regarding all aspects of program quality allows them to intentionally focus technical assistance and continuous quality improvement plans. Quality Rated provides detailed written feedback regarding the ERS observation and scores and portfolio submission across each criteria. This feedback is housed in the ELD programs Quality Rated database and is archived each year to help a program gauge, plan improvement over time, and sustain quality.

As the lead agency for Quality Rated, DECAL collects data to gauge Quality Rated's effectiveness in improving quality. The data serves as part of the state's ongoing validation efforts (see (B)(5)). At the state level, one database, KOALA, holds information about individual programs and connects licensing and Quality Rated data. This database includes, but is not limited to: licensing compliance and monitoring history, physical environment, program

and classroom enrollment, curriculum and assessment used, child demographics, detailed environment rating scales reports, staff qualifications and training history, ratios and group size information, family engagement strategies and continuous quality improvement (CQI) plans, and health and nutrition CQI plans. Program data are updated and archived annually. This enables DECAL to continually monitor the impact of Quality Rated, and demographic data that DECAL collects facilitates measuring the improvements made in programs serving children with high needs.

Because ELD providers participating in Quality Rated are required to report demographic and socioeconomic data on the children they serve via an online application, DECAL is able to direct critical attention and resources to programs serving children with high needs, including foster children, English language learners, children with disabilities, children of migrant workers, and children receiving child care subsidy or who are eligible for Medicaid or Georgia's PeachCare for Kids state health insurance program.

(B)(1)(b) TQRIS standards are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence

Clear Standards. Georgia clearly communicates quality to the public by posting ELD programs' licensing reports and Quality Rated star level on the DECAL and Quality Rated public websites. The public can easily search for programs by star level, and programs receive banners, certificates, bus decals, and window decals to market their star rating. The Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS), a private partner who supports Quality Rated's public awareness campaign, has released public service announcements for radio and television, has rented and covered billboards, and has organized parent events to help parent understand the Quality Rated system. The press and parent feedback has confirmed that parents are utilizing rating information to select ELD programs.

Measurable. All Program Standards are measured through direct observation by reliable assessors using standardized, valid, and reliable instruments or through the review of program portfolios submitted by ELD programs participating in Quality Rated. Program portfolios are reviewed and scored by certified reliable assessors and documentation is updated and reviewed annually in programs to maintain their star levels.

Meaningfully Differentiate Program Quality Levels. The Quality Rated Program

Standards reflect high expectations of program excellence that are informed by and aligned with NAEYC and Head Start Performance Standards. The research conducted by FPG Child Development Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill provided important information to DECAL leaders in determining which standards would comprise Georgia's TQRIS and where the different levels and "cut-scores" should be established. This research included a feasibility study (Appendix 25) in which the standards were examined from a measurement perspective, and Georgia Quality Studies (Appendices 3,4,5) in which independent quality observations, document reviews, and interviews of a representative sample of Georgia providers were conducted. Data from this latter study, along with incorporating other research, was used to create the different levels of standards. In other words, well-designed and representative research specific to Georgia was used in the development of leveling and cut-scores.

Reflect High Expectations of Program Excellence

The Standards were developed based on best practice and have been reviewed by national experts at the FPG Child Development Institute as part of a 2008 Quality System Indicators Feasibility Study to determine how best to measure the quality indicators (Appendix 25). In addition, Quality Rated Program Standards and criteria have been cross walked with NAEYC and Head Start Performance Standards to confirm alignment with overarching themes and quality standards. The standards can be reviewed in the Quality Rated Program Manual (Appendix 13 pgs. 21-29).

(B)(1)(c) TQRIS linked to State licensing system

Quality Rated is a step towards higher quality standards built on the health and safety requirements of child care licensing. Only programs that are annually categorized as compliant with the rules and regulations for that past year are eligible to be rated a 1-, 2-, or 3-star Quality Rated program. DECAL houses both the state's child care licensing system and Quality Rated, and data from the two systems are connected via KOALA.

The Child Care Services Division of DECAL monitors and licenses child care programs in Georgia. Georgia recognizes the following categories of licensed or registered child care:

- Family day care homes are operated in a private residential home less than 24 hours per day. These programs provide care for three to six children unrelated to the provider (defined as children related to the provider within the second degree of consanguinity or

affinity by either blood or marriage) under the age of 18 for pay.

- Group day care homes are operated by a person, society, agency, corporation, institution, or group that receives pay for group care. A group day care home may provide care for seven to 18 children under the age of 18 for less than 24 hours per day.
- Child care learning centers are operated by a person, society, agency, corporation, institution, or group that receives pay for group care. A child care learning center may provide care for 19 or more children under the age of 18 for less than 24 hours per day.

Every child care program is monitored twice a year. One visit is a full licensing study where all of rules are examined, and the other is a monitoring visit where a group of core rules are examined. Programs that receive complaints or have a history of non-compliance are visited more often depending on assessed risk to children. Based on the licensing visits, each program receives an annual compliance (compliant or non-compliant) designation. Georgia's Child Care Services Technical Assistance unit provides targeted technical assistance and professional development to support ELD programs at risk of or in non-compliant status. In 2013, Georgia concluded an initial study that validated the process by which Georgia designates compliance. This study is important because it substantiates licensing as the "floor" for Quality Rated. The report from that study can be found in Appendix 7.

As in other states, limited types of child care programs may be exempt from licensure based on specific criteria. Programs that meet the criteria must submit an Exemption Request Form to DECAL. DECAL reviews the request and determines exemption based on the applicable rules and guidelines. All eligible child care providers (family day care homes, group day care homes, child care learning centers, after school programs, and faith-based programs) licensed or registered by DECAL may volunteer to participate in Quality Rated. Military child care programs licensed by the Department of Defense, Georgia's Pre-K programs operated by local boards of education, Head Start/Early Head Start programs, and lab schools at technical colleges and universities are currently also encouraged to participate in Quality Rated. As of September 2013, 48 programs with at least one Head Start classroom are participating, and there is an ongoing pilot project to include Georgia's Pre-K programs operated by local boards of education in Quality Rated. As noted throughout the grant, **by June 2017, program participation in Quality Rated will be required for ALL programs serving children with high needs.**

Eligibility requirements for programs to receive a one-, two-, or three-star rating include:

- Licensed/Registered for a minimum of 12 months
- Compliant with state child care licensing rules and regulations
- Compliant with Georgia's Pre-K Program (if applicable)
- Compliant with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) (if applicable)
- Registration of all staff members in the Professional Development Registry

(B)(1) High-Quality Plan for developing and adopting a common, statewide TQRIS

As noted above, Quality Rated is the driver for increasing high-quality options for Georgia's children with high needs. In less than two years, Quality Rated has succeeded in improving the access of children with high needs to high-quality programs. In the first week that Tiered Reimbursement was implemented, two- and three-star programs received higher subsidy payments using CCDF for 2,539 children with high needs.

Though Quality Rated has been successful, Georgia recognizes that revisions are needed to meet the goal of increasing access to high-quality environments for children with high needs. **Therefore, even though Quality Rated is fully developed, operational, and exceeding goals for statewide participation, Georgia proposes the following High-Quality Plan for revisions. This High-Quality Plan (aligned with Project 3) will focus on revising and improving Quality Rated criteria and the weighted points structure of structural (portfolio submission) and process quality (ERS observation).**

(a) Key Goals

1. To revise Quality Rated criteria to more specifically address supporting children with high needs and to more specifically address cultural competency within and across the criteria across the five program standards.
2. To revise Quality Rated by incorporating additional rigor into the family engagement and comprehensive assessment system standards.
3. To evaluate and revise (as needed) the point structure in Quality Rated to ensure meaningful differentiation between the observation and the portfolio sections.

4. To increase professional development in the areas of family engagement, cultural competency, and assessment systems that will be strengthened in the revised Quality Rated system.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Create work groups from the ELC Advisory Committee as discussed in (A)(3) to specifically address standards around family engagement, cultural competency, comprehensive assessment systems, infant/toddler care, and serving children with high needs. The specific task is reconvening key work groups:

- Over a year ago, DECAL formed a cultural competency committee and multiple Quality Rated cohort groups that reflect the diversity of programs/settings in the ELD landscape. These groups will be reconvened with members from the ELC Advisory Committee to review the current criteria, review relevant evidence based research and guidelines from other organizations (e.g., Head Start, NAEYC), provide guidance for the future of Quality Rated, and draft recommendations for short, intermediate, and long term changes to the Quality Rated criteria and points system.

2. Create specific trainings and different training models addressing the revisions in Activity 1.

- In partnership with the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, and Georgia's system of child care resource and referral agencies, DECAL will create professional development opportunities to address the following topics: inclusion of children with disabilities, the support of children with high needs, family engagement, cultural competency, infant and toddler care, and comprehensive assessment.

Professional learning modules will include: directed reading, online introductory courses, instructor-led beginner and intermediate courses, and learning community meetings within resource and referral regions to encourage peer-to-peer discussions (see selection criteria (C)(1), (C)(2), (C)(4), and (D)(2) for further detail regarding professional development activities).

3. Using data from the Quality Rated validation study as proposed in (B)(5), Georgia will ensure that the structure and process quality points are weighted in a way that clearly differentiates overall quality.

- Specific tasks include using the information collected for validation and revising the

TQRIS. DECAL will work closely with its Director of Research and Evaluation as well as the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement for this activity. (Validation detailed in (B)(5))

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Create work groups from the ELC Coordinating Committee to review and revise standards around family engagement, cultural competency, comprehensive assessment systems, infant/toddler care, and serving children with high needs. Aligned Goal: 1		
Quality Rated is the systemic framework in Georgia to improve quality in early care and education programs thereby ensuring children and families with high needs have more high-quality options. Based on Georgia’s current validation of Quality Rated (see (B)(5)) of our structural quality indicators as demonstrated via portfolio submission, it is critical that we revise our criteria across the Quality Rated program standards to better differentiate quality across the three tiers and to more overtly address the support of children with high needs, family engagement, cultural competency, infant and toddler care, and comprehensive assessment.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 2: Create specific trainings and different training models addressing the revisions in Activity 1. Aligned Goal: 2		
It is vital that the revisions are well publicized and that professional development supports program success in addressing and meeting new standards.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 3: Revise the weighted point structure for the overall program rating. Aligned Goal: 3		
The driver for access is Quality Rated with an overall goal of increasing the number of high-quality options for families of children with high needs. To best meet these goals, key revisions will need to be made. This activity uses data from the validation process described in (B)(5).	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Create work groups and revise criteria								
Convene stakeholder groups	X	X						
Review of current criteria	X	X						
Recommendations for changes		X	X					
Revised criteria implemented				X				
Activity 2: Professional development								

Develop professional learning content (online, instructor led, professional learning communities) and resource materials		X						
Training for Trainers (resource and referral staff, higher education staff, private trainers) staff			X	X	X	X	X	X
Launch professional development			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 3: Revision of points								
Research team data collection	X							
Research team recommends points restructure		X						
Launch new point structure			X					

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

DECAL is responsible for implementing changes within the QR system. Key personnel will include the Director of Quality Initiatives, Quality Rated Manager, Resource and Referral System Manager and stakeholders.

Additionally, DECAL’s Director of Research and Evaluation and staff from the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement will assist in the analysis.

(e) Financial Resources

Note that **Project 3** encompasses all activities for sections (B)(1), (2), (3), and (4).

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability **Selection Criterion:** B1-4

Project 3 focuses on increasing accessibility and availability of high-quality care to children with high needs through Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS. DECAL will be lead the agency for this project and will implement innovative strategies to increase the number of ELD programs participating and to increase the number of Quality Rated programs at a 2- or 3-star level. Strategies include decreasing the family co-pay when families select a 2- or 3-star program, creating a grant program that pays higher subsidy rates to programs offering the highest level of care, and expanding access to a high-quality Summer Transition Program for rising Kindergartners and rising Pre-K students.

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability		
Selection Criteria: B1-4		
Total Project Budget: \$50,744,844		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$24,927,278
Participating State Agency	Department of Education	\$0
Participating State Agency	Department of Public Health	\$0
Participating State Agency	Georgia Public Broadcasting	\$41,896

(f) Supporting Evidence

- A copy of the tiered Program Standards and Criteria (Appendix 13)
- Documentation that the Program Standards address all areas outlined in the definition of Program Standards, demonstrate high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards, and are linked to the state’s licensing system. (Appendix 13 and 25)
- 2008 Quality System Indicators Feasibility Study to determine how best to measure the quality indicators (Appendix 25).

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

A strong TQRIS is needed to ensure that children with high needs receive high-quality care, which is related to the Performance Measures in table (B)(2)(c).

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

Revised criteria will be developed to respect the uniqueness of all types of ELD programs. All ELD programs will be required to participate in Quality Rated by year 4. Quality Rated incentives are offered to support programs’ access to Quality Rated and to build accessibility for families across the state.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

As a part of the rating process, providers report demographic and socioeconomic data through the Quality Rated data system, making it easy to direct attention and resources to

specific populations of children with high needs. Subsidy policies and final incentives are used to promote the enrollment of children with high needs in star rated programs. Programs receive higher subsidy payments if they have a higher star rating. All licensed and registered providers will be required to participate in Quality Rated by June 30, 2017, thus significantly increasing access to high-quality early learning and development programs for children with high needs. In addition, parent co-pay incentives and subsidy grants will promote access to higher star rated programs for families with high needs to attend higher star rated programs. Comprehensive assessment, including screening and formative assessment, are strongly emphasized in the Program Standards. This ensures that children with high needs are identified earlier and that ELD programs are able to use information about individual children’s skills in order to target instruction to the individual needs of children who may learn differently.

Table (B)(1)-1: Status of all Program Standards currently used in the State

	Program Standards Elements²⁶						
	<i>If the Program Standards address the element, place an “X” in that box</i>						
List each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State; specify which programs in the State use the standards	Early Learning and Development Standards	Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Qualified workforce	Family engagement	Health promotion	Effective data practices	Other
Child Care Center (CCLC) Rules and Regulations	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Family Day Care Home (FDCH) Rules and Regulations	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Group Day Care Homes (GDCH)	X	X	X	X	X	X	

²⁶ Please refer to the definition of Program Standards for more information on the elements.

Table (B)(1)-1: Status of all Program Standards currently used in the State

List each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State; specify which programs in the State use the standards	Program Standards Elements ²⁶ <i>If the Program Standards address the element, place an "X" in that box</i>						
	Early Learning and Development Standards	Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Qualified workforce	Family engagement	Health promotion	Effective data practices	Other
Licensing Rules and Regulations							
Ga's Pre-K Operating Guidelines	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Quality Rated (TQRIS)	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Head Start and Early Head Start	X	X	X	X	X	X	X ^a
Part C IDEA (all programs use these standards)	X	X	X	X	X	X	
^a HS/EHS programs follow all federal guidelines as mandated in the federal Head Start Performance Standards along with ANY additional state or local guidelines that are more stringent based on administrative requirements of the governing agency.							

(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.
(15 points)

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

- (1) State-funded preschool programs;

- (2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;
- (3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of Part B of IDEA and Part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA;
and
- (5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed*. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Additionally, the State must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measure under (B)(2)(c).

Evidence for (B)(2):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

(B)(2)(a) Participation of all publicly funded ELD Programs in a TQRIS

Since its launch in January 2012, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, Quality Rated, has been successful in recruiting and engaging programs and surpassing initial goals for participation²⁷ After almost two years of implementation, 28.59 % of eligible child care centers and 10% of eligible family day care homes (a combined percentage of 17%) are participating in 132 (83%) of Georgia's 159 counties. To ensure the availability of safe, healthy, high-quality ELD options to all families, the Department of Early Care and Learning is authorized and empowered to establish, maintain, extend, and improve the regulation of early care and education programs by providing consultation and implementation of such programs and by licensing and inspecting periodically all such programs to ensure their adherence rules and regulations. Therefore, Governor Nathan Deal has set the expectation that all providers granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs shall be required to participate in Quality Rated no later than June 30, 2017.

This includes:

- 1) **All** licensed and monitored Child Care Learning Centers and Family Day Care Homes (as these entities are referred to in Georgia statute)
 - Governor Nathan Deal has set the expectation that all providers granted a license or registration or which receives public funding to operate an ELD program shall be required to participate in Quality Rated no later than June 30, 2017. See Competitive Priority 2 for details regarding statute changes.
- 2) State-funded preschool programs (Georgia's Pre-K Program)
 - All of Georgia's Pre-K programs regardless of their physical location or site sponsor (public school system or private ELD program), receive state funds and often CCDF funds for wrap-around care. Currently 433 Georgia's Pre-K classrooms in ELD programs are participating in Quality Rated. Targeted technical assistance and Quality Rated Portfolio modifications to reduce redundancy in program evaluation will ensure that ALL of Georgia's Pre-K

²⁷ Participation means that the programs are in the process of being rated (completing their portfolio, in the waiting period for their observation) or have been rated.

programs meet the requirement to participate in Quality Rated by 2017.

3) Early Head Start and Head Start programs

- As noted in the Head Start State Collaboration Office scope of work, Georgia has received full cooperation by Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) grantees to participate in Quality Rated by 2017. Currently 48 Head Start and Early Head Start programs are participating. Targeted technical assistance to HS and EHS and Quality Rated Portfolio modifications to reduce redundancy in program evaluation will ensure that 95% of Head Start and Early Head Start programs will be participating in Quality Rated by 2017.

4) Early learning and development programs funded under section 619 of Part B of IDEA

- The changes discussed for Georgia's Pre-K programs in local school systems will also apply to Special Education 619 services in school systems. This includes technical assistance, incentives, and bonus packages.

5) Early learning and development programs funded under Title 1 of ESEA

- The changes discussed for Georgia's Pre-K programs in local school systems will apply to any preschool programs funded under Title 1 of ESEA. This includes technical assistance, incentives, and bonus packages.

6) Early learning and development programs receiving funds from the state's CCDF program

- All providers receiving public funding to operate an ELD program will participate in Quality Rated no later than June 30, 2017.

The ambitious yet achievable goal of having all licensed, registered, and publicly funded programs participating in Quality Rated by 2017 will be accomplished through three strategies:

1) **policy** (All licensed programs that receive funds related to CCDF, Georgia's Pre-K and Child Care and Adult Food Program (CACFP) will be required to participate), 2) **incentives** (continuing the practice of offering tiered reimbursement, bonus packages, scholarships, and on-site professional development), and 3) **commitments** from key partners (In the Georgia Department of Education scope of work, the current Georgia School Superintendent has agreed to facilitate the participation of ELD programs under section 619, and the scope of work for the

Head Start State Collaboration Office ensures that Georgia's Head Start State Collaboration Director will facilitate 100% participation from the state's Early Head Start and Head Start providers). In addition to the strategies listed above, Georgia will also undertake the following activities to help facilitate participation in Quality Rated:

- 1) Continue to offer generous and purposeful incentives:** Georgia already offers incentives and bonus packages to ELD programs that choose to participate in Quality Rated. Incentives include tiered reimbursement payments and teacher scholarships. Bonus packages include materials aligned with the Environment Rating Scales (ERS). Bonus packages are funded through outside sources (philanthropic, not-for-profit, and business community contributions). Additionally, families of children attending programs in the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs) will receive parent co-pay assistance when their child is enrolled in a rated program, and programs statewide that serve targeted percentages of children with subsidies will receive additional grants to provide expanded services. (These additional grants are detailed in the next section.)
- 2) Enact small changes to the Quality Rated process for Georgia's Pre-K programs administered by local boards of education:** Georgia's Pre-K Program is funded as a grant directly from the state to eligible providers. Approximately 98% of Georgia's Pre-K providers are either private child care centers or local school system boards of education.²⁸ Pre-K quality standards do not differ between the two. However, for local school systems we will revise portions of the Quality Rated process to make the system more accessible. This is not reducing expectations for meeting higher quality standards; rather it is putting mechanisms in place to help school-based programs improve areas not addressed in Georgia's Pre-K program standards. For example, Georgia's Pre-K Program already utilizes the CLASS and has high-quality standards comparable to the standards in star levels two and three (utilizing formative assessment). However, many health and safety items addressed in the ECERS-R (Quality Rated's observation instrument) and in basic licensure may be areas of

²⁸ The other 2% are programs in technical schools, colleges or universities, and/or Department of Defense sites. These programs will fall under the requirements issued to local boards of education.

improvement for these programs. These programs will be offered similar incentives and bonus packages and will also receive technical assistance. In August 2013, Georgia began a pilot program for local school systems offering Georgia's Pre-K Program to participate in Quality Rated. The expansion of Quality Rated to school system settings is an outstanding opportunity to take the principles of quality that have been successful in Georgia's Pre-K model and in child care settings and apply them cross laterally, thereby strengthening both. This partnership between both models can be accomplished through minor adjustments to Quality Rated portfolio submission guidelines. The pilot will conclude in May 2014 and is considered part of Georgia's validation plan detailed in (B)(5).

- 3) Make Quality Rated more accessible to Head Start and Early Head Start programs.** We will slightly revise the Quality Rated process to accept documentation already collected through the Office of Head Start's triennial federal review process to make it easier for Head Start grantees to participate while minimizing duplicative requirements. As with Georgia's Pre-K, this is not reducing expectations for meeting high-quality standards, but instead aligning Quality Rated policies with those high-quality policies embedded in the Head Start regulations. Federal Head Start reviewers who administer the CLASS instrument are required to meet review standards including observation skills to reliability metrics.
- 4) Make Quality Rated more accessible to Special Education 619 services.** The changes discussed for Georgia's Pre-K in local school systems will also apply to Special Education 619 services in school systems. This includes technical assistance, incentives, and bonus packages.

DECAL has developed a four-year strategy (see performance measures outlined in (B)(2)(c) and High-Quality Plan (b)(2)) to maximize the number of licensed programs participating in TQRIS. In cooperation with the Georgia Department of Education, the Head Start State Collaboration Office, and DECAL's Quality Initiatives division, policies will be published in the updated Quality Rated manual in January 2014 outlining the policies listed above.

In summary, to meet the broad outlines of improving quality and increasing access to

high quality for families of children with high needs, it is necessary for all programs to participate in the system. The policy of requiring all licensed and publicly funded ELD programs to participate in Quality Rated, in conjunction with ample supports, will facilitate 100% participation and ensure that Georgia is able to meet its goals.

(B)(2)(b) Affordability and supply of high-quality child care

As mentioned throughout this application, a goal of the grant is to increase the availability of high-quality ELD options for families of children with high needs. To meet this goal, the state must help ensure that ELD programs providing quality care are affordable and that parents, especially those of children with high needs, have the ability to afford quality.

In 2006, Georgia began to overtly address affordability and supply with the development of Quality Rated. Even as the program was being developed, the state was able to offer technical assistance and financial incentives to ELD programs. With the launch of Quality Rated, additional supports were offered. These supports are necessary but not sufficient to substantially increase the number of high-quality options available to families of children with high needs. Therefore, Georgia is adding the following four strategies and continuing with two existing strategies that have been used to increase Quality Rated participation. These strategies will ensure that the overall goal of increasing high-quality options is met:

New Strategies:

Strategy 1: Promote affordability and access through tiered reimbursement

Previously in Georgia, CCDF funds were administered by two agencies. The Department of Human Services (DHS) administered the subsidy program, and DECAL administered the quality set aside. In October 2011, Governor Nathan Deal decided to move the subsidy program from the DHS to DECAL. This move was completed in 2012. Now all CCDF funds in Georgia are administered by the same agency, thereby streamlining administration and facilitating an alignment of CCDF with other key early education programs (Georgia's Pre-K, health and safety licensing and monitoring, nutrition programs, and the Head Start State Collaboration Office).

This realignment supported policy changes designed to increase access to high-quality ELD programs for families of children with high needs. By definition, children who receive subsidies are considered children with high needs, and they include children whose families meet

key income requirements, are in foster care, have been identified with special needs, and/or are children with disabilities.

To encourage ELD programs to strive for higher quality and parents to choose high quality, Georgia instituted a child care subsidy tiered reimbursement system in July 2013. The tiered reimbursement system will be a driver to not only encourage programs to improve quality but also to encourage high-quality programs to be more active in recruiting children receiving child care subsidies.

Georgia deliberately waited a year and a half after Quality Rated was launched to implement tiered reimbursement. This allowed a sufficient number of programs ample time to ensure that Quality Rated was being implemented as intended. The tiered reimbursement rates are as follows: Quality Rated ELD programs with one star receive a 2% tiered reimbursement; programs with two stars receive a 5% tiered reimbursement, and programs with three stars receive a 10% tiered reimbursement. The percentages are added to the weekly rate per child paid by the state. Initial feedback from stakeholders indicated that these bonuses are sufficient to encourage programs to recruit and serve families who receive CCDF subsidies and sufficient to maintain quality.

At the inception of tiered reimbursement, 52 Quality Rated ELD programs received bonuses for serving 977 children. By the end of September, 2013, the number of Quality Rated ELD programs receiving tiered reimbursement increased to 168 for serving 3,336 children. Georgia's ambitious but attainable goal is to ensure that all children who receive CCDF subsidies attend Quality Rated ELD programs by January 2017. Quality Rated programs have demonstrated a commitment to quality, exceeded licensing standards, and based on their process and structural quality points, are ensuring that Georgia's children with high needs have access to high-quality environments. In January 2017, Georgia will revise the current policy and require programs receiving subsidy dollars to be at the top two tiers of Quality Rated.

In summary, this first strategy provides additional incentives to improve quality and recruit children with high needs. The strategy was implemented in July 2013 after a cost modeling project and after receiving stakeholder feedback. Preliminary results, from increasing numbers and provider feedback, suggest that the strategy is working as intended.

Strategy 2: Promote access by reducing the parent co-pay (cost of care) for families receiving

CCDF subsidies in the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs)

Whereas Strategy 1 provided incentives for providers to improve quality and recruit children receiving subsidies, Strategy 2 empowers families to choose a higher rated program.

Using Early Learning Challenge Grant funds, to be later sustained through CCDF allocations, Georgia will test and implement a revised family co-payment system in the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). In these zones, articulated in Georgia's reform agenda and described in the High-Quality Plan found in (A)(2), Georgia will engage in two family empowerment activities: 1. providing consumer education services (July 2014), and 2. implementing lower family co-pay policies (July 2015). The higher the rated program, the lower the co-pay will be for those families. Families choosing a three-star ELD program will pay a modest \$5.00 family co-payment; families choosing a two-star ELD program will pay a \$10.00 family co-payment, and families choosing a one-star ELD program will pay a \$15.00 family co-payment. Grant funds will be used to pay the difference between the program's tuition rate and the family co-payment amount.

These proposed parent co-pays are significantly lower than the current assessed family fee. Currently, these family fees are based on the family's income and the number of children in care. Families are also responsible for paying the difference in the provider fee and the state rate. The unintended consequence is that families with high needs who receive subsidies choose less expensive programs which may be of lower quality. Families who participated in the 2013 Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Task Force reported that paying the providers' charges which exceed the state rate and the family co-payments is a hardship. Program data from April 2013 show that 27,711 families receiving CCDF subsidies were assessed a total of \$1,042,039 in family co-payments; yet were responsible for \$419,552 in charges that exceed the state reimbursement rate. This strategy is being piloted in the E³Zs between 2015 and 2017. Based on the pilot findings related to cost and percentage of families choosing higher quality ELD programs, DECAL will expand the reduced family co-payment program statewide to families choosing the highest tier level.

In summary, this strategy incentivizes parents to choose a higher quality program in their community. It will also incentivize communities to ensure that there are sufficient high-quality programs in their area and encourage providers to increase their quality, knowing that if they are higher quality, the burden on parents will be less and that parents will be more likely to pay.

Strategy 3: Promote access by establishing grants and entering into contracts

The first strategy encourages providers to increase quality, and the second strategy encourages parents to choose quality. This third strategy will encourage providers to serve more children with subsidies and increase the services they offer to families.

Mirroring the highly successful Georgia's Pre-K Program that uses a selective, competitive process to award child slots across the state for four year olds, Georgia will promote access to high-quality ELD programs by entering into contracts for subsidy slots for children six weeks through three years of age with our top tier or three-star Quality Rated programs. Top tier programs with Georgia's Pre-K Program; Early Head Start and Head Start programs or classrooms; and Section 619 of Part B IDEA and Part C of IDEA or with credentialed or ECE degreed lead teachers in each age group will be eligible to compete for these subsidy grants. Subsidy grants will support between three and 20 children per ELD program. Family child care programs will be eligible for up to three funded slots, and centers will be eligible for up to 20 funded slots. Funded slots would not be able to exceed 50% of a classroom or program and will be awarded only to Georgia's highest rated programs. Contracts for subsidy slots will be used to address shortages in the supply of high-quality child care across Georgia and will target high need and rural areas such as the E³Zs described in selection criterion (A)(2).

Strategy 4: Expand and strengthen technical assistance to diverse programs participating in Quality Rated.

To support the growth of programs across the state participating in Quality Rated, the local child care resource and referral (CCR&R) systems and DECAL will add additional staff. Specifically DECAL will add technical assistance staff to support Georgia's Pre-K programs located in public schools, Early Head Start and Head Start programs, and special education classrooms. Currently, DECAL offers targeted technical assistance to cohorts of large provider chains and franchises. These ELD program types represent the largest provider base for children with high needs in Georgia. Additional staff to support these efforts will be added until the 2017 requirement for all licensed and registered ELD programs to participate in Quality Rated. In addition, the local CCR&R staff will increase bilingual technical assistance support staff to support the growing number of bilingual family child care providers.

Continuing Strategies:

Strategy 5: Additional financial incentives

The final two strategies build on the strategies discussed above. Strategy 5 continues the financial incentives offered to programs participating in Quality Rated. Currently, ELD programs that participate in Quality Rated Technical Assistance receive a one-time Quality Rated Enhancement Grant of \$1,000 to purchase needed equipment, materials, or supplies. Quality Rated Bonus Packages valued from \$4,000 to \$6,000 are awarded after a program has received a star rating. The latter is designed to help programs sustain higher quality. Additionally, teachers and administrators in three-star programs receive a one-time financial bonus for their efforts. Each teacher receives a \$250 bonus, and each administrator receives a \$500 bonus. The Quality Rated Enhancement Grants, bonus packages, and staff bonuses are funded entirely by contributions from private foundations. DECAL's private partner, the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS); a committed group of funders; and DECAL are working to create a sustainable funding stream for these initiatives. All Quality Rated Enhancement Grants, bonus packages and staff bonuses are administered through Georgia Family Connections Partnership, an established non-profit partner, founded more than 20 years ago, with community collaboratives in each of Georgia's 159 counties focused on improving conditions for children and families.

Strategy 6: Consumer education services

As mentioned above, consumer education services are offered to help families choose higher quality options. In partnership with GEEARS and county DHS Division for Family and Services eligibility offices, DECAL will continue to provide families with a way to differentiate between the quality of the child care providers in their communities. Extensive consumer education information, including Quality Rated star levels, the health and safety/licensing requirements met by ELD programs, and a history of licensing rule violations is available on the DECAL and Quality Rated website and from the child care resource and referral family call center. Selection criterion (B)(3) offers additional information.

(B)(2)(c) Ambitious yet achievable targets for ELD programs participating in a TQRIS

Through increasing participation in Quality Rated and increasing the number of high-quality options available to families of children with high needs, Georgia will meet the goal of having more children with high needs in higher quality programs. The following High-Quality Plan articulates the goal of Georgia's efforts.

Georgia has set ambitious and achievable goals for Quality Rated participation, as shown in the following (B)(2)(c) Performance Measures table. These goals reflect a deep commitment by Georgia's Governor to ensure that ALL children attend Quality Rated ELD programs.

(B)(2) High-Quality Plan for Promoting Participation in TQRIS

(a) Key Goals

1. Increase the number of ELD programs in Quality Rated so that ALL publicly funded ELD programs participate in Quality Rated by June 30, 2017.
2. Develop or strengthen the financial incentives and policies to support the participation of children with high needs in high-quality ELD programs.
3. Increase the supply of Quality Rated ELD programs in areas with high concentrations of children with high needs and in E³Zs.
4. Modify the Quality Rated process for programs monitored by other high-quality systems or state and federal agencies such as: Georgia's Pre-K Program, Department of Education, Head Start, Early Head Start, Technical Schools and Universities, and Department of Defense.
5. Expand and strengthen technical assistance to diverse programs participating in Quality Rated.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Pilot reduced parent co-pay in the E³Zs by 2015.
2. Pilot and implement subsidy contracts by 2015 to three-star programs serving a high percentage of children with high needs.
3. Assess and strengthen financial incentives and policies based on ELD program category.
4. Modify the Quality Rated process for programs monitored by high-quality systems such as: Georgia's Pre-K Program, Department of Education, Head Start, Early Head Start, Technical Schools and Universities, and Department of Defense.

5. Expand and strengthen technical assistance to diverse programs participating in Quality Rated.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Pilot reduced parent co-pay in the E³Zs by 2015.		
Aligned Goal:		
By reducing the parent co-pay in the E ³ Zs, families of children with high needs gain access to high-quality programs.	E ³ Zs	This pilot will not move beyond the E ³ Zs.
Activity 2: Pilot and implement subsidy contracts by 2015 to three-star programs serving a high percentage of children with high needs.		
Aligned Goal:		
Improved access of high-quality ELD programs	Statewide	N/A
Activity 3: Assess and strengthen financial incentives and policies based on ELD program category.		
Aligned Goal:		
One way to support ELD program participation in Quality Rated is to offset program costs.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 4: Modify the Quality Rated process for programs monitored by high-quality systems such as: Georgia's Pre-K Program, Department of Education, Head Start, Early Head Start, Technical Schools and Universities, and Department of Defense.		
Aligned Goal:		
Increase participation in Quality Rated	Statewide	N/A
Activity 5: Expand and strengthen technical assistance to diverse programs participating in Quality Rated.		
Aligned Goal:		
Increase participation in Quality Rated	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Pilot reduced parent co-pay in the E³Zs by 2015								
Plan the pilot for parent co-pay	X	X						
Implement the pilot for parent co-pay			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2: Subsidy contracts for 3-star programs								
Plan the process for implementing subsidy contracts	X	X						
Implement subsidy contracts by 2015 to three-star programs serving a high percentage of children with high needs			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 3: Financial incentives and policies								
Assess financial incentives and policies based on ELD program category.	X	X						
Strengthen financial incentives and policies based on ELD program category.			X	X				
Activity 4 Modification of Quality Rated process for certain programs								

Modify the Quality Rated process for programs monitored by high-quality systems such as: Georgia’s Pre-K Program, Department of Education, Head Start, Early Head Start, Technical Schools and Universities, and Department of Defense			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 5								
Expand and strengthen technical assistance to diverse programs participating in Quality Rated	X	X	X	X				

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

- Director of Quality Initiatives
- Quality Rated Manager
- Childcare and Parent Services Director
- Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K/ Pre-K key staff
- Assistant Commissioner for Programs
- Head Start State Collaboration Director
- CCR&R Staff

(e) Financial Resources

Note that Project 3 encompasses all activities for sections (B)(1), (2), (3), and (4).

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability **Selection Criterion:** B1-4

Project 3 focuses on increasing accessibility and availability of high-quality care to children with high needs through Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS. DECAL will be lead the agency for this project and will implement innovative strategies to increase the number of ELD programs participating and to increase the number of Quality Rated programs at a 2- or 3-star level. Strategies include decreasing the family co-pay when families select a 2- or 3-star program, creating a grant program that pays higher subsidy rates to programs offering the highest level of care, and expanding access to a high-quality Summer Transition Program for rising Kindergartners and rising Pre-K students.

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability		
Selection Criteria: B1-4		
Total Project Budget: \$50,744,844		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$24,927,278
Participating State Agency	Department of Education	\$0
Participating State Agency	Department of Public Health	\$0
Participating State Agency	Georgia Public Broadcasting	\$41,896

(f) Supporting Evidence

Quality Rated ELD program participation (Appendix 2)

Number of children with high needs served in Quality Rated programs

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Refer to (B)(2)(c) Performance Measures table.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

Quality Rated recognizes that the state’s early care and education system is composed of many organized, integrated subsystems working to accomplish the mutual goal of providing high-quality care and education to young children. For this reason, Quality Rated created a technical assistance cohort model that addresses the individual systemic needs of these various subsystems (different types) that include: franchise systems, corporate chains, faith based programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, family child care, school systems, Title I and Section 619, Montessori programs, and dual language providers.

The Quality Rated Cohort Model for Technical Assistance supports groups of similar ELD programs as they move through the Quality Rated process together. Cohort participants benefit from:

- Logistical support for successful and timely completion of the Quality Rated process
- Targeted technical assistance for programs
- System level support for quality reform

- Collaborative professional development with colleagues
- Professional networks that support continuous quality improvement (CQI) and ongoing professional growth

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

All of the activities described above are designed to create access to high-quality programs as defined as Quality Rated one, two, or three stars for families and children with high needs. Facilitating participation in Quality Rated by public school Georgia’s Pre-K classrooms, programs funded by IDEA Part B Section 619, Head Start and Early Head Start will increase availability of high-quality early learning and development programs for children with high needs. Additionally, strategies such as reducing parent co-pays, continuing a tiered reimbursement system of subsidy payments and providing grants to purchase subsidy slots in high-quality programs will make it easier for families with high needs to choose high-quality programs. All licensed and registered providers will be required to participate in Quality Rated by June 30, 2017, significantly increasing access to high-quality early learning and development programs for children with high needs.

Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of programs in the State	Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target - end of calendar year 2015		Target-end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool Specify: Georgia’s Pre-K	1,809 ^a	433	23.9%	452	25%	905	50%	1,357	85%	1,809	100%

Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of programs in the State	Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target - end of calendar year 2015		Target-end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Early Head Start and Head Start ²⁹	341 ^b	48	14.1%	85	25%	171	50%	256	75%	324	95%
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	n/a ^c	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	431 ^d	0	0%	86	20%	216	50%	308	70%	350	81.2%
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	n/a ^e	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Programs receiving from CCDF funds	3,298 ^f	775	23.5%	825	25%	1,649	50%	2,474	75%	3,298	100%
Other Describe:											

^a Number of programs in baseline is actual number of Georgia's Pre-K sites participating in the TQRIS as of report run date; Quality Rated data system, 9/13/2013. 782 Pre-K sites (43%) were operated by local educational agencies and will be required to participate in Quality Rated by 2017.

^b Number of Early Head Start and Head Start programs is actual, from Program Information Report (PIR) 2013: Region 04, Georgia, Centers. Number of programs in baseline is actual number of Early Head Start or Head Start facilities participating in the TQRIS as of report run date; Quality Rated data system, 9/13/2013.

^c IDEA Part C does not fund programs directly in Georgia.

^d IDEA Part B, section 619 total number of special education preschool classrooms is an estimate based on current IDEA Part B, section 619 teacher workforce size. Each classroom will count as a program in Quality Rated.

^e Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia's

²⁹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of programs in the State	Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target - end of calendar year 2015		Target-end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia's Pre-K classes.											
<p>^f CCDF baseline is number of programs in TQRIS who report serving subsidy children; Quality Rated data system, 9/26/2013. Total number of programs receiving CCDF funds is generated from the total number of providers serving children ages 0-5 with currently active subsidy certificates as of report run date; Maximus CCDF data system, 9/3/2013.</p> <p>Participating TQRIS programs are those that are in the process of being rated (completing their portfolio, in the waiting period for their observation) or have been rated.</p>											

(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs. (15 points)

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing 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) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are written in plain language, and 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.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the

State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed*. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (B)(3):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

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

Since its creation, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, Quality Rated, has implemented a high-quality plan for rating and monitoring ELD programs. Rating and monitoring procedures focus on structural and process quality, while implementing various checks and balances that ensure inter-rater reliability and minimize subjectivity in the process. Furthermore, the process includes a family-friendly approach that not only includes information about the meaning of ratings which can be interpreted by the general public, but also why the quality measured is important to child development. For Quality Rated to be the driver of quality improvement in the state's ELD programs, a strong, evidence-based system of rating and an equally strong system of continual monitoring must exist.

The Quality Rated system includes:

- A valid and reliable tool for monitoring programs.
 - These include Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford, 2003), the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 2005), the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R) (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford, 2007).
- An appropriate frequency of monitoring visits.
 - Portfolio updates are required and monitored annually for a program to maintain its star rating. ERS observations are required a minimum of every three years.
- Clear public reporting of monitoring results that are easy to understand and act upon
 - Quality Rated star levels and licensing information are available to the general public on the DECAL (www.dec.state.ga.us) and Quality Rated (www.qualityrated.org) websites. Quality Rated information is updated in live time while licensing information is updated within two weeks of a program visit.

An Overview of the Rating and Monitoring Process

Georgia's TQRIS rating and monitoring system builds on the solid foundation of a comprehensive licensing and monitoring system on all licensed and registered ELD programs. DECAL's Child Care Services Division uses a focused visit system to monitor early care facilities and uses resulting data to designate a program compliant or noncompliant. Focused visits are based on a set of core rules (specific licensing rules) and core rule areas (the overall categories of rules) that have been determined to have a higher impact on the health and safety of children in ELD programs. Every child care program in the state, even those who have not yet engaged in the TQRIS process receives an unannounced visit a minimum of twice per year – with the exception of after school programs, which are visited once per year. The number of core rule areas cited and the level of risk assigned to a core rule citation factors into the annual compliance designation. Recently, Dr. Richard Fiene of Pennsylvania State University completed a study regarding the validity of our licensing compliance system (Appendix 7). Specifically, the study looked at the validity of the process by which a program's annual rule citations are analyzed and a compliance designation is assigned. Overall, the study concluded that Georgia's method for determining compliance was valid.

The following details the high-quality phases by which programs become rated and subsequently monitored in Quality Rated:

- 1) Programs submit an application. All application materials are submitted, reviewed, and approved via Georgia's online system.
- 2) Once the compliance designation has been verified, programs are notified of acceptance. Programs are then assigned technical assistance and are eligible to start their portfolio.
- 3) Programs are expected to continually update their portfolio as they are undergoing technical assistance. Portfolios were designed to measure structural quality. The portfolio, also online, helps providers organize and submit evidence of meeting criteria across Quality Rated's five Program Standards.
- 4) After the portfolio is completed and submitted, the portfolio review is performed concurrently with an **unannounced** Environment Rating Scale (ERS) observation. These observations are conducted within ninety (90) business days of the portfolio being accepted. Assessors use the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) to assess **process quality** in ELD programs.

- 5) Once the observation has been conducted, an independent review of the visit is completed by a national expert from the Environment Rating Scales Institute (ERSI). Following this review, the structural and process totals are summed, and the program is officially rated by the Quality Rated Manager. The program is then notified of the rating.
- 6) Once a program is rated, ongoing monitoring is accomplished by 1) annual health and safety visits to ensure licensing compliance; 2) an annual portfolio review; and 3) an ERS observation every three years (unless the program requests an additional review).

In summary, the Quality Rated rating process provides an opportunity for both process and structural quality to be evaluated in a reliable manner. Structural quality is determined via an online portfolio. The online portfolio helps providers organize and submit evidence of meeting criteria across standards. Process quality is determined by using the ERS, which allows for an independent observation. Our commitment to monitoring and rating is demonstrated by our high standards for reliability and by using the Environment Rating Scales Institute, established by the measures' authors, to review ERS observation reports on a regular basis. Georgia maintains a strong commitment to the valid and reliable use of the Environment Rating Scales and has recently been asked by ERS author Richard M. Clifford to participate in the study of a new ERS scale, the ECERS-3.

(B)(3)(a) Rating and monitoring tools, monitors, and frequency

Quality Rated rates structural and process quality in programs using two distinct tools: An online portfolio assessment and the Environment Rating Scales (ERS).

The following subsection details how Georgia monitors and rates structural and process quality. The High-Quality Plan at the end of the section outlines how the state will continue to improve in this area.

Use of Reliable Tools

The Program Portfolio provides an opportunity for programs to submit evidence of compliance across each of Quality Rated's five Program Standards: Staff Qualifications, Ratios

and Group Size, Health, Safety and Nutrition, Parent Engagement, and Intentional Teaching Practices. Each standard has three levels of criteria that meaningfully differentiate levels of quality and build on quality indicators from one tier to the next. Each criteria level has specific points assigned to support valid leveling of the program. All reviews of submitted materials are conducted with strict adherence to a rating rubric and written guidelines. All portfolio assessors demonstrate 90% inter-rater reliability every 20 portfolios scored. If reliability is not met, three consecutive consensus checks are held until reliability is met. An annual review of the program's portfolio is required for a program to maintain their quality level between their Environment Rating Scale visits.

The second tool is the Environment Rating Scale set of instruments. These include Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford, 2003), the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 2005), the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R) (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford, 2007), and the School Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) (Harms, Jacobs, & White, 1996). The ITERS-R, ECERS-R, and FCCERS-R include items to evaluate the classroom's Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language-Reasoning or Listening-Talking, Activities, Interactions, Program Structure, and Parents and Staff. The SACERS includes items to evaluate the classroom's Space and Furnishings, Health and Safety, Activities, Interactions, Program Structure, Staff Development, and Special Needs Supplementary Items. The scales are suitable for use in evaluating inclusive and culturally diverse programs and have proven reliability and validity, nationally and internationally.

Department policy requires Quality Rated to randomly select and observe one-third of the **total** classrooms in a program **and** to observe each age group represented in the Environment Rating Scales. To ensure that each age group is observed, one third of the ITERS-R classrooms, one third of the ECERS-R classrooms, and one third of the Georgia's Pre-K classrooms, if the center has Georgia's Pre-K, will be observed. If additional classrooms must be observed to meet the one third of total classrooms requirement, they will be randomly chosen from the remaining classrooms not yet chosen for observation.

Trained Monitors with Inter-Rater Reliability

The Quality Rated administrative staff assigns a trained assessor to evaluate the ELD

programs that have applied to become Quality Rated. The assessor is impartial: he/she has not provided technical assistance to the program and is not the DECAL Pre-K or Child Care Services consultant assigned to that program. The following process is in place to ensure reliability with the ERS instruments³⁰:

- 1) Reliability Check One: Ensuring that DECAL ERS raters are reliable with an ERS expert on their respective ERS instrument. The experts are from the Environment Rating Scale Institute (ERSI). To maintain this reliability, all raters will conduct an annual reliability test with designated ERSI Anchors. Raters must receive a 90% or above reliability score on three consecutive assessments for their respective scales. After raters are checked off by ERSI, they are considered potential anchors. ERSI provides a dated letter saying that they have met ERSI standards for reliability.
- 2) Reliability Check Two: All raters will conduct one paired visit every two months. The pairs may consist of anchor-anchor, or anchor-rater. Reliability will be officially computed by comparing the independent scores of the two raters (before the raters discuss the items and reach consensus on the scoring). Although DECAL follows the ERS authors' guidelines for inter-rater reliability standards, we also compute two other types of agreement measures common in early childhood research studies examining agreement: a kappa statistical score and a % of items in agreement (or a one point difference) score.
- 3) Reliability Check Three: Reliability data is reviewed every two weeks. Any rater that is consistently scoring significantly above or below the state average may be assigned additional paired visits. DECAL uses the data to design quarterly professional development activities.
- 4) Reliability Check Four: Every three months, the Quality Initiatives Director and Quality Rated Manager develop a professional development activity for all raters. This may include video activities, site visits, or in-depth exercises.

These processes to rate and monitor programs adhere and surpass acceptable industry standards for reliability and level of monitoring as per ERSI. These processes ensure fidelity to

³⁰ These processes were revised to incorporate additional levels of rigor. This was done during the validation process outlined in (B)(5).

the instruments and ensure that the program ratings are meaningful. Therefore, these processes contribute to a system designed to improve the quality of Georgia's ELD programs.

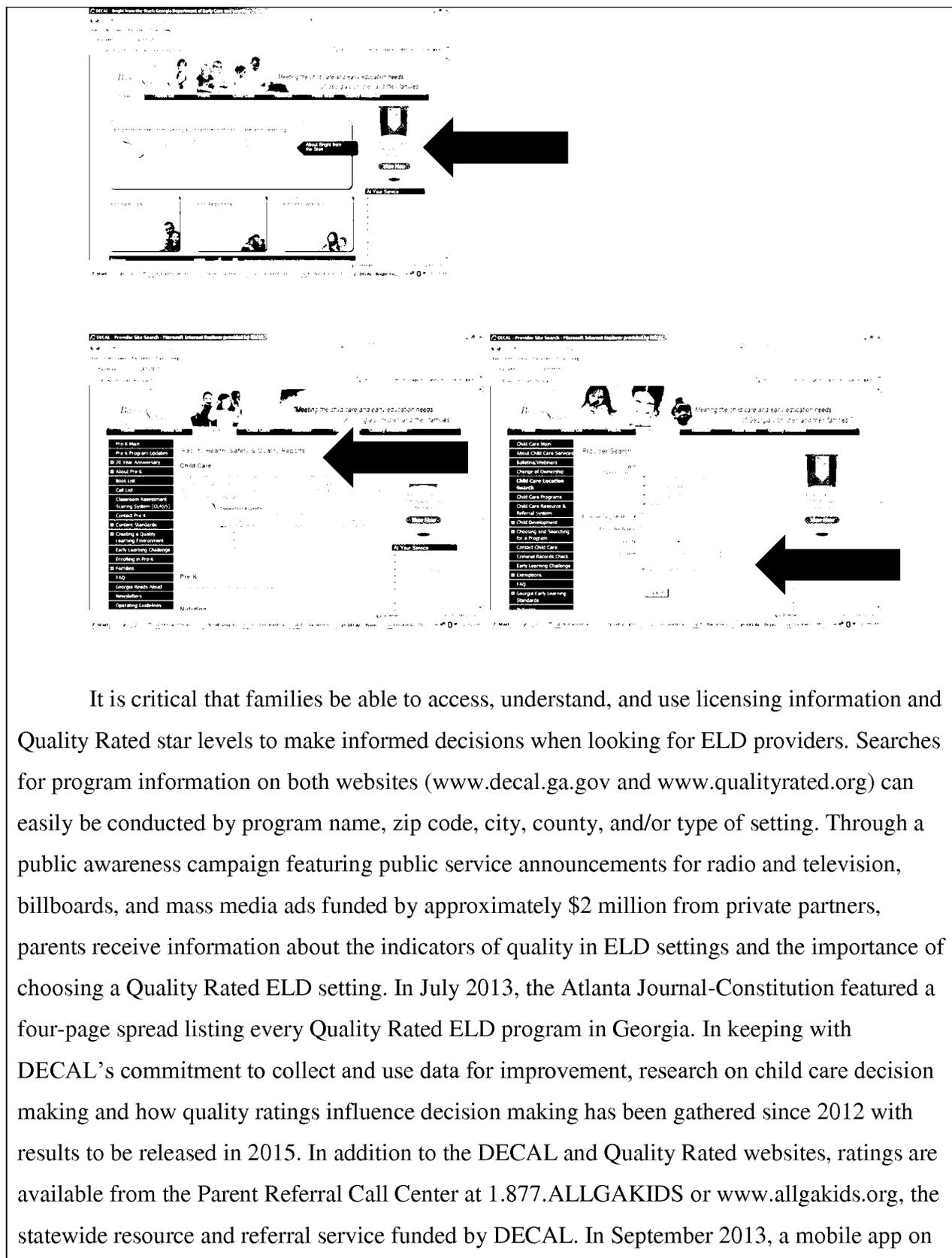
Monitoring and Rating Programs with Appropriate Frequency

Portfolio updates are required and monitored annually for a program to maintain its star rating. ERS observations are required a minimum of every three years. If a program feels it has successfully addressed shortcomings identified in the first rating, a follow-up assessment can be requested by the program at the expense of the program. Requiring the program to pay a fee for a follow-up ERS assessment is designed to offset the cost of the observation and to discourage repeated requests over a short period of time.

(B)(3)(b) Quality rating and licensing information available to parents and public

Increasing access to families of children with high needs requires having a viable process to communicate ratings and information about how to discern quality. Programs are required to post licensing and Quality Rated information in an area clearly accessible to families. In addition, Quality Rated programs receive banners, certificates, window, and bus decals to help the public to identify them as a Quality Rated ELD program. The following details Georgia's current plans, and the High-Quality Plan at the end of the section outlines how the state will continue to improve in this area.

Quality Rated star levels and licensing information are available to the general public on the DECAL (www.decal.ga.gov) and Quality Rated (www.qualityrated.org) websites. Quality Rated information is updated in live time while licensing information is updated within two weeks of a program visit. ELD programs are also required to have their licensing compliance designation available for parents to review. Quality Rated data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) are written in language that is easy to understand and use by families when selecting ELD programs and by families whose children are already enrolled in the programs.



It is critical that families be able to access, understand, and use licensing information and Quality Rated star levels to make informed decisions when looking for ELD providers. Searches for program information on both websites (www.dec.al.ga.gov and www.qualityrated.org) can easily be conducted by program name, zip code, city, county, and/or type of setting. Through a public awareness campaign featuring public service announcements for radio and television, billboards, and mass media ads funded by approximately \$2 million from private partners, parents receive information about the indicators of quality in ELD settings and the importance of choosing a Quality Rated ELD setting. In July 2013, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution featured a four-page spread listing every Quality Rated ELD program in Georgia. In keeping with DECAL's commitment to collect and use data for improvement, research on child care decision making and how quality ratings influence decision making has been gathered since 2012 with results to be released in 2015. In addition to the DECAL and Quality Rated websites, ratings are available from the Parent Referral Call Center at 1.877.ALLGAKIDS or www.allgakids.org, the statewide resource and referral service funded by DECAL. In September 2013, a mobile app on

iTunes was also launched to support parents in locating high-quality ELD programs. Families may call or go online and receive referrals in English and Spanish. Using funds from the ELCG, DECAL will work to expand/enhance the dissemination of information regarding licensing compliance and Quality Ratings to meet the needs of diverse families. Information will also be distributed through pediatrician and obstetrician offices, DFCS offices, public libraries, and other community locations.

(B)(3) High-Quality Plan for Rating and Monitoring ELD Programs

(a) Key Goals

- 1) To maintain rigorous protocol for rating and monitoring programs participating in Quality Rated
- 2) To maintain reliability protocol for Portfolio and ERS Assessors
- 3) To expand/enhance the dissemination of information regarding licensing compliance and Quality Ratings to meet the needs of diverse families and increase the number of community partners who distribute information

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

- 1) Continue efforts described in (B)(3)(a), which include a rigorous protocol for rating and monitoring programs participating in Quality Rated and reliability protocol for Portfolio and ERS Assessors.
- 2) Organize a family stakeholder work group to inform the planning and implementation of expanded dissemination of information regarding licensing compliance and Quality Ratings to meet the needs of diverse families (multi-language materials/ad campaign)
- 3) Work with Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS), Family Connection Partnership, and family stakeholder work group to assess current dissemination and plan new strategies.
- 4) Create materials and ad campaigns in multiple languages.
- 5) Implement expanded dissemination plan.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Continue efforts described in (B)(3)(a), which include a rigorous protocol for rating and monitoring programs participating in Quality Rated and reliability protocol for Portfolio and ERS Assessors.		
Aligned Goal: 1,2		
To insure a valid and reliability rating system that accurately differentiates levels of quality.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 2: Organize a family stakeholder work group to inform the planning and implementation of expanded dissemination of information regarding licensing compliance and Quality Ratings to meet the needs of diverse families (multi-language materials/ad campaign).		
Aligned Goal: 3		
It is critical that families can access, understand, and use licensing information and Quality Rated star levels to make informed decisions when looking for ELD providers. This activity will incorporate additional family input in the process.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 3: Work with Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS), Family Connection Partnership, and family stakeholder work group to assess current dissemination and plan new strategies.		
Aligned Goal: 3		
This will help identify new strategies to disseminate information.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 4: Create materials and ad campaigns in multiple languages.		
Aligned Goal: 3		
It is critical that families have licensing and Quality Rated star level information in a meaningful format.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 5: Implement expanded dissemination plan.		
Aligned Goal: 3		
This will help families further understand the importance of and process for selecting a high-quality program.	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Continue efforts outlined in (B)(3)(a): protocol for rating and monitoring QR programs and reliability for Portfolio and Assessors.								
Raters must receive a 90% or above reliability score on three consecutive assessments for their respective scales.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Conduct professional development activity for all raters. This may include video activities, site visits, or in-depth exercises.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2: Create family work group to plan and implement information for diverse families and disseminate information through community partners.								
Convene family work group for planning sessions.	X	X						
Activity 3: Work with Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS), Family								

Connection Partnership, and family stakeholder work group to assess current dissemination and plan new strategies.								
Conduct strategic planning meetings with GEERS and family stakeholder group.		X	X					
Activity 4: Create materials and ad campaigns in multiple languages.								
Development and production of materials and ad campaigns in multiple languages.		X	X	X				
Activity 5: Develop and implement expanded dissemination plan.								
Develop expanded dissemination plan			X	X	X			
Implement expanded dissemination plan				X	X			

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

- Quality Rated Program Manager
- GEEARS Staff
- GA Family Connection Partnership Staff
- Family Work Group

(e) Financial Resources

Note that Project 3 encompasses all activities for sections (B)(1), (2), (3), and (4).

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability **Selection Criterion:** B1-4

Project 3 focuses on increasing accessibility and availability of high-quality care to children with high needs through Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS. DECAL will be lead the agency for this project and will implement innovative strategies to increase the number of ELD programs participating and to increase the number of Quality Rated programs at a 2- or 3-star level. Strategies include decreasing the family co-pay when families select a 2- or 3-star program, creating a grant program that pays higher subsidy rates to programs offering the highest level of care, and expanding access to a high-quality Summer Transition Program for rising Kindergartners and rising Pre-K students.

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability		
Selection Criteria: B1-4		
Total Project Budget: \$50,744,844		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$24,927,278
Participating State Agency	Department of Education	\$0
Participating State Agency	Department of Public Health	\$0
Participating State Agency	Georgia Public Broadcasting	\$41,896

(f) Supporting Evidence

Distribution data

Marketing materials

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

Not applicable

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

Ratings of early learning and development programs are accomplished using valid and reliable tools that are suitable for use in evaluating inclusive and culturally diverse programs. The Portfolio, completed to demonstrate structural quality, includes criteria addressing training and policies related to cultural and linguistic competence as well as supporting children with disabilities. The Environmental Rating Scales have been well researched and have been proven valid and reliable for use in diverse settings.

Georgia already has tools and materials that help all families access, understand, and use licensing and rating information. These tools include website search engines, a public service and ad campaign including TV, radio, print ads and billboards. Georgia’s Parent Referral Call Center is available by phone, website, and smartphone app. In order to ensure that the needs of families with high needs are being addressed, a family stakeholder workgroup will be established. This group will assist with planning a campaign to develop additional materials, tools, and advertisements in multiple languages. These materials will recognize and address the

diversity of Georgia's families. Materials will be distributed in locations frequented by target groups, such as obstetrician and pediatricians' offices, public libraries and other community locations, to ensure access to the families that compose Georgia's diverse population.

(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs. (20 points)

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) 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 Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and*

addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Additionally, the State must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measures under (B)(4)(c)(1) and (B)(4)(c)(2).

Evidence for (B)(4):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Introduction

Georgia is firmly committed, through Quality Rated, to increasing access to higher quality ELD programs for children with high needs. During the grant period, we will implement new strategies to expand access to two- and three-star programs in the same way we expanded access to Quality Rated in the last two years. Our work will 1) increase the number of high-quality options available to families of children with high needs (also a key goal of the grant); 2) create strategies to provide quality services to specific populations of children with high needs; 3) incentivize high-quality early learning providers to increase the number of children with high needs participating in their programs; and 4) increase demand for high-quality programs. In short, we are committed to ensure that there is a sufficient number of high-quality (i.e., two- and three-star) programs in every county in the state to meet an increased demand for higher quality. Georgia's action plan for improving capacity and increasing demand will include:

- Strengthening the supports and incentives for programs to continuously improve.
 - Expansion of Georgia's Scholarships and Incentives programs to increase the number of early care and education professionals moving up a knowledge and career pathway. The FIRST and SECOND programs provide incentives for teachers to navigate through and up the career lattice and obtain their first or a higher credential. The expansion of the Scholarships Program supports an increase in critical field credentials (e.g., infant-toddler teachers, teachers working with English language learners, teachers supporting children with disabilities). The Incentives Program provides salary supplements to encourage the retention of teachers who have progressed in their professional career.
- Providing supports to families of children with high needs to help them access services.
 - Three significant financial activities are targeted to support families in accessing high-quality programs. These activities include tiered reimbursement, lower subsidy family co-pays and subsidy grants to three-star programs.

- Setting ambitious but achievable targets for increasing the number of high-quality programs, and the number of children with high needs enrolled in those high-quality programs.
 - In partnership with Georgia’s child care resource and referral (CCR&R) network and private technical assistance partners, Georgia has devised a systematic approach to support programs working to achieve higher quality child care environments, teacher-child interactions, and overall enhanced quality of early care and education programs throughout the state.

Georgia’s successful implementation of Quality Rated demonstrates that it is the viable framework to create access to high-quality ELD programs to more of the state’s 450,000 children with high needs. In two short years, we have already improved the number of higher quality options accessible to children with high needs: more than 100,000 children across Georgia in 133 (83%) of our 159 counties are enrolled in programs participating in Quality Rated. Our aggressive enrollment and individualized support strategies will succeed in tripling the number of children accessing high-quality programs by 2017. Georgia’s policies supporting Quality Rated respect individual ELD programs and the cost of care. We are committed to providing increased resources to support programs just entering Quality Rated as well as programs working to achieve higher star ratings. We are also committed to support family access to programs through consumer awareness, education initiatives, and financial supports.

(B)(4)(a) Ongoing ELD Program Support and Incentives for Continuous Improvement

Five activities are aimed solely at increasing ELD program quality.

1) The Quality Rated inclusion designation project or QR¹

Programs that wish to demonstrate quality in inclusive practices may apply for a Quality Inclusion (QR¹) designation as part of their Quality Rating. To do this, an assessor will conduct an Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) observation in classrooms serving children with disabilities ages 2 ½ to 5. The ICP, developed by Elena Soukakou (Appendix 35), is a structured observation rating scale designed to assess the quality of provisions and daily practices that support the developmental needs of children with disabilities in early childhood settings. This scale

complements other early childhood rating scales on classroom quality by measuring additional elements of adult support and intentional adaptations that promote the learning needs of children with disabilities. The scale, appropriate for classrooms with children with disabilities ages 2 ½ to 5, consists of 12 items covering practices that have the strongest research support for meeting the developmental needs of young children in inclusive settings. After the observation is concluded and scored, program personnel and an inclusion coordinator will use the information from the ICP to develop a continuous quality improvement plan to improve the quality of classroom practices in meeting the needs of children with disabilities. Georgia's inclusion coordinators offer training and technical assistance to help families, early childhood educators and others identify resources, services, and supports to ensure that children have access to and are successfully included in high-quality early learning and development programs. After technical assistance has been implemented and the plan completed, the ICP will be re-administered and the Quality Inclusion designation will be awarded based on meeting a minimum threshold score on the ICP.

2) The Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GA PITC) Mentor Project in the E³Zs

The quality study of Georgia's child care conducted by the FPG Child Development Institute in 2009 (Appendix 3) used the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (Harms, et al., 2003) to measure the global quality in infant toddler classrooms in Georgia. The instrument utilizes a 1-7 scale, with higher scores indicating higher quality. For this study, the average ITERS-R score was a 2.74 (Maxwell, et al., 2009a-b). According to the study, two thirds of infant toddler classrooms were of low quality and only five percent of infant toddler classrooms were of high quality. Based on this data, the Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GA PITC) established a mentor program for family child care teachers and center-based teachers serving high needs infants and toddlers as a strategy to improve and sustain quality in infant toddler programs.

Mentoring is a long-standing research based approach to support workforce development that provides career advancement opportunities for skilled teachers while retaining them in the classroom. Georgia's mentoring program was designed to create a personal relationship between a more experienced or more knowledgeable teacher (mentor) and a less experienced or less knowledgeable teacher (mentee). The relationship establishes the context for the transfer of

knowledge. The mentoring program allows for face-to-face informal transmission of knowledge, psychosocial support, and dosage determined by need. Using funds from the grant, Georgia will expand our well-designed statewide system for mentoring to support infant and toddler teachers in the E³Zs and in rated programs in rural areas serving high percentages of children with high needs. Mentoring as needed will be conducted in the home language of our growing Spanish speaking work force. Through mentoring, specially trained mentors will provide support to: develop new staff, retain high-quality staff, advance staff professional credentials, achieve program quality improvement, ensure positive child outcomes, and increase responsiveness to unexpected demands. The mentoring system has four components:

1. Readiness Program – Orientation to mentoring and to Georgia’s vision of a mentoring system to support and sustain Quality Rated
2. Mentor System Course – For administrators of programs with prospective mentors
3. Mentor Preparation – To prepare early childhood professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to serve as mentors
4. Mentor Network – To promote ongoing and collaborative learning among mentors

3) Technical Assistance

In partnership with Georgia’s child care resource and referral (CCR&R) network and private technical assistance partners, Georgia has devised a systematic approach to support programs working to achieve higher quality child care environments, teacher-child interactions, and overall enhanced quality of early care and education programs throughout the state. Child care resource and referral agencies are a core component of the systematic technical assistance approach in Georgia. Agencies are located throughout the state to effectively support ELD programs with careful attention to the diversity of families served by the programs. Free on-site technical assistance and coaching are provided by each local CCR&R agency to early care and education programs participating in Quality Rated.

The Georgia Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (GACCRRA) defines technical assistance (TA) as the provision of targeted and customized supports by CCR&R professionals to strengthen early learning and school-age program processes, knowledge application, and implementation of best practices to increase outcomes for children. This support is individualized to meet the program's unique needs and includes on-site pre

assessment to identify goals, classroom observations, coaching, leadership development, and professional development opportunities. The goal is to create sustainable quality improvement practices that will enhance child development and promote school readiness.

The National Implementation Research Network and Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute concluded a recent exploratory evaluation, Georgia's Child Care Resource and Referral System Evaluation Report, of Georgia's CCR&R system. The evaluation confirmed that Georgia has a current infrastructure in place that is strong and primed to promote sustainable quality improvement throughout the state. The evaluation recommended that the TA system be strengthened by developing a practice model that delineates the key components of TA provided by the CCR&R system. Georgia has begun developing this model, knowing that it will help strengthen the TA provided. (Appendix 9).

Georgia's investments (federal, state, and private) in TA have been substantial. In 2005, DECAL formed a high-level workgroup to develop a plan to produce a highly skilled TA workforce and statewide technical assistance delivery system. An advisory group with national experts and state stakeholders was convened, and national systems were researched to inform DECAL's strategic approach. DECAL and the workgroup framed the following mission: *"Georgia's Technical Assistance System will create and sustain positive change in all early care and education and school age programs and strengthen Georgia's capacity to prepare children, together with their families, to be successful in school and in life."*

To accomplish this mission, the workgroup developed a logic model including purpose, inputs/resources, core values, key characteristics, activities, outputs, and intermediate and long-term outcomes. This model is available for review in Appendix 36. A uniform approach to TA along with standards and competencies was developed; a training program for TA consultants was developed; and professional designations were established to distinguish the level of knowledge, experience, and specialized skills of Georgia's TA consultants. These competencies were embedded in the Georgia Early Care and Professional Development System. To develop additional TA capacity to support Quality Rated, DECAL proposes to use funds from the Early Learning Challenge Grant to:

- Review and update TA system priorities and policies
- Increase TA capacity to support Quality Rated

- Ensure that the TA workforce is well prepared and that the TA delivery system is accessible and functioning as a significant catalyst for Quality Rated

4) Professional Development

Georgia defines professional development as facilitated teaching and learning experiences that are continual, transactional, and designed to support the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as the application of that knowledge in practice. Professional development should reflect a continuum of learning and should prepare individuals to work with and on behalf of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children, their families, and their communities. Professional development as a support to improve quality is described in detail in selection criterion (D)(2).

5) Financial Incentives to Promote Program Improvement for Programs and Staff

Between January 2012 and September 2013 over \$1.3 million worth of materials and financial incentives have been awarded to ELD programs in 128 of Georgia’s 159 counties. Along with developing and implementing professional development, technical assistance, and mentoring to support programs as they improve quality through Quality Rated, substantial financial incentives for ELD programs support participation in Quality Rated. Incentive packages are distributed by the Georgia Family Connection Partnership, a statewide non-profit with a local community collaborative in all 159 counties in Georgia. This partnership allows DECAL to leverage long existing local community collaboratives to promote high-quality ELD programs and to promote local community investment in these programs. The following chart outlines the financial incentives available to support higher participation and greater access to Quality Rated.

Type of Financial Incentive	Description	Eligibility
Educational Assistance Incentives	Salary supplement program that rewards eligible ELD professionals for earning a credential or degree in the field and for tenure with their employer. Eligible applicants receive two consecutive awards ranging from \$250 - \$1,250 per award for each eligible credential or degree earned. This is directly aligned with Quality Rated Program Standard 1.	Work in a licensed child care facility or registered family day care home that meets at least one of the following requirements: Accredited by NAEYC, NECPA, or NAFCC or other approved national accreditation Serves subsidized (high needs) children (at least 25% must be subsidized) Participates in the Child and Adult Care Food

		Program (children with high needs) Participates in Quality Rated
Educational Assistance Scholarships	Educational assistance program for eligible ELD professionals pursuing credentials or degrees in early care and education. This is directly aligned with Quality Rated Program Standard 1.	Work in a licensed center, a registered family day care, or group day care home, and Work at least 25 hours a week as a teacher/assistant teacher or 40 hours per week as a director/assistant director, and Earn less than \$15.00 per hour, and Enroll in an eligible institution in an approved program of study
Educational Assistance SECOND	Educational assistance program for ELD professionals pursuing their second credential or degree in early care and education. This is directly aligned with Quality Rated Program Standard 1 and is designed to help professionals move up the career ladder.	Teacher or administrator must work full time in a licensed or registered program participating in Quality Rated.
Technical Assistance Grants	Funds awarded at the program level to support the acquisition of materials and supplies based on a technical assistance plan.	All programs participating in Quality Rated
Participant Bonus Quality Rated	Bonuses awarded based on Quality Rated star level (see chart in Appendix 18 for details)	All programs participating in Quality Rated
Tiered Reimbursement	Distribution of funds at the program level NOT linked to a specific child. Bonus based on the number of children with high needs who are subsidized and the star level of the program.	Programs serving children with high needs and receiving child care subsidy payments. All programs participating in Quality Rated by 2017
Subsidy Parent Co-Pay	Funds distributed to the Quality Rated ELD program to offset the parent co-pay. Supports increased access to higher star rated programs.	Parents of children with high needs receiving child care subsidy payments Programs participating in Quality Rated
Child Care Subsidy Grants	Funds distributed to the Quality Rated ELD program to purchase slots for children receiving subsidy. Supports increased access to higher star rated programs.	Quality Rated programs in E ³ Zs and three-star Quality Rated programs serving a high % of children with high needs

(B)(4)(b) Supports to Help Families of Children with High Needs Access High-Quality ELD Programs

As outlined in detail in selection criterion (B)(2), three significant financial activities are targeted to support families in accessing high-quality programs. These activities include:

Access = affordability for families	Access = increasing # of Quality Rated Programs Access = offsetting cost of quality allowing programs to meet requirements	Increasing Quality = moving programs into Quality Rated and moving programs to higher star levels in Quality Rated
1) Tiered reimbursement (B)(4)(a)	ELD programs receiving CCDF in Quality Rated by January 2017	Free professional development and TA services to programs seeking a Quality Rating (see areas (C) and (D))
2) Lower family co-pay for subsidized families in the E ³ Zs (B)(4)(a)	Bonus packages and incentives based on star rating	Aggressive requirements for programs to become Quality Rated (see (B)(1))
3) Subsidy grants to three-star programs	Teacher and administrator bonuses at the three-star level	Targeted/required TA and Quality Rated participation to publicly funded programs that serve children with high needs

In addition to these financial supports that promote access, DECAL is also proposing to expand an existing program to promote access for children with high needs to high-quality ELD programs.

Expansion of Pre-K Summer Transition Programs (STP) in E³Zs

Research suggests that children with high needs typically lose skills over the summer between the end of pre-k and the beginning of kindergarten (Alexander, Entwisle, and Olson, 2007). One of Georgia’s strategies to combat this loss of skills is to offer a Summer Transition Program for children between the pre-k and kindergarten year. This program also helps meet families’ child care needs in the summer. Building on the success of Georgia’s Pre-K Program, Georgia has implemented a successful Summer Transition Program (STP) geared towards children with high needs for the last four years. We will expand the STP in the E³Z zones.

The Pre-K STP offers a high-quality academic summer program for low-income, four-year-old children who never attended a Georgia's Pre-K or Head Start program during the previous school year, who attended a Georgia's Pre-K or Head Start program but need additional academic support before entering Kindergarten, and who meet CAPS eligibility. The program encompasses six weeks of high-quality instruction with a strong focus on language and literacy and math while implementing the Pearson Opening the World of Learning (OWL) curriculum. In addition, appropriate transition and arts integration activities are offered to children and their

families. An evaluation, including child outcomes, has been conducted each year of the program. Results from the first three years can be found in the Pre-K Summer Transition evaluation findings (Appendix 37). Results from the fourth year will be available in December 2013.

The first year findings of the Pre-K Longitudinal Study (Peisner-Feinberg, et al., 2013; see Appendix 14) indicated that English language learners were entering Pre-K, on average, more than one standard deviation behind their same aged peers. For this reason in 2013, DECAL began a second summer transition program targeting Rising Pre-K students who are English language learners. We will expand the Rising Pre-K Summer Transition Program in the E³Z zones.

The Rising Pre-K Summer Transition Program is similar to the original STP but differed in one key area – staff were bilingual and classroom instruction occurred in both English and the children’s home language. Otherwise, the supports were the same. An implementation evaluation (including classroom quality scores) was conducted; results will be available in December 2013.

Conclusion

As demonstrated above, Georgia is committed through policy development and practice to provide adequate financial and program resources to provide parents of children with high needs with the supports necessary to guarantee access to Quality Rated/high-quality ELD programs. The chart below clearly identifies all of the supports that promote access to Quality Rated high-quality ELD programs as defined in two broad areas: financial support and recruitment:

Supports that promote access to high-quality ELD programs for children with high needs	Financial Support	Recruitment /Awareness
Child care subsidy tiered reimbursement (as described in (B)(2)) linked to Quality Rated participation. This strategy provides an incentive to high-quality programs to actively recruit and serve more children who are eligible for child care subsidies and helps working families afford higher quality ELD programs for their children.	X	X
Child care subsidy parent co-pay reduction (as described in (B)(2)) linked to Quality Rated participation. This strategy will pay a portion of the required parent co-pay based on the star rating of a program. This helps working families afford higher quality ELD programs for their children.	X	X
Georgia child care subsidy policies that place priority on programs that are Quality Rated and that encourage placing children with high needs including children with disabilities, foster children, and children who are homeless in Quality Rated programs.	X	X

Child care subsidy grants offered to Quality Rated programs in the E ³ Zs and to three-star programs serving a high percentage of children with high needs. This strategy encourages programs to actively recruit high needs families and to expedite a family's application and start date.	X	
Building on the highly successful summer transition programs (STPs) for three and four year olds, this strategy will expand access to STPs for children of high needs and their families.	X	X
Transportation and meals provided to children enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K programs.	X	X
1.888.ALLGAKIDS referral line to support parents of children with high needs in locating high-quality programs. Spanish speaking referral staff available.		X
Free Inclusion Coordinator Services (with a priority given to Quality Rated programs) provided through the local CCR&Rs to offer assistance in locating appropriate child care for children with disabilities and program supports once a child with disabilities has enrolled.		X
Free professional development, mentoring, coaching and financial incentives for Quality Rated programs that actively recruit children with disabilities.		X
The Common Point of Access to Social Services (COMPASS) system that promotes access for children with high needs to programs that can accept child care subsidy payments. This online system allows a parent or guardian to apply for child care subsidy online and then receive case management services via the telephone.		X
Quality Rated materials developed in Spanish.		X
Partnerships with cultural associations and refugee associations, such as the Latin American Association, to support community education, engagement, and recruitment for Quality Rated.		X
Providing adequate wrap-around funds to provide full-day, full year programs for children with high needs enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. All programs will be Quality Rated by 2017.	X	
Georgia's Pre-K Program for four year olds. All programs will be Quality Rated by 2017.	X	

(B)(4)(c) Ambitious yet achievable targets

Georgia has set ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing:

- (1) The number of ELD programs participating in Quality Rated to 100% by 2017;
- (2) The number of Quality Rated ELD programs moving between tiers (from one star to two stars and from two stars to three stars);
- (3) The number and percentage of children with high needs receiving subsidy enrolled in Quality Rated ELD programs to 100% by 2017.

These ambitious targets were set to ensure the availability of safe, healthy, high-quality ELD options to all families. The Department of Early Care and Learning is authorized and empowered to establish, maintain, extend, and improve the regulation of ELD programs by

providing consultation and implementation of such programs and by licensing and inspecting periodically all such programs to ensure their adherence rules and regulations. Governor Nathan Deal as outlined in his letter of support **has set the expectation that all providers granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs shall be required to participate in Quality Rated no later than June 30, 2017.**

Our goals for the number of programs enrolled in Quality Rated and the number of programs by tier is represented in the performance measure for (B)(4)(c)(1) below.

(B)(4) High-Quality Plan for Promoting Access to High-Quality ELD Programs

(a) Key Goals

1. To increase quality in ELD programs statewide.
2. To increase family access to high-quality ELD programs.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Expand GAPITC Mentorship Program to E³Zs and rural areas with high percentage of infant and toddlers with high needs being served.
2. Implement QRI designation to three-star programs serving children with special needs.
3. Expand Georgia’s Pre-K Summer Transition program in the E³Zs.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Expand GAPITC Mentorship Program to E³Zs and rural areas with high percentage of infant and toddlers with high needs being served. Aligned Goal: 1,2		
Quality in infant toddler settings is low based on Ga quality study making it logical to target infant toddler programs in areas with families and children with high needs.	Rural and E ³ Zs	Fully implemented Year 2-4 in E ³ Zs
Activity 2: Implement QR¹ designation to three-star programs serving children with special needs. Aligned Goal: 1,2		
For many parents of children with disabilities locating a high-quality program is not sufficient. They need programs equipped to meet the needs of their child. This I designation will help them make more informed choices.	Statewide	Target 3-star programs statewide, 10-20 programs per year
Activity 3: Expand Georgia’s Pre-K Summer Transition program in the E³Zs. Aligned Goal: 1,2		
Expand highly successful model in areas serving children with high needs – school readiness	E ³ Zs	Fully implemented Year 2-4 in E ³ Zs

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1 Expanding GAPITC Mentorship Program to E³Zs and rural areas with high percentage of infant and toddlers with high needs being served.								
Train mentors	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support mentors			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2: Implement QR¹ designation to three-star programs serving children with special needs.								
Reliability in Inclusive Classroom Profile Model	X	X						
Pilot TA and new designation	X	X	X	X				
Program to scale for three-star ELD programs			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2: Expanding Georgia's Pre-K Summer Transition Program in the E³Zs.								
Expansion - STP			X	X	X	X	X	X

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

GAPITC Manager and Mentor Project Director
 Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K
 Statewide Inclusion Program Manager and Inclusion Staff

(e) Financial Resources

Note that Project 3 encompasses all activities for sections (B)(1), (2), (3), and (4).

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability **Selection Criterion:** B1-4

Project 3 focuses on increasing accessibility and availability of high-quality care to children with high needs through Quality Rated, Georgia's TQRIS. DECAL will be lead the agency for this project and will implement innovative strategies to increase the number of ELD programs participating and to increase the number of Quality Rated programs at a 2- or 3-star level. Strategies include decreasing the family co-pay when families select a 2- or 3-star program, creating a grant program that pays higher subsidy rates to programs offering the highest level of care, and expanding access to a high-quality Summer Transition Program for rising Kindergartners and rising Pre-K students.

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability		
Selection Criteria: B1-4		
Total Project Budget: \$50,744,844		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$24,927,278
Participating State Agency	Department of Education	\$0
Participating State Agency	Department of Public Health	\$0
Participating State Agency	Georgia Public Broadcasting	\$41,896

(f) Supporting Evidence

Georgia’s Pre-K Summer Transition Program evaluation (Appendix 37)
 GAPITC Program Evaluation

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Baseline data and set targets for the performance measures refer to (B)(4)(c)(1) and (2) Performance Measures tables.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

DECAL recognizes that the state’s ELD system is composed of many organized integrated subsystems working to accomplish the mutual goal of providing high-quality care and education to young children. For this reason, Quality Rated created a technical assistance cohort model that addresses the individual systemic needs of these various subsystems (different types) that include: franchise systems, corporate chains, faith based programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, family child care, school systems, Title I and Section 619, Montessori programs, and dual language providers.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

All of the activities described above are designed to create access to high-quality programs for families and children with high needs. All licensed and registered providers will be required to participate in Quality Rated by 2017, significantly increasing access to high-quality early learning and development programs for children with high needs.

Subsidy policies and financial incentives are used to promote the enrollment of children with high needs in star rated programs. Programs receive higher subsidy payments if they have a higher star rating. In addition, parent co-pay incentives and subsidy grants are used to promote access for high needs families to attend higher star rated programs.

The Quality Rated Inclusion Project (QRⁱ) will ensure that children with disabilities have access to high-quality ELD programs that have identified and addressed barriers to inclusion. Additionally, expansion of the Infant Toddler Mentor Project in the E³Zs will support increased quality in infant toddler classroom accessed by children with high needs. Implementing the successful bilingual Rising Pre-K Summer Program in the E³Zs will ensure that children who are learning both Spanish and English will have access to high-quality early childhood education delivered in both languages.

Performance Measure for (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

	Baseline (Today)	Target- end of calendar year 2014	Target- end of calendar year 2015	Target- end of calendar year 2016	Target- end of calendar year 2017
Total number of programs covered by the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	1,126	1,755	2,734	4,262	6,642
Number of pending rating status programs	896	920	945	970	996
Number of 1-star programs	88	388	793	1,402	1,993
Number of 2-star programs	80	353	722	1,346	2,657
Number of 3-star programs	62	94	274	544	996

Include a row for each tier in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System,

customize the labeling of the tiers, and indicate the highest and lowest tier.

Baseline data are actual count of TQRIS participants in Quality Rated data system as of 9/13/13.

Growth in total number of programs anticipates a 55.84% annual growth rate until all ELD programs are participating in 2017.

In Georgia’s TQRIS, Quality Rated, “pending rating status” is the lowest tier of participation and 3 stars is the highest tier. Actual counts of providers in the Quality Rated data system as of 9/13/2013 are reported here.

Performance Measures for (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 Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percent of Children with High Needs Participating in Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target - end of calendar year 2015		Target-end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool Specify: Georgia’s Pre-K	50,496	1,800 ^a	3.6%	5,050	10%	10,099	20%	17,674	35%	25,248	50%
Early Head Start and Head Start ³¹	25,396	520 ^b	2.0%	2,540	10%	5,079	20%	8,889	35%	12,698	50%
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	7,519	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	8,974	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c

³¹ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Performance Measures for (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 Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percent of Children with High Needs Participating in Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target - end of calendar year 2015		Target-end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	n/a	n/a ^d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program	60,858	1,236 ^c	2.0%	6,086	10%	12,172	20%	21,300	35%	30,429	50%
Other Describe:											
<p>“Top tiers” in Georgia’s TQRIS means Quality Rated programs with 2 or 3 stars.</p> <p>^a The total number of children with high needs in Georgia’s Pre-K is an estimate based on counting all enrolled children who were marked as having an IEP, having limited English proficiency, or participating in a means-tested benefit, as reported by providers to the state in final roster data for the 2012-2013 school year. This count, while actual, is only approximate to the definition of children with high needs. The number of these children who were enrolled in a 2- or 3-star program is actual, based on linking Quality Rated program data as of 9/9/2013 with final FY13 Pre-K roster data. 24,649 of the total number of children with high needs (49%) were served in Pre-K programs operated by local educational agencies, which will be required to participate in Quality Rated by 2017.</p> <p>^b Early Head Start and Head Start funded enrollment: Program Information Report, 2012-2013. Early Head Start and Head Start number of children enrolled in Quality Rated 2- and 3- star programs is based on the enrollment reported by Early Head Start and Head Start programs participating in TQRIS; Quality Rated data system, 9/17/2013.</p>											

Performance Measures for (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 Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percent of Children with High Needs Participating in Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target - end of calendar year 2015		Target-end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<p>^c Federal law prohibits IDEA Parts C and B funded programs from sharing information about children receiving services. Families are encouraged to share this information with their early learning and development programs but cannot be required to do so. Thus Georgia is unable to track participation in Quality Rated programs by children with IEPs and IFSPs.</p> <p>^d Over the past 5 years, Title I preschool classes in Georgia have been converted into Georgia's Pre-K classes; school districts use Title I funds to supplement their Georgia's Pre-K classes.</p> <p>^e CCDF baseline is actual number of children with active subsidy certificates being served at programs in TQRIS with a 2- or 3-star rating as of report run date; Maximus CCDF data system, 9/3/13. Since tiered reimbursement was implemented in July 2013, average monthly served was not possible to run for the baseline as it was for the total number of CCDF children.</p>											

(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems.
(15 points)

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), that the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

- (b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children’s learning, development, and school readiness.

.In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State’s special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed*. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (B)(5):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Introduction

An important strategy in Georgia’s ELC agenda is measurement, and part of the measurement strategy is Georgia’s validation of Quality Rated. The activities under validation are important to help determine the success of meeting our ELD reform goals (as outlined in (A)(2)(a)). Quality Rated is an important component driving access, so Georgia has undertaken key measurement activities to gauge its validity and fidelity.

This section describes Georgia’s state plan for conducting validation studies that examine the extent to which the tiers of its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality and assess the extent to which quality ratings relate to progress in children’s learning, development, and school readiness. As part of earlier validation activities, Georgia has conducted content validity assessments to measure the extent to which the standards reflect quality and has begun the process of analyzing Quality Rated data to ensure that the system is operating as intended.

Georgia has been engaged in validation efforts since the initial stages of the development of its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, Quality Rated. These efforts are best articulated through the methodology outlined in the research brief, “Validation of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems for Early Care and Education and School-Age Care” (Zellman & Fiene, 2012). This methodology is guiding current efforts. Zellman and Fiene define validation as “a multi-step process that assesses the degree to which design decisions about QRIS program quality standards and measurement strategies are resulting in accurate and meaningful program ratings” (p. 5). They also describe four validation approaches that states would address during different periods of the TQRIS lifespan: 1) Key concepts – examining the validity of key underlying concepts; 2) Measurement strategy – examining the measurement strategy and the psychometric properties of the measures used to assess quality; 3) QRIS outputs – assessing the outputs of the rating process (e.g., the extent to which ratings accurately reflect differential levels of program quality); and 4) Child outcomes – examining how ratings are associated with child outcomes. The ELC grant application specifically requires validation activities related to the third and fourth aspects of validation.

(B)(5)(a) Validating that the Tiers in the QRIS Reflect Differential Levels of Program Quality

This section describes how Georgia’s validation plans will show if the tiers in Quality Rated accurately differentiate program quality, including our use of research and evaluation in the development of Quality Rated. The narrative is organized by the four aspects of validation described by Zellman and Fiene. Phase one has been completed; phase two is currently being implemented; and phases three and four will be completed over the duration of the Early Learning Challenge grant period. Phase one and two validation efforts provide important foundational evidence that the Quality Rated tiers meaningfully differentiate quality – by first ensuring that the tiers include important components of quality and can be measured reliably. A proposed study for phase three (described below) will provide additional evidence that the tiers accurately reflect differential levels of program quality by examining the relationship between the ratings and an independent measure of quality not currently used in Quality Rated.

Phase One: Validating Key Concepts

The first phase of the validation process addresses content validity (Zellman and Fiene, 2012). The work on this phase began in 2007 as Georgia’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System was being developed. This development was based on two distinct, yet interwoven projects: the Quality System Indicators (QSI) Committee and the Georgia Quality Studies. The QSI Committee, composed of Georgia early education stakeholders, outlined specific standards, indicators, and measures of quality. The Georgia Quality Studies were studies of ELD program quality commissioned by DECAL and conducted by lead researchers from the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (FPG) and included data from a statewide, representative study of quality (see Appendices 3, 4, and 5). These studies measured quality using the Environment Rating Scales (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, and FCCERS-R) and gathered data around the standards and indicators developed by the QSI Committee. The information from these studies was used by DECAL to establish criteria for the tiers that would reflect differential levels of program quality.

To address content validity, the underlying concepts that make up Georgia’s TQRIS were examined by national, state, and local experts. First, the standards and indicators developed by

the QSI Committee were examined by a statewide review committee and then by three national experts: Joan Lombardi of the Children’s Project and the Birth to Five Policy Alliance, Judy Collins of the National Child Care Information Center, and Judy Langford of Strengthening Families at the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Second, research experts at FPG reviewed all of the indicators related to the standards and advised the state on the feasibility of measuring these indicators through observations, interviews, or document review (Appendix 25). Finally, as this work was being translated into an operational TQRIS, state leaders conducted focus groups and stakeholder meetings to validate that the five program standards in the state’s final TQRIS model reflected important quality concepts and were rigorous at the higher levels so that higher quality was truly being differentiated. This rigorous three-step process assured state leaders that the standards in Georgia’s TQRIS met sufficient content validity criteria and that the proposed tiers reflected differential levels of program quality.

This first phase in the validation process was completed in late 2011 with the finalization of the Quality Rated program standards and with the development of the Quality Rated logic model. This logic model was revised in June 2012. The revised version of the logic model is found in Appendix 16.

Phase Two: Validating Measurement Strategy

The second phase in the validation process addresses how well the TQRIS system is actually measuring various components of quality. This second phase includes a focus on how well the various standards (and the way they are measured) correlate with and are independent of each other. Georgia initially began this phase as part of the quality studies and is currently implementing activities that validate measurement strategies in the TQRIS.

As an initial validity study, the FPG research team systematically compared the Quality System Indicators with items from several observational measures of quality to guide the state’s decisions about a quality observational measure (Appendix 25). A crosswalk embedded in the study ensured that the observational quality measure selected for Quality Rated best matched the committee’s definition of quality.

Data collected as part of the Georgia Quality Studies were used as part of this phase of the validation process. Specifically, data were collected around the specific standards outlined by the QSI Committee. These data were then used to develop the specific levels of quality now

encompassed in Georgia's TQRIS. For example, program level data from the studies that illustrated types of family engagement activities were used to outline the specific number of points offered for family engagement activities in Standard Three. The data that were collected with the Environment Rating Scale scores, along with a research review of other states and peer-reviewed journals, were used to establish the ERS cut-scores that are now used in Georgia's TQRIS. For instance, current research suggests that an average ERS score of a "5" is a good cut-point for the highest level of quality, and the Quality Study demonstrated that a small number of classrooms in Georgia could score above a "5" on the ERS. Thus a "5" was selected as the ERS cut-score for the highest tier of Quality Rated. In summary, DECAL utilized independent data from statewide studies to help determine the indicators and scoring criteria for the three rating levels to ensure that the tiers reflect differential levels of program quality in Georgia.

Since the launch of Quality Rated in 2012, Georgia has engaged in numerous activities related to this validation phase. Working with national experts Drs. Kelly Maxwell and Donna Bryant, DECAL's Director of Research and Evaluation has directed these validation efforts and helped develop a database to capture the data at the lowest possible level (e.g., indicators for the physical health and safety self-assessment) so that it would be available to guide later revisions. These data are integrated, at the state level, into a single data system (KOALA) that holds information about individual programs and connects licensing and Quality Rated data. Program data are updated and archived annually. This enables DECAL to continually monitor the impact of Quality Rated, and the demographic data allows DECAL to measure the improvements made in programs serving children with high needs.

The activities associated with this current phase in the validation process began in January 2013, when sufficient numbers of programs started being rated. These activities focus on assessor reliability, program retention, portfolio scores, and the relationship between portfolio scores and ERS observations. The specific activities include:

- An adoption of a more rigorous inter-rater reliability effort. This was undertaken after initial analysis indicated inter-rater reliability was not as high as desired. Currently, all raters are undergoing a new reliability check with the authors of the ERS instruments. Inter-rater reliability is necessary to ensure that tiers meaningfully differentiate programs on quality.
- The development of a monthly statistics report that "trends" each phase of the Quality

Rated process (Appendix 2). From a validation aspect, this helps monitor participation and retention data. For example, this report provides important participation statistics, including information about the types of programs entering the system and the different degrees of participation where programs fall. The report can be used to determine if the average time that a program takes to be rated improves or declines – important in ensuring that programs become rated.

- An in-depth analysis of data from the first 100 centers rated and the first 100 family day care homes rated. As of this writing, the analysis file has been built for 100 centers and is being constructed for family day care homes. Analysis should begin in November 2013. This analysis will test the correlation between portfolio scores and ERS observation scores. Preliminary analyses suggest that the ERS scores may be too heavily weighted in the program’s final rating.
- One additional research project, conducted as part of Georgia’s State Advisory Council project, informs this stage of Georgia’s current validation efforts. The study, conducted by Dr. Richard Fiene, professor emeritus from Pennsylvania State University, is examining the validity of the process by which the state designates licensed programs as either compliant or non-compliant with the state’s health and safety standards. This is important because the state uses compliance with state licensing rules as a prerequisite for participating in Quality Rated. The results of the study (Appendix 7) indicate that the process by which the state determines compliance, the “floor” of Quality Rated, is valid.

In summary, Georgia is using a variety of activities supported by internal and external experts in this stage of the validation process. The activities discussed are ensuring the Georgia’s TQRIS is being implemented with sound measurement strategies—ensuring, in part, that the tiers reflect differential levels of program quality. During the ELC grant period, Georgia will continue to invest funds into these validation activities.

Phase Three: Validating TQRIS Outputs

Phase three validation addresses the heart of (B)(5)(a) – the extent to which the tiers accurately reflect differential levels of program quality. It also examines how the ratings differ between different types of programs. It is also important that we can demonstrate that Quality

Rated is truly differentiating quality in programs serving large numbers of children with high needs.

The primary strategy for gathering evidence that the tiers differentiate program quality is to use quality instruments not currently in Quality Rated (e.g., CLASS) to see if quality is different for lower and higher rated programs. This and other related activities are detailed in the state's High-Quality Plan as part of Georgia's model to continue the validation efforts and address child outcomes. We will implement qualitative research components to study the cohort process (a model being used to increase the number of high-quality options available to families of children with high needs) and the process for enrolling Georgia's Pre-K programs in local school systems to better understand how well the Quality Rated process differentiates program quality.

For these validation activities, DECAL will be assisted by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) for the data analysis. GOSA is an independent educational agency in Georgia that serves the state to improve student outcomes by providing transparent and objective analysis and communication of statewide data (<https://gosa.georgia.gov/about-gosa>). GOSA is the agency conducting many of the evaluation activities for Georgia's K-12 Race to the Top initiative. GOSA works closely with the Georgia Department of Education and the Department of Early Care and Learning and is heavily involved in Governor Deal's Grade-Level Reading Initiative. The collaboration between DECAL and GOSA will ensure that the important data collected for these activities is also used to inform the K-12 system.

(B)(5)(b) Assessing extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to children's progress

The fourth validation phase addresses the relationship between the TQRIS standards and key measures of children's development – and Georgia intends to examine the relationship between the quality ratings and children's development and learning. Child outcomes are one of the multiple goals for Georgia's Quality Rated (Appendix 16 Quality Rated logic model). When enough, at least 500, programs have been rated at varying tiers, we will utilize ELC funds to conduct a validation study that will help us better understand which indicators in the TQRIS are most closely related to children's growth and development and explore the extent to which children attending higher rated programs (i.e., programs at the higher tiers) perform better on

academic and social measures than children attending programs at the lower tiers. Child outcome data will be collected in the fall and spring, so that children's progress in learning, development, and school readiness skills can be assessed. See the High-Quality Plan below for additional details.

In summary, Georgia has incorporated a strong research and evaluation methodology in developing and implementing Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. This methodology has carried over into the ongoing validation process that will continue through the lifespan of the state's Early Learning Challenge plan by addressing the extent to which the tiers reflect differential levels of program quality and the relationship between the quality ratings (and the rating components) and children's development and learning. Furthermore, these and other related validation activities will prepare the state for 2017 when all programs are required to be enrolled in Quality Rated.

High-Quality Plan for Validating the Effectiveness of the TQRIS

The following High-Quality Plan outlines specific validation efforts for the third and fourth phases referenced by Zellman and Fiene (2012). Addressing the ability of the current tiers to differentiate quality and to measure the impact on children's development is part of these phases. Georgia proposes a study (modeled after the former Georgia Quality Study and the current Pre-K Longitudinal Study) to examine the extent to which the tiers are related to independent measures of quality and to demonstrate the impact of Quality Rated on overall quality and the relationships between Quality Rated tiers – and the rating components – and children's progress.

(a) Key Goals

- 1) To complete phases three and four of the validation process.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

Activity 1 – Ensuring that the Tiers Reflect Differential Levels of Program Quality

As described in Zellman and Fiene (2012), the third phase in the validation study specifically examines TQRIS ratings (or tiers) and their relationship to other, independent measures of quality. The specific tasks under Activity 1 for phase three are:

- Task One: The most important activity in this phase is validating the ratings with external instruments of quality (e.g., CLASS). This will be conducted in child care centers and family child care homes in conjunction with Activity 2.
- Task Two: Expand the 100 case analysis for child care centers and the 100 case analysis for family child care providers (Group Day Care Homes are included in Child Care Centers). This expansion, made possible as more programs are being rated, will allow for better comparisons between different groups of providers. For example, are there statistically significant differences in quality between child care centers where more than 50% of the children they serve receive subsidies and those with a lower percentage of subsidy children? This expansion of the analysis from phase two will provide better detail on how Georgia's TQRIS may be working differently for different groups of providers.
- Task Three: Conduct additional studies from the spring of 2014 through the fall of 2015, including:
 - An in-depth study of the cohort model; discussed in (B)(2). The cohort model allows similar groups of providers (e.g., child care chains, family child care providers serving Hispanic children) to submit their portfolios together. This streamlines the process and facilitates a consistent approach for many of the key standards. For this validation task, researchers at DECAL will interview key staff in each of the cohorts, analyze cohort data and compare it to statewide averages, and compare cohort data to child demographic data. This will allow the state to gauge how well the cohort model is helping the state improve access to high-quality programs.
 - A case-study analysis of Georgia's Pre-K programs housed in a local board of education that have agreed to participate in Quality Rated. (All programs will be required to participate by 2017.) This study will help us better understand the particular issues faced by public school-based programs in becoming Quality Rated, which will be important for providing needed supports as DECAL moves from a voluntary TQRIS to a mandatory one. This case study will follow programs from their initial consultation through the portfolio submission to their classroom observations and final rating.

- Qualitative interviews and surveys with participating providers and families to explicitly examine how well Quality Rated is meeting the needs of many children with high needs including children with special needs, English learners, and children receiving subsidies.

Activity 2 – Examining the relationship between changes in quality ratings and progress in children’s learning and development

As described in Zellman and Fiene (2012), the fourth phase in the validation study specifically examines key elements of the TQRIS system and the relationship to progress in key areas of children’s growth and development. Georgia proposes an independent research study conducted by an outside entity with experience conducting child assessment studies. The study will also gather independent measures of quality to examine the extent to which the ratings differentiate programs on quality. This validation study will use Quality Rated ratings to discern the relationship between children’s progress over time and program ratings, specifically comparing programs of lower quality (those participating and those at one star) with those of higher quality (two to three stars). This will provide evidence for the validity of the method used to rate programs and hence designate some programs as higher quality (two or three stars). Though the study will be developed and implemented in 2015, below is a proposed overall outline.

- Task One: Development and design for the validation will begin in late 2014. A contract will be awarded by January 2015. DECAL will begin working with the contracted entity to design the sampling frame and study procedures. The absolutes will be that we have a sufficient number of Quality Rated programs at all levels (including those that are just participating) to make comparisons between different ratings. Design questions to be answered include: 1) child assessments to be conducted; and 2) observational instruments and other quality indicators (e.g., teacher turnover) to be included in the study.
- Task Two: Data collection for the study will begin in fall 2015. All data will be collected in a ten-month period. It is expected that the sample will include at least 150 child care programs. Within each program, one infant/toddler, one preschool (non Georgia’s Pre-K), and one Georgia’s Pre-K classroom (if the program is a Pre-K provider) will be sampled. Local school systems that offer Georgia’s Pre-K Program and are participating in Quality

Rated will be eligible. Pre (fall 2015) and Post (spring 2016) child assessments will be conducted on a sample of children. Measures relating to children’s progress and skills will be collected for younger and older children to the extent possible. Within each classroom, an environment and teacher-child interaction observation will be conducted. The observation instruments will be identified at a later date. Sufficient family information will be collected as well. This activity will be conducted after the revisions discussed in (B)(1) have been made, so the study will be designed around more (presumably) rigorous standards of quality.

- Task Three: A second study of family child care programs. The initial study described above will be conducted in child care programs during the first year. A study in family child care (using the methods described above) will be conducted in fall 2016 through spring 2017.
- Though this study will correspond to similar data collected in (D)(2), it is important that it remain distinct. Participants in this study will remain anonymous to DECAL. These same restrictions may not apply to data collected for (D)(2).

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Complete Phase Three of the Validation Process		
Aligned Goal: 1		
This activity is focused on measuring the outputs of the system and how the system is working for different groups of providers.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 2: Complete Phase Four of the Validation Process		
Aligned Goal: 1		
The independent study proposed, the type of study that Georgia has a history of conducting, will provide an independent analysis of the impact of Quality Rated on 1) providing access to higher quality programs for children with high needs; 2) raising overall quality in Georgia; and 3) the impact of certain standards on elements of children’s development and growth.	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Phase Three of Validation Process								
Task One: Cohort Study	X	X	X					
Task Two: Expansion of Data Analysis	X	X	X	X				
Task Three: Cohort Model Study, Pre-K Case Study, and Qualitative Research	X	X	X	X				
Activity 2: Phase Four of Validation Process								
Task One: Initial Design, External Contract Awarded, and Procedures Developed		X	X	X				
Task Two: Data Collection/Data Analysis				X	X	X	X	X
Task Three: Family Study				X	X	X	X	X

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

Activity 1: DECAL, the lead agency overseeing Quality Rated, will continue to lead the validation process. DECAL’s Director of Research and Evaluation will oversee the validation work. DECAL will also partner with the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement to conduct many of the analyses.

Activity 2: The phase four study will be conducted by an independent, well-established research entity commissioned by DECAL.

(e) Financial Resources

Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation

Selection Criterion: B5

The Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) will assist DECAL with the data analysis for the validation of the quality tiers in Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS. GOSA will employ a half-time research and evaluation specialist to complete the data analysis that will inform the in-depth study of the cohort model.

Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation		
Selection Criteria: B5		
Total Project Budget: \$14,084,541		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$2,222,943
Participating State Agency	Governor’s Office of Student Achievement	\$109,932

(f) Supporting Evidence

1. Feasibility Study (Appendix 25)
2. Georgia's Quality Study (Appendix 3,4,5)
3. Licensing and Monitoring Study (Appendix 7)

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

All types of ELD programs will be included in validation activities. Key activities focus on the cohort model (which includes programs serving specific populations of children with high needs) and Georgia's Pre-K programs housed in local school systems. Furthermore, this validation includes specific plans to examine the impact of Quality Rated for different types of programs. This includes analyses conducted to measure differences within and between groups. Specific activities are designed for programs that serve children with special needs, dual language learners, and programs serving a large number of children receiving subsidies. Additionally, a study measuring the feasibility of including Georgia's Pre-K is proposed. Finally, examination of the cultural competence of the TQRIS standards is also proposed.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

As detailed earlier in Core Area (B), Quality Rated is specifically designed to improve quality and to increase access to higher quality for children with high needs. The validation activities proposed in this section measure the impact of all types of ELD programs. Furthermore, the study proposed in Activity Two will be able to measure progress and skills for children with high needs.

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

The State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

Note: The total available points for (C)(1) through (C)(4) = 60. The 60 available points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria in the Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points

The applicant must address two or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows.

(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

- (a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;
- (c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and that they are shared with parents and families along with suggestions for appropriate strategies they can use at home to support their children's learning and development; and
- (d) Includes evidence that the State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative *how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion*; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the

State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily. In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed*. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (C)(1)(a) and (b):

- To the extent the State has implemented Early Learning and Development Standards that meet the elements in selection criteria (C)(1)(a) and (b), submit--
 - Proof of use by all types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State;
 - The State's Early Learning and Development Standards for:
 - Infants and toddlers
 - Preschoolers
 - Documentation that the standards are developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate for all children, including children with disabilities and developmental delays and English learners;
 - Documentation that the standards address all Essential Domains of School Readiness and that they are of high quality; and
 - Documentation of the alignment between the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and the State's K-3 standards.

Introduction

Georgia has a long history as a leader in the development and use of early learning and development (ELD) standards that support children's learning and development. The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) (Appendix 27) are written for children birth through four, are **developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate**, and cover all of the **essential domains of learning**. The state's ELD standards are aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for K-3 and embedded as a critical foundation in Georgia's TQRIS Program Standards, curricula and assessments, the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and in most (soon to be all) ELD professional development activities. Expanding the use of the GELDS will increase ELD and classroom instruction quality and contribute to meeting the state's Early Learning Challenge goals.

The inception of ELD standards in Georgia came in 2002 with the creation of the Pre-K Learning Goals, which were revised when the GPS for K-12 were implemented in 2005. In addition, DECAL developed the Georgia Early Learning Standards (GELS) for children birth through age three, which were systematically rolled out to programs in 2007. In 2013, Georgia introduced the latest set of high-quality, research-based ELD standards for children birth to age five called the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). The GELDS are the result of a two-year alignment study and revision project that began in 2010 with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The GELDS represent a continuation of the history and strength of Georgia's commitment to high-quality learning standards. Appendix 28 contains the results of research alignment studies that have been completed on the birth-to-five GELDS.

This section provides a brief overview of how the state's current standards were developed. It then explains how the GELDS meet all the criteria of (C)(1) with a High-Quality Plan to strengthen the implementation of GELDS and to ensure that the GELDS have their intended impact of improving the experiences of children with high needs in ELD programs.

Development of the GELDS

In 2010 DECAL commissioned a comprehensive analysis of what was then called the

Georgia Early Learning Standards (GELS) and the Pre-K Content Standards, alongside other pertinent documents, including the newly implemented Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) for kindergarten through third grade, the recently revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (HSCDELFF), and Work Sampling System (WSS), the assessment tool used by all Georgia's Pre-K programs. Drs. Sharon Lynn Kagan of Columbia University and Catherine Scott-Little of UNC-Greensboro conducted the analysis. Their goal was to provide empirical data that Georgia could use to revise and improve its early learning standards. As part of their analysis, they examined the following:

- The extent to which content was addressed in the GELS, the Pre-K Content Standards, and the GPS for K-3.
- The extent to which the GELS aligned across the age levels from birth through three years (vertical alignment), and the extent to which the three-year-old GELS, the Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards, and the GPS for kindergarten aligned (vertical alignment).
- The extent to which Georgia's Pre-K Content Standards aligned with the Work Sampling System assessment (horizontal alignment), and the extent to which Georgia's Pre-K Content Standards aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (horizontal alignment).
- The extent to which the GPS for K-3 aligned across the grade levels (vertical alignment) (Kagan & Scott-Little 2011).

Findings from the study identified areas of strength and areas of misalignment and provided a scientifically rigorous guide to assist in revising the standards. Georgia formed the Georgia Standards Revision Committee (GSRC) in July 2011 to review the recommendations and begin the revision process. The committee comprised a large cross-sector membership with expertise in young children's development. The committee included DECAL staff, Georgia Department of Education specialists, Head Start specialists, inclusion specialists, cultural and linguistic experts, Pre-K teachers, infant/toddler teachers, infant/toddler specialists, university professors, center and family child care providers and technical college instructors. A complete list of the committee's membership can be found in Appendix 38. The committee's charge was to revise the existing standards into one set of appropriate and attainable learning goals for

children from birth to age five that aligned to the GPS for K-3. The group convened under the leadership of Kagan and Scott-Little to draft a new set of standards.

Once the draft was complete in 2011, the new document went back to Kagan and Scott-Little for further review. They conducted an additional series of three analyses on the new GELDS. The first was a comprehensive analysis of the entire document, which yielded recommendations for edits to ensure that items were in their proper categories and order. Overall, the expert reviewers found that the revised standards were developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and comprehensively covered important aspects of children's early learning and development. Kagan and Scott-Little write:

Overall, we found the revised documents to be well done and to thoughtfully incorporate not only past reviews, but also new knowledge that has emanated from research. The documents are easy to follow, advancing the likelihood of their utility to teachers and practitioners. The age range, from 0 to 60 months, is beautifully delineated into five well-considered age groupings (0-12, 12-24, 24-36, 36-48, and 48-60 months). This structure provides needed attention to each year in the pre-primary age range. Moreover, the inclusion of multiple domains fosters a strong commitment to the holistic development that is so critical for young children (2012, p.2).

Two notable recommendations that came from this analysis were for Georgia to consider including a focus on the social conventions or pragmatics of language usage and to consider enriching the mathematics sub-domain by adding a mathematical processes section that would address reasoning, estimation, probability, and communication. Georgia addressed both of these areas, as evidenced in the GELDS (Appendix 27).

The second analysis was an examination of how balanced the revised standards for birth to 60 months were across the domains of early learning and development. A key recommendation from the balance analysis was for Georgia to reassess the balance of indicators in the younger age groupings (0-12 months and 12-24 months). Kagan and Scott-Little suggested lesser emphasis be placed on the Cognitive Development domain to make sure the Physical Development and Motor Skills and the Social and Emotional Development domains were fully and appropriately addressed for younger children. The Georgia Standards Revision Committee reconvened to examine this finding and revised the 0-12 and 12-24 month indicators to represent a more appropriate balance.

The final analysis from Kagan and Scott-Little was an examination of the GELDS for the

48-60 months age range alongside the kindergarten Common Core standards in English language arts and mathematics. The feedback on this last analysis proved positive in most areas. However, they asked Georgia to consider giving greater attention to the following three areas to create optimal alignment with the Common Core for English language arts: participation in language and literacy-related activities, expressive verbal communication, and pragmatics and social language. The Georgia Standards Revision Committee used these recommendations to make edits and revisions to better align with GPS for K-3.

The GELDS revision process was extensive. Georgia used the research team's recommendations at every stage. The final standards included in Appendix 27 are the result of a lengthy and thorough process guided by experts in all areas of learning and development. The goal was to create a quality set of standards that would serve as the foundation for all ELD initiatives in Georgia. It was also important to incorporate the most current and thoughtful research. Kagan and Scott-Little were selected for their knowledge and reputation in the field of early education, and their expertise was instrumental in guiding this process for Georgia. With the help Kagan and Scott-Little's leadership, the GELDS raise the quality of early learning opportunities for Georgia's youngest learners.

(C)(1)(a) ELDS are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate

The GELDS are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for children birth to age five, and they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness. During the extensive 2011 revision of Georgia's early learning standards, Georgia ensured that the standards would meet these goals by establishing the Georgia Standards Revision Committee (GSRC), composed of a diverse range of stakeholders and advised by national experts, Drs. Kagan and Scott-Little, who conducted a second review after the new draft was completed. Drs. Kagan and Scott-Little analyzed the new draft and made the recommendations. The analysis concluded that the standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for children birth to age five and they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness.

Developmentally Appropriate

Georgia has given careful consideration and attention to making sure the GELDS address

a **developmentally appropriate** trajectory of skills. The age-appropriate indicators for each standard are divided in five age groupings: 0-12 months, 12-24 months, 24-36 months, 36-48 months, and 48-60 months. The purpose of this type of age grouping is to show the natural progression of a skill. The structure of the GELDS and this progression of skills is illustrated in the following chart:

Domain: Communication, Language, and Literacy (CLL)				
Strand: Receptive Language				
Standard: CLL1 - The child will listen to conversations and demonstrate comprehension.				
0-12 months:	12-24 months:	24-36 months:	36-48 months:	48-60 months:
CLL1.0a Reacts to environmental sounds and verbal communication.	CLL1.1a Responds to a language during conversations, songs, stories or other experiences.	CLL1.2a Listens to and responds to brief conversations and group discussions.	CLL1.3a Listens and responds to conversations and group discussions.	CLL1.4a Listens and responds on topic to conversations and group discussions for an extended period.

The structure of the GELDS emphasizes the progression of skills and provides teachers, caregivers, parents, and all stakeholders with a framework for children’s learning and development. The GELDS also promote the inclusion of children with disabilities and take into account individual rates of development. Because they are a framework for learning, the age groupings are not fixed bands. The standards statements are intended for all children, but the age-appropriate indicators provide embedded adaptations that help teachers address individual children’s needs. In the subsequent review, Drs. Kagan and Scott-Little found that the revised standards were developmentally appropriate and comprehensively covered important aspects of children’s early learning and development. The researchers noted:

The results of the balanced analysis indicate that the Georgia early learning standards devote considerable attention to the multiple domains of early learning, taking a holistic approach that is most apparent at the earliest age levels. The results also show that Georgia has worked diligently to trace the path of early skills and knowledge that might be expected in kindergarten back to the earliest months of a child’s life. We commend this ambitious effort for its attempt to create a cohesive set of standards that support intentional care and instruction across the infant-toddler and preschool age spectrum (2013, p. 13). (Appendix 28)

Culturally Appropriate

One of the main goals of the GELDS revision project was to develop **culturally appropriate** standards that reflect the needs of Georgia’s diverse population. The Georgia Standards Revision Committee (GSRC) included members with personal and professional exposure to relevant cultural issues who contributed to the process. The committee paid special attention to making sure cultural awareness was addressed in the standards statements and age-appropriate indicators. For example, under the Cognitive Development: Social Studies domain, standard CD-SS1 states, “The child will demonstrate understanding of his/her family and an emerging awareness of their own culture and ethnicity,” and standard CD-SS2 states, “The child will demonstrate an understanding of his/her community and an emerging awareness of others’ culture and ethnicity.” It was the committee’s belief that by adding specific standards and age-appropriate indicators to address cultural awareness, cultural learning would be interwoven into daily discussions and experiences. In the review of the standards, the researchers found that the revised standards were culturally appropriate (Appendix 28).

Linguistically Appropriate

The GELDS are **linguistically appropriate** for their intended audience. They contain simple, straightforward language that was written on an 8th grade reading level. The language is user-friendly and understandable for early childhood educators and other stakeholder groups at varying levels of language and literacy skills. Across the standards, the expectations for children’s language usage are both age and developmentally appropriate. The wording of the indicators also provides choices for child communication. As stated above, the GELDS give options for communication to accommodate for children with linguistic differences and for children who are dual language learners. The executive summary of the research alignment studies is located in Appendix 28, the results of which show the GELDS are linguistically appropriate and the content has been validated with child development and early education research. The GELDS have also been translated into Spanish (Appendix 27) and a plan is in place to translate the GELDS into Georgia’s other most spoken languages: Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Additionally, Georgia is part of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment

(WIDA) Consortium. Established with funding from the U.S. Department of Education Enhanced Assessment Grant, the WIDA Consortium currently consists of 17 states, including Georgia. WIDA provides meaningful tools and information to educators working with dual language learners (DLLs) that are anchored in research-based practices for serving diverse learners. WIDA has developed Early English Language Development (E-ELD) Standards to be used by early childhood practitioners, including child care, Head Start, preschool/prekindergarten educators, and caregivers. The purpose of the E-ELD Standards is to provide a developmentally sound framework for supporting, instructing, and assessing DLLs in developmentally appropriate social and academic English. The E-ELD Standards provide early childhood practitioners with a map of English language development and encourage the incorporation of each student's home language and culture. Using ELC funding, DECAL will adopt the WIDA E-ELD Standards, develop a correspondence document between the GELDS and the E-ELD Standards, and provide training, technical assistance, and ongoing support on the E-ELD Standards to early childhood programs using evidence-based practices.

Essential Domains of School Readiness

The GELDS reflect common learning domains across all ages, birth to five, and are aligned with the **Essential Domains of School Readiness**. The GELDS domains of learning include: Physical Development and Motor Skills, Social and Emotional Development, Approaches to Play and Learning, Communication, Language and Literacy, and Cognitive Development. The Cognitive Development domain is unique in that it contains sub-domains for the more academic disciplines. The sub-domains include Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Cognitive Processes, and Creative Development. The alignment between the GELDS and the Essential Domains of School Readiness is illustrated in the following chart:

Organizational Framework of GELDS									
Essential Domains of School Readiness	Physical Well-being and Motor Development	Social and Emotional Development	Approaches to Learning	Language and Literacy Development	Cognitive and General Knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development)				
	Physical Development and Motor Skills	Social and Emotional Development	Approaches to Play and Learning	Communication, Language and Literacy Development	Cognitive Development				
GELDS Domains					Cognitive Processes	Math	Science	Social Studies	Creative Development
Strands	Health & Well Being Use of Senses Motor Skills Adaptive Skills	Developing a Sense of Self Self Regulation Developing a Sense of Self with Others	Attentiveness and Persistence Initiative and Exploration Play	Receptive Language Expressive Language Early Reading Early Writing	Thinking Skills Problem Solving	Number Quantity Geometry and Spatial Thinking Measurement and Comparison	Scientific Skills and Methods Living Creatures Physical Science Earth and Space	Family and Community History and Events People and the Environment	Creative Movement and Dance Visual Arts Music Drama

(C)(1)(b) ELDS aligned with K-3 academic standards

The GELDS provide a strong alignment with the GPS for K-3. With the goal of preparing children for kindergarten success in mind, the GELDS were developed to represent the skills and concepts in which all children should be competent by the end of preschool. As described in the overview, the final analysis conducted by Kagan and Scott-Little (2013) was an examination of the alignment of the GELDS for 48-60 months in the areas of Communication, Language, and Literacy and Mathematics with the CCGPS in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten. The study results can be found in Appendix 28 and show the results of the analysis between the two sets of standards. Kagan and Scott-Little write specifically about the alignment:

The Coverage/Depth results suggest that alignment between the Georgia standards and kindergarten CCGPS in English Language Arts and Mathematics is quite good. Many instances of apparent misalignment are understandable for the different age levels that the documents address, and in some cases, Georgia appropriately covers aspects of early learning that the Common Core does not. For example, in the domain of Language & Communication Development, Georgia deserves praise for addressing ... constructs related to emergent writing skills, which are not covered by the Common Core. In mathematics, we commend Georgia for addressing patterns, seriation, time, measuring objects, and the mathematics processes (2013 p. 12). (Appendix 28)

The GELDS were reviewed by Georgia Department of Education specialists in all content areas when the standards were under development and again in their final stages of completion. Kindergarten through third grade teachers contributed their expertise by serving on the GSRC and provided feedback during each step of the revision process. The overall result was alignment between the GELDS and the GPS for K-3.

(C)(1)(c) ELDS incorporated across early learning and development system and shared with families

Georgia has taken steps to ensure the state's ELD standards are embedded across all programs by incorporating them in the Program Standards, in curricula, activities, and assessments, in the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and in professional development activities. Additionally, Georgia will continue to expand efforts for family

engagement around the GELDS.

Program Standards

Georgia's Pre-K programs and Quality Rated Programs are required to use the GELDS to guide instructional planning and assessment. This is a requirement for receiving Georgia's Pre-K funds and is monitored when programs are visited by a Georgia's Pre-K consultant.

As outlined in section (B)(1)(a), the GELDS are a foundational component of Georgia's Quality Rated **Program Standards**. The GELDS are embedded in Standard 4: Intentional Teaching Practices. Programs must demonstrate that their curricula and lesson plans align with the GELDS to receive full points. Additionally, the GELDS are interwoven in the professional development for Quality Rated. Programs receive points in Standard 1 if the GELDS are embedded in their annual professional development plans. DECAL worked with Georgia Public Broadcasting to produce a GELDS/QRIS webinar as part of a stakeholder awareness campaign. The goal of the webinar, posted at gelds.decal.ga.gov/resources, is to assist programs in how they can use the GELDS to meet standard 4 of the Quality Rated portfolio. The webinar featured infant/toddler and preschool teachers and addressed the importance of intentional planning and the process of planning and coding lesson plans with the GELDS.

Curricula and Activities

Georgia has developed an intentional plan to embed the GELDS into all **Curricula and Activities**. For Georgia's Pre-K Program, a curriculum review has been conducted every three to five years to review research-based curricula for optimal alignment with the state's ELD standards (now the GELDS). The end result of the review was a list of accepted curricula. Each Georgia's Pre-K site selected a curriculum from the list that best met their program needs.

Georgia is now in the process of doing a similar review for birth to five programs that coincides with the implementation of the GELDS. The end result of this process will be a newly approved curriculum list for Georgia's Pre-K programs and a recommended curriculum list for Georgia's birth to five early learning programs. That is, the GELDS will serve as the birth to five standards and the approved list of curricular resources serve as the vehicles by which the GELDS are implemented. Programs participating in Quality Rated (all ELD programs by 2017; see (B)(1)) must also select a curriculum from this list. Each submitted curriculum will be reviewed

for effective content, appropriate instructional strategies, standards alignment, and professional development models, with the goal of developing a comprehensive list of curricula aligned with the GELDS. DECAL has also created technical assistance and webinars that support programs participating in QRIS in how to select a curriculum and how to plan activities with intentionality (see (B)(1)). The GELDS are also used by ELD educators in designing goals for IFSP's and IEP's.

In addressing activities, Georgia's licensing activity rule (Appendix 26) mandates that all licensed ELD programs provide a daily plan of varied and developmentally appropriate activities that promote the social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language, and literacy development of each child. The activity rule requires a written daily lesson plan for all ages served. The rule was written to encourage programs to use the GELDS as the basis for instruction. As part of the initial awareness campaign surrounding the GELDS roll out, DECAL partnered with Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) to develop a webinar that explains how the GELDS can be used to satisfy the activity rule. Currently, licensed programs are not required to use the GELDS to satisfy the activity rule, but DECAL will rewrite the rule to make the use of the GELDS a requirement; the plan is outlined in further detail in (C)(1)(d).

Comprehensive Assessment System

Optimal alignment between the GELDS and the **Comprehensive Assessment System** (CAS) is an integral component in strengthening ELD programs. As demonstrated in the following section: 1) Georgia has an assessment that meets the criteria for each element of the comprehensive assessment system definition; and 2) each of those assessments is aligned to the GELDS. Georgia's existing CAS, includes strong components, and each is being expanded as part of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge Plan: child screening measures (embedded in Quality Rated Standards), formative child assessments (required by Georgia's Pre-K, embedded in Quality Rated Standards), measures of environmental quality (required in Quality Rated), and measures of the quality of adult-child interactions in ELD programs (required in Quality Rated, used for professional development in Georgia's Pre-K, used in Georgia's Early Learning Initiative for the K-12 Race to the Top). Furthermore, the GELDS are linked to early childhood assessment practices in several ways. First, ELD programs are encouraged to use assessment for curriculum planning purposes, and curricula lists are now linked to the GELDS. Second,

assessments are a tool used in communicating with families, and part of that communication is using GELDS to understand child development and growth. The following provides more detail into each comprehensive assessment component and link to the GELDS.

- **Screening.** The screening tools utilized by most ELD programs cover the five essential domains addressed in GELDS.
- **Formative Child Assessments.** Georgia has worked to ensure that the primary formative assessment used in the Pre-K program is aligned with GELDS. Currently, all Georgia's Pre-K programs are required to use the Work Sampling System (WSS) assessment, a formative assessment of children's skills. All Pre-K teachers receive annual training on WSS and how WSS can be used most effectively with the GELDS. In addition, programs receiving funding for IDEA Parts C and B, section 619 are required to implement a formative assessment aligned with ELD standards. Georgia perceived it was important to examine the alignment between the existing standards and WSS and to create an even better alignment during the revision process. Perhaps one of the greatest areas of misalignment existed between the Pre-K Content Standards and the Work Sampling System indicators. Kagan and Scott-Little (2011) write, "When comparing the Pre-K standards with the WSS, we noted that the latter were less well articulated and in general rated as less difficult than the Pre-K standards" (p.7). As Georgia was developing the GELDS, the GELDS documents were shared with Pearson, the company that holds the license for WSS. Concurrently, Pearson conducted a multi-state gap analysis to determine the areas of weakness in WSS. Using the finalized GELDS and the results of their gap analysis, they revised the WSS indicators leading to a better alignment between the two documents.
- **Environmental Measures of Quality.** The ERS family of environmental rating measures utilized in Quality Rated and throughout the professional development system includes items and indicators that address aspects of all of the domains covered in GELDS.
- **Teacher-Child Interactions.** Georgia's Pre-K uses the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to measure teacher-child interactions. When we were developing the GELDS, CLASS specialists participated on the GSRC and helped ensure that the

GELDS were also aligned with CLASS. Developed by researchers at the University of Virginia, the CLASS is an observational tool that provides a common lens and language focused on what matters – the classroom interactions that boost student learning. Strands or areas of learning in the GELDS were written to promote these rich, meaningful interactions, such as the Cognitive Processes sub-domain which promotes thinking skills and problem-solving skills and the Mathematical Reasoning strand which focuses on mathematical communication. Integration across child care programs is also found in Head Start where preschool aged classrooms are mandated to use CLASS in their reviews and to demonstrate an ongoing strategy for monitoring teacher-child interactions in the classroom.

Georgia plans to promote increased knowledge and application of effective assessment strategies by offering extensive training opportunities as part of our Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy (see sections (C)(3) and (D)(2)). The goal is to help early childhood educators understand and be able to address the important connection between the GELDS, curriculum/lesson planning, and assessment in improving child outcomes in Georgia.

Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

Georgia’s **Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework**, known as the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies, is a comprehensive document that describes the knowledge and skills expected of professionals who work with young children in ELD programs. The WKC Framework (see section (D)(1)) has gone through multiple revisions to ensure optimal alignment with the GELDS. This framework is used to create statewide progressions of credentials and degrees and used for articulation purposes with Georgia’s higher education system.

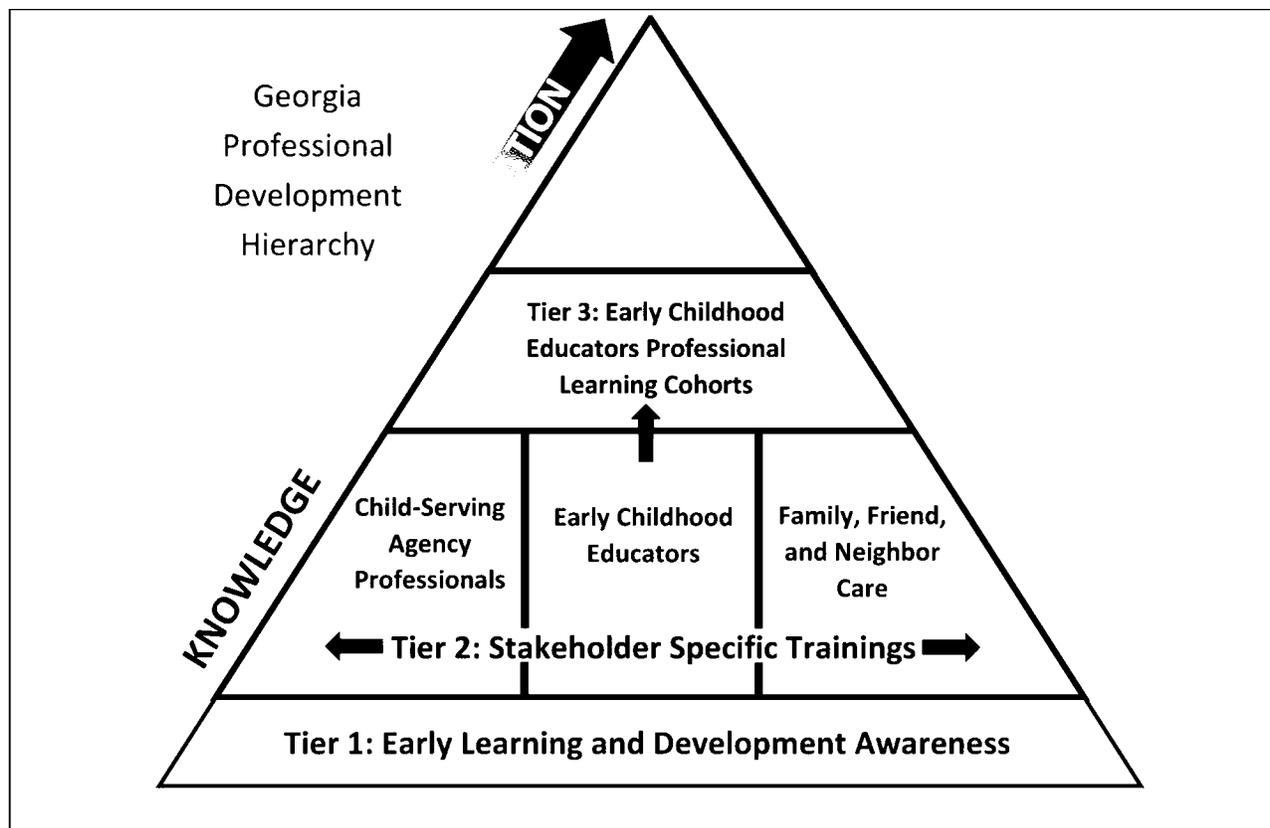
Professional Development

As discussed in the dissemination process, Georgia has developed a professional development framework that encompasses use of the GELDS across all levels. This includes basic awareness and understanding for many key groups followed by specific trainings offered to specialized groups of early educators. Specifically, Georgia has developed a four-tiered approach

to **Professional Development**, called the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy (GPDH) (discussed in detail in (D)(2)). This hierarchy uses the GELDS as the **foundational** professional development that all early childhood educators and ELD partners receive. The hierarchy starts with a broad base of stakeholder groups in tier one and becomes more targeted as the tiers progress (see diagram below). All levels of the hierarchy are embedded with appropriate use of GELDS, and the hierarchy is designed to move early childhood educators from the knowledge to the application phase.

In addition to the hierarchy, Georgia has been offering specific GELDS training to Georgia's Pre-K teachers, Head Start, DECAL field staff, child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs), and programs participating in Quality Rated. In fact, the GELDS are included as part of Quality Rated as a training that educators receive and as part of the technical assistance offered by CCR&Rs.

Families are also offered information about the GELDS. Online resources and short webisodes contain targeted information to help families address the GELDS at home. To provide additional support to families, DECAL is designing an online family tool kit. The tool kit will include a family activity guide, domain-specific and age-specific information, and a family engagement online training manual to help community-based organizations and programs conduct ELD training for families and family, friend, and neighbor care providers. The tool kit will be housed on the DECAL website for sustainability purposes. Using a translation service, the tool kit will be available in Georgia's top five languages.



In summary, Georgia has taken steps to incorporate the GELDS across multiple programs by embedding them in Program Standards, in curriculum and activities, in the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and in professional development activities. Georgia’s Pre-K programs are required to use the GELDS and use a curriculum aligned with GELDS. They are embedded in the standards for Quality Rated, and curricula must be aligned to the GELDS for use in Georgia’s Pre-K programs and in programs participating in Quality Rated. Quality Rated is the driver for improving ELD quality in Georgia and will be the driver for implementing GELDS support. To ensure that the GELDS are incorporated in components of the state’s ELD system, DECAL plans to revise the child care licensing activity rule to specify intentional use of GELDS instead of the more broadly-defined ELD standards. Additionally, Georgia’s State Board of Education will formally adopt the newly revised GELDS.

(C)(1)(d) Supports in place to promote ELDS

The following activities demonstrate how Georgia’s efforts to promote GELDS align

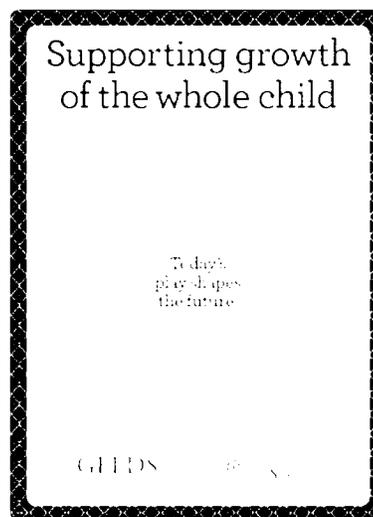
with the overall professional development hierarchy discussed in the previous section. The initial dissemination strategies discussed below link to the first tier of the hierarchy.

To promote GELDS, DECAL developed and launched a new GELDS website, www.gelds.decal.ga.gov, with State Advisory Council funding. The site is user-friendly and interactive; it provides visitors to the site an easy way to access the GELDS via a searchable standards database. Users have access to all age-appropriate indicators, a rationale for each indicator, and examples of learning-in-action. Perhaps the most helpful feature of the indicator detail box is the video clip showing what that indicators look like in an actual Georgia early learning program. DECAL worked closely with partners, including Georgia Public Broadcasting, (GPB) to travel all over the state to film footage at model programs. This footage was edited by indicator into small vignettes to help teachers and families understand each skill better. Since the website launched in March 2013, there have been over 60,000 hits from all over Georgia and seven other states.

In addition to the teacher modeling footage, DECAL also partnered with GPB to produce a series of ten informational webinars on the GELDS using State Advisory Council funding. The webinars were developed with specific target audiences in mind. The first webinar, called Introduction to the GELDS, provides an overview of the research and revision process, offers an explanation of the structure and language, and contains two interview segments, one with a pediatrician and one with an early intervention specialist from Babies Can't Wait. The other nine webinars are targeted towards specific audiences, such as Pre-K teachers, Pre-K administrators, Pre-K parents, infant/toddler teachers, inclusion teachers, ELL teachers, and programs participating in QRIS. These awareness webinars are posted on the GELDS website, www.gelds.decal.ga.gov.

Another key initiative in tier one was the GELDS Institute series. With CCDF funding, DECAL partnered with Georgia State University's Best Practices early education division to develop a two-day, voluntary institute that provided awareness of and basic knowledge on the GELDS for teachers and directors of children birth to age five. Over 1,000 early childhood teachers and directors received face-to-face awareness training on the GELDS in the three institutes.

Also using CCDF funding, DECAL contracted with a graphic design team to develop a series of print resources that would be used as training resources. Using teacher feedback, it was decided that the main slogan for all GELDS print and training resources would be “Today’s Play Shapes the Future.” This slogan addresses the misconception that children only “play” in early learning programs. The goal of the slogan is to get



teachers, families, and all stakeholders to think about the intentionality that goes into the planning of activities in Georgia’s ELD programs. The posters and clings went out to all licensed early care and learning programs in Georgia. All the wall clings have the message “Ask Me What I Learned Today” with the GELDS website address.

The clings are targeted towards parents. The cling has two main goals: to get parents thinking about the skills being covered in their child’s classroom and to get parents to visit the GELDS website for more information. The ultimate goal is get them to work on these skills at home.

With ELC funding, DECAL will continue efforts to increase overall awareness for **all** groups at this tier one level. Currently, the GELDS are available in English and Spanish (Appendix 27), but DECAL will work with translation services to have all existing resources translated into the other top languages in Georgia: Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). DECAL will also develop additional print resources that target all stakeholder groups and they will also be available in Georgia’s top five languages.

DECAL will partner with GPB to develop and produce a series of 12, 15-30 second, on-air spots targeting families and family home providers watching GPB Kids Television. The purpose of the on-air spots would be to provide information and drive viewers to GELDS

resources. According to GPB statistics, almost 50% of parents with children under six watch with their children making GPB's kid programming among the most popular co-viewing destination. Two thirds of parents say they pay attention to the on-air sponsor messages and maintain that GPB's sponsors and partners have a commitment to education and learning. To reach these families and family home providers watching GPB programming with children, spots will be scheduled primarily during daytime television when viewership is highest for these audiences.

As the strategies above align with the first tier, the following more in-depth promotion strategies link to Tier Two. As Georgia has a strong existing commitment to professional development for ELD educators, the GELDS present an opportunity to expand to other audiences who also need a stronger understanding. Therefore, Georgia will use ELC funds to strengthen tier two. This plan focuses on targeted training and training resources for the three core groups: early childhood educators (family home providers, teachers in center and school based care), child-serving agency professionals, families, and family, friend, and neighbor care.

1. Child-Serving Agency Professionals:

To provide tier two training for child-serving agency professionals, DECAL plans to produce specific web-based training opportunities via webinars. This training will be embedded in the current job training for professionals listed in the chart above. In addition, the print resources will be distributed through the agencies and county offices, for example, health departments and Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) offices. These print resources will also be available in Georgia's top five languages.

2. Early Childhood Educators:

DECAL developed a GELDS resource guide book for early childhood educators using CCDF funding. The book comes in two versions, a birth to five version and a preschool version. It has a "How to Use the GELDS" section in the beginning and then has the standards divided in two convenient ways: by domain and by age. In the sections divided by age, teachers have access to the rationales and learning-in-action examples for each age-appropriate indicator. The back of the book contains the Work Sampling Assessment System correlations and the Kindergarten correlations to the GELDS. All licensed early care and learning programs received the resource book as a training tool.

Also with CCDF funding, DECAL collaborated with Georgia State University's Best Practices to develop a Train the Trainer course for Georgia's CCR&Rs. The course is a two-day training called "Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS." Participants receive a training manual, PowerPoint presentation, and training resources to use to redeliver the training. Once the CCR&R's have gone through the Training for Trainers (TFT) modules, they will have the ability to provide this course to programs in their respective regions. By training these CCR&R's from all over Georgia, Georgia will increase the availability for training opportunities.

Using ELC grant funding, Georgia will develop and offer more training opportunities that include face-to-face and online delivery and print resources. Georgia recognizes the need for an integrated approach to using ELD standards and formative assessment. DECAL will partner with an institute of higher learning to develop a six-hour professional development course called "Intentional Planning Using the GELDS." They will conduct a Train the Trainer for CCR&R staff and inclusion coordinators over two days. They will then be able to deliver this face-to-face course in their respective regions in a one-day, six-hour format, or by breaking it up in three day, two-hour sessions.

DECAL will also collaborate with graphic designers to develop and produce a GELDS teacher tool box that will contain activity cards for all GELDS indicators and adaptations for children with disabilities and dual language learners. The GELDS teacher tool box will be a resource used in the intentional planning course. Participants who attend will return home with the tool box. Georgia's Special Education Preschool, section 619, educators will participate in this face-to-face professional development course alongside Georgia's Pre-K teachers. Also for early childhood educators, DECAL will develop more targeted podcasts for addition to the Online Learning Library (OLLI). Topics would include cultural competency, lesson planning, curriculum, assessment, and family engagement; all podcasts will use the GELDS as the foundational component. DECAL will also partner with GPB to develop and produce three separate web series. Each episode will last 6-7 minutes and offer strategies to help teachers and families address specific GELDS indicators. One series will be for preschool/Pre-K teachers, and the second series will be for infant/toddler teachers. A new episode will post each month on the GELDS website with a corresponding email blast announcing a new episode has been posted.

DECAL will also adopt the WIDA E-ELD Standards and develop a correspondence document between the GELDS and the E-ELD Standards. DECAL will also partner with WIDA

to provide training, technical assistance, and ongoing support on the E-ELD Standards to early childhood programs using evidence-based practices. This work will include the collection of data to assess the efficacy of the training model and fidelity of implementation. DECAL will also collaborate with WIDA to develop assessment tools such as a parent/caregiver questionnaire and other formative resources for practitioners and caregivers. The overall goal is to introduce early childhood practitioners, across all early childhood sectors, to WIDA's E-ELD Standards, familiarize them with the correspondence document between the E-ELD Standards and the GELDS, and help them better serve Georgia's dual language learner population.

3. Families and Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care:

Specific online episodes of the GELDS are being specifically developed for families. Each episode will contain targeted information to help families address the GELDS at home. To provide additional support to this group, DECAL will develop an online a family tool kit. The tool kit will include a family activity guide, domain-specific and age-specific information, and a family engagement online training manual to help community-based organizations and programs conduct ELD training for families and family, friend, and neighbor care.

To provide additional resources and training for all groups in tier two, DECAL will develop an app for smart phones and tablets. The app will be user-friendly and have different features to address different target group. The app will contain all GELDS age-appropriate indicators, rationales, and activity ideas for each indicator, among other features. The app will have an option for the content to be viewed in English or Spanish.

The following table lists the subgroups in Tier Two and the specific activities around promotion strategies for each one.

Stakeholder Groups	Stakeholder Subgroups	Training/Training Resources	Medium
Child-Serving Agency Staff	Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services Caseworkers (foster care, kinship care, child protective services, and eligibility services)	<p><u>With ELC funding:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GELDS Webinars 2. GELDS Print Guides 	Print Materials Webinars/Web content
	Department of Public Health, including Maternal and Child Health staff including county health department nurses, and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) staff	<p><u>With ELC funding:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GELDS Webinars 2. GELDS Print Guides 	Print Materials Webinars/Web content
	Department of Community Health, Medicaid staff	<p><u>With ELC funding:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GELDS Webinars 2. GELDS Print Guides 	Print Materials Webinars/Web content
	Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, children and adolescents mental health workers	<p><u>With ELC funding:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GELDS Webinars 2. GELDS Print Guides 	Print Materials Webinars/Web content
Early Childhood Educators	Center-based child care directors, teachers, and assistant teachers	<p><u>Current:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS” Course 2. GELDS Resource Book (training resource) <p><u>With ELC funding:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules 4. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 5. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course 6. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 7. App for smart phones and tablets 8. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD standards to support dual language learners 	Print materials Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training
	Family child care providers	<p><u>Current:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS” Course 2. GELDS Resource Book (training resource) 3. Lesson plan form notebook <p><u>With ELC funding:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules 5. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 6. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course 7. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 8. App for smart phones and tablets 	Print materials Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training

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		9. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD Standards to support dual language learners	
	Georgia’s Pre-K directors, teachers, and assistant teachers	<p>Current:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GELDS Resource Book 2. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules <p>With ELC funding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 4. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course 5. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 6. App for smart phones and tablets 7. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD Standards to support dual language learners 	<p>Print materials Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training</p>
	Early childhood special education teachers and administrators (Part B, Section 619)	<p>Current:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS” Course 2. GELDS Resource Book (training resource) <p>With ELC funding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules 4. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 5. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course with Georgia’s Pre-K teachers 6. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 7. App for smart phones and tablets 8. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD Standards to support dual language learners 	<p>Print materials, R&R Training, Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training</p>
	Early intervention specialists (Part C)	<p>Current:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS” Course 2. GELDS Resource Book (training resource) <p>With ELC funding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules 4. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 5. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course 6. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 7. App for smart phones and tablets 8. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD Standards to support dual language learners 	<p>Print materials, R&R Training, Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training</p>
	Great Start Georgia System Implementation in child care	<p>Current:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS” Course 2. GELDS Resource Book (training resource) <p>With ELC funding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules 	<p>Print materials, R&R Training, Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training</p>

		<p>4. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 5. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course 6. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 7. App for smart phones and tablets 8. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD Standards to support dual language learners</p>	
	<p>Head Start administrators, teachers, and family services staff</p>	<p><u>Current:</u> 1. “Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS” Course 2. GELDS Resource Book (training resource)</p> <p><u>With ELC funding:</u> 3. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules 4. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 5. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course 6. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 7. App for smart phones and tablets 8. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD Standards to support dual language learners</p>	<p>Print materials, R&R Training, Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training</p>
	<p>Early Head Start administrators, teachers, and family service staff</p>	<p><u>Current:</u> 1. “Standards 101: How to Use the GELDS” Course 2. GELDS Resource Book (training resource)</p> <p><u>With ELC funding:</u> 3. Online Learning Library (OLLI) Modules 4. GELDS Webisodes (6-7 minute video series) 5. “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” Course 6. GELDS Toolbox/Teachers activity kit (training resource) 7. App for smart phones and tablets 8. Training on WIDA’s E-ELD Standards to support dual language learners</p>	<p>Print materials, R&R Training, Web/Podcasts App Face-to-Face Training</p>
<p>Families, Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care</p>	<p>Parents, guardians family, friend, neighbor subsidized caregivers</p>	<p><u>With ELC funding:</u> 1. GELDS 6-7 minute Videos produced by GPB 2. App for smart phones and tablets 3. GELDS domain-specific and age-specific print guides 4. Family Tool Kit</p>	<p>Print Materials Webinars/Web content App Face-to-Face community-based training</p>

The final two professional development strategies are for lead teachers from specific early childhood programs. These are discussed further in (D)(2). These two strategies will first be implemented in the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). For Tier Three teachers, we will develop an intensive, five-day training series. DECAL will contract with an institute of higher education to develop the sessions which will cover GELDS, curriculum/planning, and assessment. The goal will be to help educators understand the connection between the three components and be able to use the connection to strengthen their instructional approach. The professional learning cohorts will first be instructed by DECAL staff and then will be scaled up using trainers from the CCR&R system. Once the CCR&R's are trained, the model will also have an observation piece that will help ensure fidelity. DECAL staff will observe the CCR&R trainers once a year and provide feedback. The series will include a facilitated manual, PowerPoint presentations, and instructional videos. The final tier in the hierarchy is an ECE Coaching Institute model. With ELC funding, DECAL will work with a consultant to develop training for all coaches on how to work with programs in E³Zs to improve child outcomes.

High-Quality Plan for Developing and Using ELDS

(a) Key Goals

To ensure full implementation of the GELDS across all ELD programs by:

1. Creating statewide awareness of and provide training on the GELDS across all ELD educators, child-serving agency professionals, and families.
2. Providing additional resources for meeting the needs of children with disabilities, dual language learners, and high needs learners.
3. Creating a framework and support that moves early childhood educators from GELDS knowledge to application.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Design professional development and resources for tier one of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy.
2. Design professional development and resources for tier two of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy.
3. Design professional development and resources for tier three of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy.
4. Design professional development and resources for tier four of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy.
5. Adopt the WIDA Early English Language Development (E-ELD) Standards and develop training and resources for ELD educators working with dual language learners (DLLs).
6. Partner with Parent to Parent Georgia, the federal parent information and referral center, to develop GELDS resources for working with children with disabilities.
7. Work with various agencies, organizations, and boards to adopt the GELDS in respective guidelines, policies, and/or governance.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
<p>Activity 1: Design professional development and resources for tier one of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy. Aligned Goal: 1,2</p>		
<p>All stakeholders need general knowledge and basic understanding of the GELDS and the learning and development of children. The professional development and resources will be designed and implemented with all stakeholders in mind.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 2: Design professional development and resources for tier two of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy. Aligned Goal: 1,2</p>		
<p>Beyond just general knowledge and awareness, some targeted stakeholder groups need a deeper understanding of and more training on the GELDS. Tier two begins the movement of certain stakeholder groups from the knowledge phase to the application phase. Child-serving agency professionals, early childhood educators, and families and family, friend, and neighbor caregivers would move up to tier two because of their role with Georgia's birth to five population.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p>Activity 3: Design professional development and resources for tier three of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy. Aligned Goal: 1,2,3</p>		
<p>As the professional development hierarchy moves even more from the knowledge phase to the application phase, only one group of stakeholders will move from tier two to tier three: early childhood educators. The professional development and resources in this activity would support a five-day cohort program specifically targeted towards early childhood educators and helping them with successful application of the GELDS.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 4: Design professional development and resources for tier four of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy. Aligned Goal: 1,2,3</p>		
<p>Tier four is the final level in the professional development hierarchy, and it consists of a coaching institute for early childhood educators in the E³Zs. Coaching educators in these targeted zones in applying the GELDS will support learning and development and reduce the achievement gap among Georgia’s high needs birth to five population.</p>	<p>E³Zs</p>	<p>Activities that are successful in the E³Zs will be expanded statewide.</p>
<p>Activity 5: Adopt the WIDA Early English Language Development (E-ELD) Standards and develop training and resources for ELD educators working with dual language learners (DLLs). Aligned Goal: 2</p>		
<p>To meet the growing needs of Georgia’s diverse population, early childhood educators will need professional development and resources that will help them better serve dual language learners and support families.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 6: Partner with Parent to Parent Georgia, the federal parent information and referral center, to develop GELDS resources for working with children with disabilities. Aligned Goal: 2</p>		
<p>Early childhood educators will need professional development and resources that will help them better serve children with disabilities and support families.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 7: Work with various agencies, organizations, and boards to adopt the GELDS in respective guidelines, policies, and/or governance. Aligned Goal: 4.</p>		
<p>An important part of the successful roll out and implementation of the GELDS will be to ensure statewide usage of the revised standards</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Tier 1 PD and Resources								
Develop 12, 15-30 second TV spots	X							
Air 15-30 second TV spots on GPB TV		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop statewide awareness resources that will be translated into Georgia’s other top languages: Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean	X							
Distribute statewide awareness resources		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2: Tier 2 PD and Resources								
Develop and conduct Train the Trainer/Intentional Planning with GELDS	X							
Conduct Intentional Planning with GELDS training session statewide		X	X	X	X	X		
Develop teacher tool box	X							
Distribute teacher tool box statewide		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop Online Learning Library (OLLI) Podcasts over four years	X		X		X		X	
Post new OLLI podcasts for viewing		X		X		X		X
Develop GELDS app for smart phones and tablets	X	X						
Launch GELDS app and have available for download			X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop three series of 6-7 minute instructional videos, “webisodes” (one for infant/toddler educators, one for preschool/Pre-K educators, one for families)	X	X						
Post 6-7 minute “webisodes” in intervals and continue posting over two years. They will remain available on website.			X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop print guides for child-serving agency professionals and families	X	X						
Distribute print guides for child-serving agency professionals and families			X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop webinars for child-serving agency professionals	X							
Post/Distribute webinars for child-serving agency professionals		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop family tool kit	X	X						
Post family tool kit for community family organizations to support family engagement		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 3: Tier 3 PD and Resources								
Develop five-day cohort series on GELDS, Curriculum, and Assessment	X	X						
Conduct five-day cohort series on GELDS, Curriculum, and Assessment			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 4: Tier 4 PD and Resources								
Develop Coaching Institute for E ³ Zs (high needs areas)		X	X					

Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards Selection Criteria: C1 Total Project Budget: \$3,562,579		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$2,106,989
Participating State Agency	Department of Education	\$0
Participating State Agency	Georgia Public Broadcasting	\$380,590
Participating State Agency	Technical College System of Georgia	\$0
Participating State Agency	Board of Regents/University System of Georgia	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

GELDS (Appendix 27)

Standard Study by Kagan and Little (Appendix 28)

Correlation document by Kagan and Little (Appendix 28)

Ongoing curriculum review

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

The GELDS are applicable across all ELD programs. All licensed and registered ELD programs and all ELD programs receiving state or federal dollars will be required to participate in Quality Rated, which requires the use of the GELDS by January 2017.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

The Georgia Standards Revision Committee (GSRC) included members with personal and professional exposure to relevant cultural, socio-economic, and disability issues who contributed to the final GELDS content (Appendix 38). The committee paid special attention to making sure cultural and ability awareness was addressed in the standards statements and age-appropriate indicators. The revised GELDS are culturally, linguistically, and ability appropriate for ALL children, including children with high needs.

(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment Systems by--

- (a) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;
- (b) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to strengthen Early Childhood Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems;
- (c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple Early Learning and Development Programs;
- (d) Training Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services, and to effectively solicit and use family input on children's development and needs; and
- (e) Articulating guidelines and procedures for sharing assessment data and results with parents, involving them in decisions about their children's care and education, and helping them identify concrete actions they can take to address developmental issues identified through the assessment process.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and* addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (C)(2):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Introduction

In Georgia, developmentally appropriate assessment used to refine and improve practice has been and will remain the primary driver for improving ELD program quality and outcomes for children with high needs. Georgia's Pre-K has twenty years invested in the development and implementation of systemic, statewide early childhood assessment. Quality Rated, Georgia's TQRIS (mandated for all licensed and registered programs in 2017) has followed the lead of Georgia's Pre-K Program and requires the use of comprehensive assessment strategies to gain points at EACH of its three tiers. Georgia's commitment to a Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) will be refined and strengthened with funding from the Early Learning Challenge.

Currently, Georgia addresses all four components of a Comprehensive Assessment System: screening measures, formative assessments, measures of environmental quality, and measures of the quality of adult-child interactions. This section provides some brief background on Georgia's approach to each of these forms of assessment, and then discusses how they each meet all of the following criteria:

- Working with early learning and development programs to select instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes.
 - ELD programs in Georgia use a variety of child and environmental assessments. The Task Force on Child Assessment will identify a common set of tools for child assessment, including a research-based public domain screening instrument; design professional development on selecting appropriate assessments to early childhood educators; review and strengthen the Program Standards; and implement developmental screening as a requirement in the Georgia's Pre-K program.
- Working with early learning and development programs to strengthen early childhood educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each assessment.
 - Recommendations from the Task Force on Child Assessment will be incorporated into Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. Gaps in training on child assessment will be identified and appropriate tools and training will be developed.

- Aligning and integrating assessments and sharing results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for children with high needs who are served by multiple early learning and development programs.
 - The Task Force on Child Assessment will develop guidelines and support for using the common list of screening and formative assessments; make recommendations for statewide implementation of a common screening instrument, develop and disseminate guidelines on sharing assessment information across programs and create a Developmental Passport to encourage sharing of screening information between families, health care professionals and early learning and development programs.
- Training early childhood educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services and to effectively solicit and use family input on children’s development and needs.
 - Tools and training on administering assessment instruments and using results for planning instruction will be developed and embedded into existing professional development offered to early childhood educators in the TQRIS as well as in tier three of Georgia’s Professional Development Hierarchy.
- Articulating guidelines and procedures for sharing assessment data and results with parents, involving them in decisions about their children’s care and education, and helping them identify concrete actions they can take to address developmental issues identified through the assessment process.
 - Georgia will implement a statewide campaign designed to provide families with information about developmental milestones, and screening and referral for developmental concerns. Information and strategies on sharing developmental information with families will be embedded in professional development.

More detailed information about each of the assessment components is provided below.

Screening Measures

In Georgia, screenings are interwoven into the many programs and services accessed by children and their families through a variety of state agencies. At birth, children receive genetic and metabolic screens as well as hearing screening. Children with high needs are screened, identified, and offered services and supports to meet their health, behavioral and developmental needs through Georgia's Children 1st program, which is designed to screen and identify children ages birth to five who are at risk for poor health and developmental outcomes. Children 1st, administered by the Department of Public Health, serves as Georgia's Child Find mechanism and "Single Point of Entry" to a statewide collaborative system of public health and other prevention-based programs and services designed to ensure children with high needs get the necessary services and support to ensure good developmental outcomes. Georgia's Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting program conducts screenings, provides assistance with referrals and follows up to ensure that the needs of children and families in their program are met. Screenings are also provided in the public health departments, physician's offices, Head Start and Early Head Start and through screening programs in some early learning and development programs. As further discussed in the High-Quality Plan for (C)(4), grant funds will be used to pilot an early learning and development center-based program home visitation model in the E³Z's and to develop tools and provide support for ELD programs to better understand, select and use screening tools.

Formative Assessment

Georgia's Pre-K program is a model of a large-scale statewide program that utilizes high-quality formative assessment. All of the Georgia's Pre-K classrooms, close to 4,000, implement formative assessment using the Work Sampling System Online (WSO). Every Pre-K lead and assistant teacher and administrator receive ongoing professional development on how to use the system to inform and improve instruction. In addition, Georgia's Pre-K has developed statewide policies for sharing assessment data with families and provided professional development on productive family-teacher conferences to teachers. In addition, Georgia has collaborated with the WSO vendor to create a developmentally appropriate narrative progress report completed mid-year and end of the year by the teacher. Georgia's Pre-K programs are required to hold a family

orientation and at least two family-teacher conferences annually. At the conferences, the child's portfolio and progress report are shared and discussed with families.

In addition, DECAL and the Georgia Department of Education have a strong partnership ensuring that children receiving services through IDEA, Part B, and their teachers are connected by establishing a state platform in the WSO system where data on individual students can be shared at both a system and teacher level. The departments also worked with the vendor to allow the data from WSO to document performance on federal outcome indicator B7 (Preschool 3-5) for IDEA, Part B, 619. Georgia added functionality to transfer WSO data on children served at age three in special education settings to Georgia's Pre-K or Head Start classrooms at age 4, allowing for continuity of services. The Georgia Head Start Collaboration Office housed at DECAL and Head Start programs are also able to access the State of Georgia license for Work Sampling Online and purchase student licenses at a reduced rate.

The use of formative assessment is assessed for points at all of the star levels in Quality Rated (Appendix 13). Funding from the grant as outlined in the High-Quality Plan will be used to strengthen the use of formative assessment in infant, toddler and preschool classrooms through the development of tools and support for ELD programs to better understand, select and use a set of recommended formative assessment tools.

Measures of Environmental Quality

Quality Rated is the accountability measure and state driver for ELD program quality. Quality Rated's reach to 100% of ELD programs by 2017 creates an opportunity for Georgia to measure, support and improve environmental quality statewide. Quality Rated's classroom environment and teacher child interaction are measured using the Environment Rating Scales (ERS). The ERSs cover a series of global measures including but not limited to teacher child interactions, health and safety, instructional practices, and learning environment. Georgia utilizes the scales appropriate for family child care (Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale – FCCERS-R), infant toddler care (Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale – ITERS-R), and preschool settings (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales – ECERS-R). Programs not only receive an ERS as part of the rating process but also receive technical assistance around an ERS baseline observation that informs their quality improvement plan. This provides programs the opportunity to work on elements of their program where they have scored low and to learn how

to use classroom assessments in their continuous quality improvement process. In 2017, all licensed and registered ELD programs will be required to participate in Quality Rated, making for a common, statewide use of ERSs.

The Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) (Appendix 35) , developed by Elena Soukouka, is an observation rating scale designed to assess the quality of daily classroom practices supporting the needs of children with disabilities in early childhood settings. Use of the Inclusive Classroom Profile will be incorporated into ratings of programs participating in Quality Rated and serving children with disabilities in 2014. This scale complements other early childhood rating scales on classroom quality by measuring additional elements of adult support and intentional adaptations that promote the learning needs of children with disabilities. The scale, appropriate for classrooms with children with disabilities ages 2 ½ to 5, consists of 12 items covering practices that have the strongest research support for meeting the developmental needs of young children in inclusive settings.

Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions

In addition to the use of the Environment Rating Scales as part of Georgia's TQRIS – which as stated earlier evaluates global measures including but not limited to teacher child interactions – Georgia's Pre-K Program has made tremendous investment in assessing adult child interactions and re-tooling the existing professional development supports to be aligned with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System or CLASS. All DECAL Pre-K field staff have received extensive training in using the CLASS instrument, and staff conducted CLASS observations in 92% of Georgia's Pre-K classes during school year 2010-2011. Currently, approximately one third of Pre-K classes receive a CLASS observation annually.

The CLASS observational data are shared with teachers and administrators to support their classroom quality. Georgia's professional development efforts are informed by its work on a project as part of Georgia's P-12 Race to the Top (RTTT) grant. Through that grant, DECAL developed a professional development model designed to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions in the state's Pre-K program. A current DECAL study (Appendix 39) is evaluating the effectiveness of two CLASS-based professional development models: 1) a semester college style course, Making the Most of CLASSroom Interactions (MMCI); and 2) My Teaching Partner (MTP). By the end of the 2013-2014 school year, all of Pre-K field staff will have

provided intensive CLASS-based coaching through My Teaching Partner, an evidence-based professional development model that has not only strengthened pre-k classroom instruction (Pianta, Funk, Hadden, & Hamre, 2010) but also the quality of professional development provided by DECAL consultants.

Georgia's Plan to Refine and Enhance Comprehensive Assessment System

Georgia will build upon the strengths and lesson learned from existing strong, statewide programs by:

- Reviewing current child assessment tools, practices and policies to develop a more unified state approach –which includes screening in Georgia's Pre-K while extending down from Pre-K
- Developing tools and providing support to ELD programs to help them better understand, select and use each type of assessment in the Comprehensive Assessment System
- Strengthening existing and creating new professional development opportunities for early childhood educators to better understand and appropriately administer assessment tools to improve instruction and services
- Developing awareness and guidelines for sharing assessment data with families and identify concrete actions for parents to address developmental concerns

With funding from the grant, Georgia proposes to contract with a lead expert in the field to review, make recommendations, and help to build consensus around the work of ELD assessment, including child assessment, both screening and formative, and measures of the environment and of adult-child interactions. As part of this work, a Task Force on Child Assessment will be formed, composed of professionals from programs and agencies that serve birth to five children in a variety of settings including representatives from Children 1st, IDEA Parts C and B, Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start and Early Head Start, home visiting, institutes of higher education and other child- serving agencies. Georgia will ensure that this team includes teachers, practitioners, and families. The team will also include membership from the Grade Level Reading Campaign to ensure alignment from birth to 3rd grade as well as membership from the Georgia Coalition for English Language Learners to address the specific needs of dual

language and English language learners.

The Task Force will make recommendations for changes in practice and policy to the Children’s Cabinet and to the Alliance of Education Agency Heads. The heads of all child serving and education agencies serve on these groups and will review recommendations to make statewide policy changes.

The child assessment task force will address each of the (C)(2) grant criteria as outlined below.

(C)(2)(a) Selecting Appropriate Assessment Instruments and Approaches

In order to promote understanding, selection, and use of each type of assessment in a Comprehensive Assessment System, the task force on child assessment will work with DECAL staff to develop tools and provide support to ELD programs by:

- a) Developing a common list of approved formative assessments and a series of online modules addressing the understanding, selection and use of each type of assessment;
- b) Leveraging existing state and federal level work to build support and capacity for the use of a valid, reliable and public domain developmental screening tool – Survey of Well-being of Young Children (SWYC) (Appendix 40) – across ELD programs;
- c) Updating the Program Standards to reflect the work of the Task Force and require the use of formative assessment; and
- d) Implementing screening as a Georgia’s Pre-K Program requirement.

Georgia has implemented a considerable amount of child assessments, using a variety of screening and formative tools, with a cross-funding stream commitment to the effort. Using funds from the ELCG, coordination across funding streams on the use of **common** tools will be realized. The Task Force will review current assessment tools and practices, including professional development and administration and use of the tools to develop a landscape of the most commonly used child assessment tools for screening and formative purposes.

DECAL has already started working to improve cross-program alignment and integration of measures. Through existing CCDF funds, DECAL has taken an important first step by contracting with a national expert on early childhood standards and curricula to conduct a curricula review that coincides with the implementation of the GELDS. The end result of this

process will be an approved curriculum list for Georgia's Pre-K Programs and a recommended curriculum list for Georgia's birth to five early learning and development programs. Once the list of curricula is finalized, the assessment task force will develop a common list of approved formative assessments to assist ELD programs select appropriate measures. These various efforts will lead to a list of approved curricula and common formative assessments that are aligned with Georgia's early learning and development standards (GELDS) that will be incorporated into Quality Rated and utilized across multiple early childhood programs.

To ensure access to an affordable, researched and validated screening tool, Georgia will adopt the Survey of Wellbeing of Young Children as the preferred screening tool in TQRIS, Georgia's Pre-K and other early learning and development programs. The Survey of Wellbeing of Young Children (SWYC) is a comprehensive screening instrument for children under 5 years of age, developed at Tufts Children's Hospital by Drs. E.C Perrin and R.C Sheldrick. This instrument is free of cost and can be easily accessed by families, early childhood teachers, pediatricians, nurses, and other professionals involved in early learning and development. The entire instrument requires 15 minutes or less to complete and includes items on cognitive, language, motor, and social-emotional development as well as family risk factors and at certain ages a section for Autism-specific screening is also included. The instrument has been well researched, including a statistical comparison to the items in well-respected screening tools. Additionally the tool is being validated in Head Start and child care settings.

Information regarding the availability of the SWYC will be provided to state agencies, Head Start and Early Head Start and other ELD programs, pediatricians and others who conduct screening activities. Information about the tool will be incorporated into existing professional development on assessment and a brief online module on the use and scoring of the tool will be created. The SWYC will be piloted in Georgia's Pre-K programs in the Early Education Empowerment Zones in the first year of the grant and rolled out across the state in subsequent years.

To ensure that screening and formative assessments meet the needs of all children, the task force will ensure that measures have been validated for appropriateness for children with disabilities and English language learners.

(C)(2)(b) Strengthening Early Childhood Educators' Understanding of Assessment

To better understand and appropriately administer assessment tools to improve instruction and services, the Task force on child assessment will work with DECAL staff to strengthen existing and create new professional development opportunities for early child educators by:

- a) Incorporating the Task Force on Child Assessment's recommendations into Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;
- b) Identifying existing gaps in training on child assessment and identify tools, resources and training to address;

As outlined in (D)(1), the first step in improving early childhood educators' understanding and administration of child assessment tools is to align assessment recommendations from the Taskforce on Child Assessment into the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. These competencies are the underpinning for all professional learning in Georgia. This alignment work will ensure a strong connection to recommendations and evidence based assessment tools and that all training will be aligned with the recommended tools.

The Task Force will compile a landscape of current professional development on child assessment tools to identify the needs of Georgia's ELD workforce. The landscape will be used in determining training gaps and types of training needed. This knowledge will guide Georgia in developing appropriate training tools and resources. One tool identified will be the online course, Monitoring Child Development: A Training for Early Care and Education Providers, currently being developed by the Centers for Disease Control with partners from NAEYC, Head Start, Child Care Aware, and others, as a cornerstone to professional development on screening. The one-hour course is designed to help early childhood educators understand the reason for monitoring children's development and their role in this process. The training will give early childhood educators the tools to monitor, communicate with families and resources to assist families with concrete steps to take to address developmental and behavioral concerns. This training will be field tested in the fall of 2013 and will be available in January 2014.

(C)(2)(c) Aligning and Integrating Assessments and Sharing Assessment Results

To develop a more unified statewide approach to assessment, the Task Force on Child Assessment will review current child assessment tools, practices, and policies:

- a) Developing guidelines and supports for implementing the common list of child assessment – screening and formative – statewide;
- b) Developing recommendations about how best to implement the use of the SWYC so that it is the primary screening vehicle in the state;
- c) Developing guidelines for sharing assessment data appropriately across programs; including MOUs between state agencies;
- d) Reviewing and approving a set of formative assessments that are aligned with GELDS and making recommendations to changes to the Program Standards; and
- e) Customizing a Developmental Passport to provide families, ELD providers, and primary care physicians a tool to track screening information and use in multiple settings to increase sharing of information and decrease duplication.

As part of the Task Force, a common list of currently implemented screening and formative assessments will be compiled. The list will be reviewed to determine the appropriateness and validity of the tools to determine which tools will be approved for use in Georgia. After vetting the list of common tools, Task Force will develop guidelines for implementing the common list of assessment tools including data sharing and MOUs between state agencies. In addition, a sub-committee will be formed to develop recommendations about how best to implement the use of the SWYC so that it is the primary screening vehicle in the state.

Additionally, a sub-committee will be formed to develop a Developmental Passport for use in Georgia. The Passport is a tool for families, health care professionals, and early childhood educators to use to record, track and share screening data. This passport allows families, health care and early childhood professionals to have a joint tool to share development screening results similar to a tool to track immunizations or health information. When screenings are conducted in any setting, then the information will be recorded in the passport to increase communication across sectors and to reduce duplication of screening measures.

The Task Force will customize a passport for use in Georgia and will develop strategies

to make the Passport useful to both families and providers. This is an opportunity to bring key partners together to map out programs and providers who conduct developmental screening. The Task Force will choose and customize a format for the passport and develop procedures for promoting the use of the tool. The Task Force will work with state agency partners to address the use of Developmental Passport in policy. The passport will be provided to early learning and development programs, health departments, and pediatricians

The passport will be paper pencil; however, the Georgia Department of Human Services is currently piloting an online system for tracking health and developmental information of children in foster care. The Task Force will work to incorporate the passport data into the system. It is anticipated that this system will be expanded to include other children with high needs.

(C)(2)(d) Training Early Childhood Educators to Administer Assessments and Use Assessment Data

The task force on child assessment will work with DECAL staff to strengthen existing and create new professional development opportunities for early childhood educators by:

- a) Utilizing the Center for Disease Control’s “Learn the Signs. Act Early” tools, including the Center on Disease Control’s Monitoring Child Development module, into professional development for early childhood educators;
- b) Creating a series of online modules on assessments and embedding those into training for TQRIS; and
- c) Developing assessment courses and integrating those into the Tier 3 cohort professional development institutes of Georgia’s Hierarchy of Professional Development.

Georgia’s Pre-K Program has presented Georgia’s ELD system with a well-established model regarding professional development as it relates to child assessment and intentional teaching practices built on a foundation of assessment. Using lessons learned from Pre-K and as outlined in (D)(1), the first step in improving early childhood educators’ understanding and administration of child assessment tools is to align assessment recommendations from the Taskforce into the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and then, through focused professional development and coaching efforts, facilitate a strong connection to using

assessment in a developmentally appropriate manner to guide instruction.

Many early childhood educators in center and family based settings have not had the opportunity for in-depth training on standardized tools for developmental and behavioral screening. The Learn the Signs Act Early tools, developed by the Centers for Disease Control, will be used in professional development with these groups in order to acquaint them with developmental milestones, assist them with using those tools to monitor development and to share concerns with families. This will provide them with precursor skills necessary for effective use of standardized screening tools.

As outlined in selection criterion (C)(1), Georgia recognizes the need for an integrated approach to using ELD standards and assessment. DECAL will partner with Georgia State's Best Practices division to develop a training course called "Intentional Planning Using the GELDS." This course will focus on understanding the connection between ELD standards, formative assessment, and lesson planning. In tier three of the Georgia Hierarchy of Professional Development, cross-sector educators will participate in ongoing cohort institutes as outlined in (D)(2). The content in these courses will focus on connecting standards, curricula, and assessment. Specific modules will be developed on understanding the types of assessment.

(C)(2)(e) Articulating guidelines and procedures for sharing assessment data and results with parents.

To involve families in decisions about their children's care and education, the Task Force on child assessment will develop guidelines for sharing assessment data with families and identify concrete actions for parents to address developmental concerns:

- a) Launch of a public awareness campaign to promote developmental screening and follow-up by developing a collection of resources, including CDC's Learn the Signs Act Early and Georgia's Development Passport
- b) Embed strategies for how to share assessment data with families into PD activities outlined in 2 and 3.

Involving families in assessment and sharing relevant assessment information with them is key to a child's ongoing success. Georgia's Pre-K and Head Start Programs have effective policies for sharing assessment data with families through home visits, parent conferences, and

conference reports. Early childhood educators can be uncomfortable sharing assessment results with families when there are no consistent policies or processes for sharing the information, particularly if there are developmental concerns to be discussed. Culturally appropriate, professional development tools will be developed around effective ways to include families in the assessment process, procedures for communicating screening and formative assessment results to families as well as information about how to guide families in taking steps to meet their child's developmental needs. Tools, such as guidelines, sample policies and procedures and other resources will be developed for use by early learning and development programs in establishing a screening, referral, and follow-up protocol for their programs.

As outlined above, Georgia will support families' knowledge about their child's developmental status through the use of a Developmental Passport. A Developmental Passport is a tool to support families as the keepers of information about their children's growth and development similar to a tool to track immunizations or health information. The Task Force will customize this Passport for use in Georgia and it will be provided to early learning and development programs, health departments, and pediatricians.

Additionally families and early childhood educators will be provided with resources, including CDC's Learn the Signs Act Early materials, to bring awareness to parents and providers about typical and atypical child development and provide activities they can do to support their child's development.

High-Quality Plan for Supporting Effective Uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems

(a) Key Goals

1. To promote understanding, selection and use of each type of assessment in a Comprehensive Assessment System.
2. To better understand and appropriately administer assessment tools to improve instruction and services.
3. To develop a more unified statewide approach to assessment.
4. To strengthen existing and create new professional development opportunities related to comprehensive assessment for early childhood educators.
5. To develop guidelines for sharing assessment data with families and identify concrete

actions for parents to address developmental concerns.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale up Plans

- a. Establish an Assessment Task Force that will review the current assessment tools and practices and make recommendations for improvement.
- b. Develop and conduct professional development to support ELD providers in the selection and use of assessment tools.
- c. Implement screening into Georgia’s Pre-K program requirement.
- d. Launch a public awareness campaign to promote developmental screening and follow-up by developing a collection of resources, including CDC’s Learn the Signs Act Early and Georgia’s Development Passport.
- e. Develop and implement strategies for sharing assessment data with families.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Establish an Assessment Task Force that will review the current assessment tools and practices and make recommendations for improvement.		
Aligned Goal: 3		
Georgia uses many different screening and formative assessments. A review of current practices and tools in Georgia by an Assessment Task Force of experts will yield common assessment tools, guidelines for using and sharing results among professionals and with families, resulting in more efficient and effective assessment.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 2: Develop and conduct professional development to support ELD providers in the selection and use of assessment tools and how to best share results with families.		
Aligned Goal: 1, 2, 4		
Early childhood educators need consistent professional development on using assessment to identify children needing referral, improve practices in the classroom, and effectively share results with families.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 3: Implement screening into Georgia’s Pre-K Program requirement.		
Aligned Goal: 1		
Georgia’s Pre-K has not included developmental screening in the required activities. Implementing this system into Georgia’s Pre-K system will result in more children identified and receiving supports prior to kindergarten entry.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 4: Launch a public awareness campaign to promote developmental screening.		
Aligned Goal: 2, 5		
Cost of purchasing and training on	Statewide	N/A

<p>developmental screening tools is often prohibitive for ELD programs. Statewide use of a free, research-based screener will increase and standardize screening efforts. Developmental screening occurs in many arenas across the state but there is limited sharing of screening information. A Developmental Passport will be developed and distributed to families across the state to use to record and share their child’s screening information.</p>		
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(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Assessment Task Force review and recommendations								
Update the Program Standards to reflect the work of the Assessment Task Force and require the use of a formative assessment tool chosen from approved list of tools.			X	X				
Leverage existing state and federal level work to build support and capacity for the use of a valid, reliable and public domain developmental screening tool – Survey of Well-being of Young Children (SWYC) - across ELD programs.			X	X				
Review current assessment tools and practices, including professional development and administration and use of the tools to develop a landscape of the most commonly used children assessment tools – screening and formative.		X	X	X				
Developing recommendations about how best to implement the use of the SWYC so that it is the primary screening vehicle in the state.		X	X	X				
Developing guidelines for sharing assessment data appropriately across programs; including MOUs between state agencies.			X	X	X			
Reviewing and approving a set of formative assessments that are aligned with GELDS and make recommendations to changes to the Program Standards.		X	X	X				
Customize a Developmental Passport.				X	X			
Identifying gaps in training on child assessment and identify tools, resources and training to address.			X	X				
Activity 2: Professional Development								
Develop a series of online modules addressing the understanding, selection, and use of each type of assessment.			X	X	X			

Utilize the Center for Disease Control’s “Learn the Signs. Act Early” tools, including the Center on Disease Control’s Monitoring Child Development, into professional development for early childhood educators.			X	X				
Creating a series of online modules on assessments and embed into training for TQRIS.				X	X			
Developing assessment courses into the Tier 3 cohort professional development institutes of Georgia’s Hierarchy of Professional Development.			X	X				
Embed strategies for how to best share assessment data with families.				X	X			
Activity 3: Screening in Georgia’s Pre-K Programs								
Implementation of screening in all Georgia’s Pre-K Programs.				X	X			
Activity 4: Public Awareness Campaign								
Launch a public awareness campaign to promote developmental screening.					X	X		
Develop a collection of resources, including CDC’s Learn the Signs Act Early and Georgia’s Development Passport for follow up.				X	X			

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

- DECAL-Lead Agency
- Quality Rated Manager
- Standards Coordinator
- Pre-K Director for Instruction and Assessment
- Inclusion Manager
- Pre-K Inclusion Coordinator

(e) Financial Resources

Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System

Selection Criterion: C2

The Department of Early Care and Learning is the lead agency for this project; however, the Participating State Agencies (PSA) will be represented on the Task Force for Comprehensive Assessment. DECAL will enter into a contract with an institution of higher education to facilitate the work of the Task Force. Building on the assessment systems in Georgia’s Pre-K and Quality Rated, we will undertake an ambitious agenda to incorporate comprehensive assessment in ELD

programs. This is important for children to have ELD experiences that effectively inform instruction to meet their individual needs and to have their learning environments assessed. Furthermore, this gives the state the opportunity to expand screening services in Georgia’s Pre-K and other ELD programs.

Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System		
Selection Criteria: C2		
Total Project Budget: \$153,926		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$51,450
Participating State Agency	Technical College System of Georgia	\$0
Participating State Agency	Board of Regents/University System of Georgia	\$0
Participating State Agency	Department of Public Health	\$0
Participating State Agency	Department of Education	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

- Quality Rated Standards (Appendix 13)
- Inclusive Classroom Profile (Appendix 35)

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

The enhanced Comprehensive Assessment System in Georgia will support the unique needs of ALL ELD providers in the state. The taskforce for assessment will include providers from all types of ELD programs to insure their feedback into the system design and roll-out.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

The needs of ALL children, including those children with high needs, will be the priority

in the refinement of the Comprehensive Assessment System. Instruments chosen will be normed and considered valid and reliable for use with children with high needs, especially English language learners. Professional development and tools will be available in Spanish so that qualified Spanish-speaking early childhood educators will be able to assess Spanish-speaking children in their native language. Enhanced focus and professional development around developmental screening, referral, and follow up will result in more children at risk being identified and referred for services at an earlier age. Systematic use and sharing of formative assessment data to guide instructional practices and track children's progress will assist in narrowing/closing the achievement gap. All professional development will intentionally focus on strategies for assessing children with high needs effectively and on using the data obtained to support their academic success. The combination of the use of the Inclusive Classroom Profile, Environmental Rating Scales and CLASS as well as professional development and support in a system that identifies supports early learning through the use of formative assessments and curricula aligned to strong Early Learning and Development Standards will result in increased high-quality early learning and development options for children with high needs, those living in poverty, children with disabilities and others.

(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards; and involving families as partners and building parents' capacity to promote their children's physical, social, and emotional health;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an ongoing basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity, and providing information and guidance to families to promote healthy habits at home;

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who—

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and, where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care; and

(e) Developing a comprehensive approach to increase the capacity and improve the overall quality of Early Learning and Development Programs to support and address the social and emotional development (including infant-early childhood mental health) of children from birth to age five.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative how each piece of evidence demonstrates the *State's success in meeting the criterion*; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed*. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Additionally, States must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measures under (C)(3)(d).

Evidence for (C)(3)(a):

- To the extent the State has established a progression of health standards across the levels of Program Standards that meet the elements in selection criterion (C)(3)(a), submit--
 - The progression of health standards used in the Program Standards and the State's plans for improvement over time, including documentation demonstrating that this progression of standards appropriately addresses health and safety standards; developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up; health promotion including healthy eating habits, improved nutrition, and increased

physical activity; oral health; social and emotional development; family involvement and capacity-building; and health literacy among parents and children;

Evidence for (C)(3)(b):

- To the extent the State has existing and projected numbers and percentages of Early Childhood Educators who receive training and support in meeting the health standards, the State must submit documentation of these data. If the State does not have these data, the State must outline its plan for deriving them.

Evidence for (C)(3)(c):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Evidence for (C)(3)(d):

- Documentation of the State's existing and future resources that are or will be used to address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs. At a minimum, documentation must address the screening and referral of and follow-up for all Children with High Needs, and how families will be engaged in the process; how the State will promote the participation of Children with High Needs in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care; how the State will promote healthy eating habits and improved nutrition as well as increased physical activity for Children with High Needs; and how the State will promote health literacy for children and parents.

Evidence for (C)(3)(e):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Georgia has chosen to respond to selection criteria (C)(1), (C)(2), and (C)(4).

Performance Measures for (C)(3)(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual statewide targets.					
	Baseline and annual targets				
	Baseline (Today, if known) If unknown please use narrative to explain plan for defining baseline and setting and meeting annual targets	Target for end of calendar year 2014	Target for end of calendar year 2015	Target for end of calendar year 2016	Target for end of calendar year 2017
Number of Children with High Needs screened					
Number of Children with High Needs referred for services who received follow-up/treatment					
Number of Children with High Needs who participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well child care					
Of these participating children, the number or percentage of children who are up-to-date in a schedule of well child care					
[Please 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.]					

(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate information and support to families of Children with High Needs in order to promote school readiness for their children by--

(a) Establishing a progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement across the levels of its Program Standards, including activities that enhance the capacity of families to support their children's education and development and help families build protective factors;

(b) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators trained and supported on an ongoing basis to implement the family engagement strategies included in the Program Standards; and

(c) Promoting family support and engagement statewide, including by leveraging other existing resources, such as home visiting programs, family resource centers, family support networks, and other family-serving agencies and organizations, and through outreach to family, friend, and neighbor caregivers.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative *how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion*; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs* are considered and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (C)(4)(a):

- To the extent the State has established a progression of family engagement standards across the levels of Program Standards that meet the elements in selection criterion (C)(4)(a), submit--
 - The progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate family engagement standards used in the Program Standards that includes strategies successfully used to engage families in supporting their children's development and learning. A State's family engagement standards must address, but need not be limited to: parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family

- members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and adult and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development; and
- Documentation that this progression of standards includes activities that enhance the capacity of families to support their children's education and development.

Evidence for (C)(4)(b):

- To the extent the State has existing and projected numbers and percentages of Early Childhood Educators who receive training and support on the family engagement strategies included in the Program Standards, the State must submit documentation of these data. If the State does not have these data, the State must outline its plan for deriving them.

Evidence for (C)(4)(c):

- Documentation of the State's existing resources that are or will be used to promote family support and engagement statewide, including through home visiting programs and other family-serving agencies and the identification of new resources that will be used to promote family support and engagement statewide.

Introduction

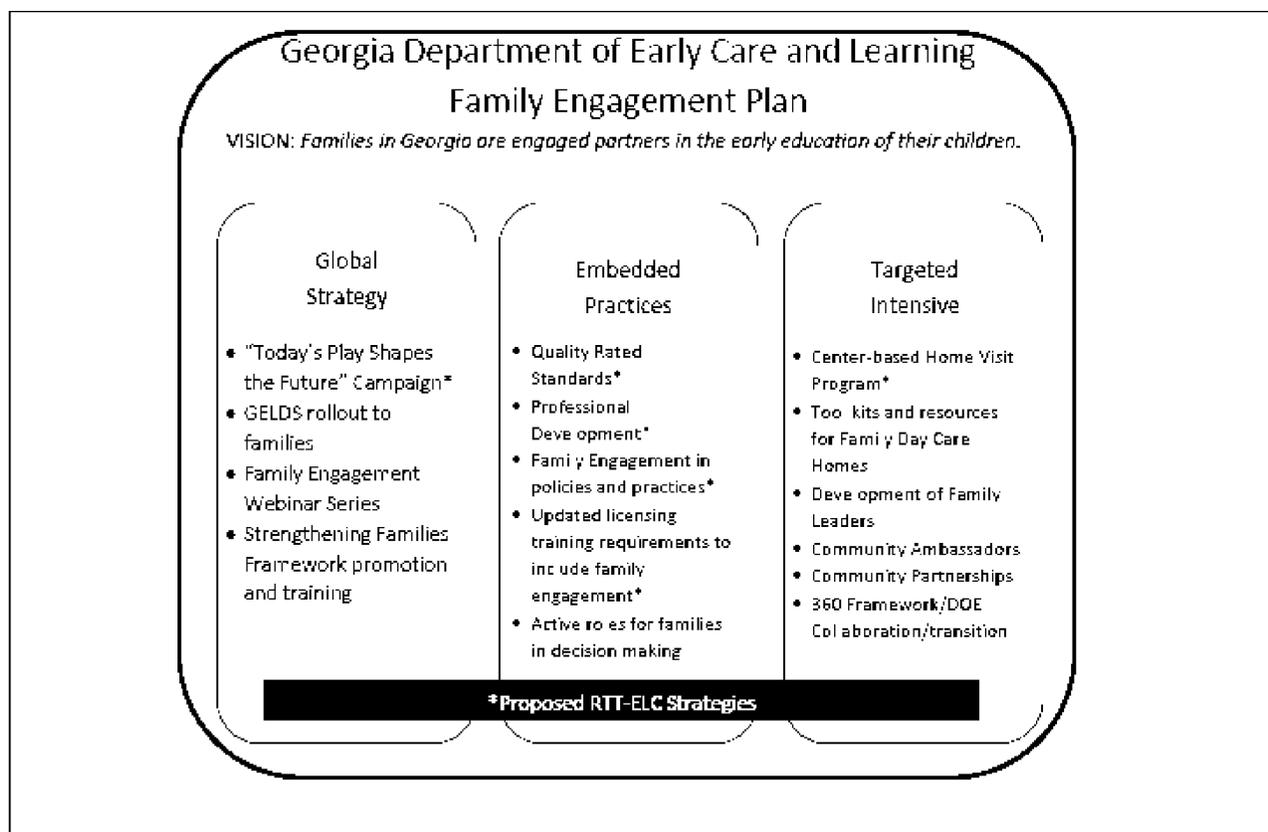
Georgia recognizes the importance of early and meaningful engagement of families in their child's development and school success. Children with supportive home learning environments demonstrate increased literacy skills, better peer interactions, fewer behavior problems and more motivation and persistence. Early Learning and Development educators play a crucial role in strengthening families' connections to both the community and early learning settings.

Georgia has 16,493 children ages birth to five years with an IFSP or IEP; 119,479 children ages birth to five years living in families whose first language is not English, 454,463 children ages birth to five years living at 200% below the federal poverty level, and more than 262,000 or 31.8% of children 0-5 children living in rural counties. The strategy for reaching these families is to engage local family-serving agencies and organizations that have built trusting relationships within their community.

Georgia proposes to build upon existing networks to roll out the global, program level and targeted strategies in the family engagement plan to promote family engagement and parenting support across the state. This approach is designed to address needs of all Georgia families with a particular focus on children with high needs.

DECAL's Family Engagement Plan

To support family engagement, Georgia has worked with a broad cadre of stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan to embed family engagement strategies across all ELD programs and communities across the state. A shared vision, goals and targeted activities have been developed as demonstrated in the diagram below.



This plan reflects Georgia’s ongoing commitment to:

- Establishing a progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement across the levels of its Program Standards.
 - Georgia’s Quality Rated Program Standards include indicators related to family engagement in multiple standards. The Program Standards are based on best practices and have been reviewed by national experts. Funds from this grant will be used to conduct an intensive review of cultural and linguistic appropriateness of all the Program Standards and an alignment of the family engagement standards with the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework.
- Increasing the number and percentage of early childhood educators trained and supported to implement the family engagement strategies.
 - Georgia has designated the Strengthening Families Framework as the basis for the family engagement principles and strategies in the Program Standards. The Program Standards require completion of the

Strengthening Families online training module and self-assessment at the highest quality tier. Extensive free training and technical assistance is available throughout Quality Rated.

- Promoting family support and engagement statewide.
 - Georgia has a long history of providing support to families of children with high needs. Multiple statewide agencies and programs currently work together to support families of children with disabilities and Family Connection Partnership supports Collaboratives in all Georgia counties to ensure that there is a focus support for families in local communities. With the award of these funds, these efforts will be further enhanced ensuring sustainability of the family engagement efforts proposed in the grant after the conclusion of the grant cycle. Additionally, home visitation programs provided in natural environments with families are available throughout most of the state. Georgia will use global and targeted strategies to promote family support and engagement. Funds from this grant will support a statewide campaign focused on the Strengthening Families protective factor: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development. In addition to those already knowledgeable partners, other community partners will be trained on family engagement principles and provided information and resources to deliver to the families in their community. As a targeted initiative, a comprehensive early childhood framework, including screening, referral, professional development, and home visitation, will be implemented in multiple early learning and development programs in the E³Zs. Additionally Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers will be supported with high-quality professional development focused on family engagement through partnerships with Head Start and Early Head Start.

(C)(4)(a) Progression of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards for Family Engagement

Goal: Review and strengthen family engagement Program Standards to ensure that there is a

progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards and to help families build protective factors.

Family engagement is a critical, all-encompassing construct within Georgia's Quality Rated program. One of the five standards explicitly focuses on family partnerships, and two other standards also have related family engagement components. Within the standards, Georgia has begun to address cultural and linguistic competence. Additionally, Georgia's definition and guiding principles of cultural competency, developed through work with BUILD national consultants, underpin all aspects of the Quality Rated Program Standards. The definition and guiding principles are designed to help programs engage in dialogue about cultural competency and form a foundation to best support each and every child and family.

Georgia has a progression of family engagement standards embedded across three of the five Quality Rated Program Standards in all three tiers.

Quality Rated Standard 1, Teacher Education and Professional Development, requires professional development in family support and engagement at each star level.

Quality Rated Standard 2, Child Health, Nutrition, and Physical Activity, includes policies and activities to support family engagement through family resource areas, family conferences and family leadership building activities.

Quality Rated Standard 3, Family Partnerships, is built on the Strengthening Families online training and self-assessment. The Family Partnership standard accounts for one fifth of the structural points awarded in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Georgia recently completed a review of the Family Engagement Program Standards to ensure alignment with the Strengthening Families Protective factors. These principles are aligned with the Center for the Study of Social Policy's evidence-based Strengthening Families framework. Strengthening Families incorporates five protective factors: Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Knowledge of Child Development, Concrete Support in Times of Need and Social Emotional Competence of Children.

The Program Standards correlate with the Family Engagement Strategies outlined in Section (C)(4)(a) and align with the protective factors. The chart below demonstrates the alignment between the ELC strategies, Quality Rated Program Standards and Strengthening Families Protective Factors:

ELC Family Engagement Strategies	Alignment with Quality Rated Standards	Strengthening Families Protective Factors
Parent access to the program	Standard 3 (also in licensing rules)	Concrete Support in Times of Need
Two-way communication	Standard 3—3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
Parent education in child development	Standard 2—3.1, 3.2, 3.3 Standard 3—1, 2, 3	Social Emotional Competence Children; Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
Outreach to fathers and other family members	Standard 3—3.1	Social Connections; Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
Training/support for transition	Standard 3—3.2	Social Connections; Parent Resilience; Social Emotional Competence Children
Social networks of support	Standard 3—1, 2 Standard 3—1, 2 Standard 3—3.1, 3.3	Social Connections; Concrete Support in Times of Need
Intergenerational activities	Standard 3—3.3	Social Connections
Linkages with community supports and adult/family literacy programs	Standard 3—1, 2 Standard 3—3.1, 3.3	Concrete Support in Times of Need; Parent Resilience
Parent involvement in decision making and parent leadership development	Standard 2—3.3 Standard 3—3.3	Social Connections; Parent Resilience; Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
Activities for families to support their child’s education and development	Standard 2—3.1, 3.2, 3.3 Standard 3—1, 2, 3	Social Emotional Competence Children; Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Using funds from the Early Learning Challenge grant, Georgia will convene state and national experts on cultural and linguistic competency to conduct a review of the Quality Rated

Program Standards to ensure alignment with national indicators of cultural and linguistic appropriateness. During this review, the experts will include a review of the family engagement standards to ensure alignment with nationally recognized indicators of quality and family engagement and alignment with the standards with the Head Start Parent, Family and Community framework. These alignments will serve to inform changes needed in the Quality Rated Program Standards and serve as guidance to Early and Learning Development (ELD) Programs in setting policies and informing practice for supporting families and children with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

(C)(4)(b) Supporting Early Childhood Educators to Implement Family Engagement Strategies

Goal: Increase the number and percentage of early childhood educators trained and supported in *implementing the family engagement strategies in Georgia's Program Standards*.

Georgia has a strong system in place to ensure that early childhood educators are trained and supported to implement the family engagement strategies included in the Program Standards. The family engagement strategies in Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System Program Standards are undergirded by the national, evidence-based Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework (Appendix 41). The Strengthening Families module, developed by Strengthening Families Georgia and available online, provides an overview of the Strengthening Families framework and protective factors and is required for all teachers and administrators in programs at the highest level in Quality Rated. After completing the module, programs complete the online Strengthening Families Self-Assessment, which has versions available for center and family-based programs as well as a version in Spanish. Based on the self-assessment, programs are provided feedback on their strengths and weakness in each area and use the results as part of a written continuous quality improvement plan. More than 90% of programs have opted to complete the self-assessment as part of their tiered quality rating and improvement system portfolio. More than 5,000 early childhood educators have completed the two-hour online Strengthening Families overview with a significant number more who could benefit from this information. The expansion of Quality Rated will increase the number of early childhood educators completing these trainings and result in a workforce with understanding and skills in enhancing families' capacity to support their children's development.

The Program Standards also require yearly training in family engagement strategies. This ongoing training is provided through the cadre of trainers trained by SFG on the five protective factors modules. The cadre of trainers includes private trainers, child care resource and referral agency staff and others and will ensure that 100% of Georgia's early childhood educators working in early learning and development programs participating the Quality Rated will have completed annual training on the family engagement program standards by 2017. From January 2012 through June 2013, more than 100 professional learning opportunities on the Strengthening Families protective factors have been offered across Georgia with several of the trainings offered in Spanish. More than 2,000 individuals (families, early childhood educators, professional development providers, administrators, and others) have also participated in these professional learning opportunities.

To ensure early childhood educators have the necessary knowledge and understanding of the unique issues affecting populations such as families who are English language learners and families with children with disabilities, professional development focused on these issues is currently being developed. Using CCDF funds, Georgia has contracted with two institutes of higher education to create a series of intermediate and advance level training modules on topics including cultural, linguistic and ability appropriateness, family engagement, and supporting children with disabilities in all Early Learning and Development Programs. The modules are appropriate for both teachers and leaders focusing on supporting programs in developing policy and improving practice. Through existing contracts, 150 to 200 professional development providers will be trained in these modules for redelivery to early childhood educators across the state.

(C)(4)(c) Promoting Family Support and Engagement

Goal: Increase knowledge and use of Family Engagement principles, strategies and parenting support by families throughout the state with a particular focus on Early Education Empowerment Zones.

Georgia has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting families across the state and is deepening and strengthening that commitment through an intentional focus on promoting family engagement and support statewide. This effort will leverage existing resources by building on initiatives currently employed in the state. A global campaign, focused on increasing

knowledge of parenting and child development, will be implemented statewide through the use of existing community collaboratives, available in every county. Using these collaboratives as the vehicle for implementation of this campaign will ensure family engagement principles and supports are embedded in efforts at the community level. The Great Start Georgia early childhood system of care framework (Appendix 42), funded through the federal Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting grant, will be leveraged and expanded to implement this system into early learning and development programs in the E³Z. Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers will receive high-quality professional development through partnerships with Head Start and Early Head Start. Georgia will make a significant impact on families' ability to support their children's growth and development by leveraging existing funding sources and programs.

Georgia has numerous family-serving agencies and organizations across the state that support families of children with high needs, including families with children with disabilities, families who are dual language learners and families living in poverty. These groups are focused on initiatives centering on supporting families of children with disabilities, families who are English language learners, and other families of children with high needs. Georgia has established statewide groups supporting the use of evidence-based family engagement principles as well as an early childhood system of care that supports screening and referral and includes voluntary, evidence-based home visiting as a key service strategy. The narrative below will describe these groups and Georgia's plans for leveraging this work to support families of children with high needs.

Strengthening Families Georgia - This statewide partnership established in 2000, includes national, state, local, and public/private organizations dedicated to embedding the five research-based protective factors (parent resilience, knowledge of parenting and child development, social and emotional competence of children, social connections, and concrete support in times of need) in services and supports for young children and their families. Strengthening Families Georgia (SFG) is funded with state funds from the Governor's Office for Children and Families with the Georgia Association of Young Children (NAEYC state affiliate) as the lead agency. Strengthening Families Georgia has developed an overview module and one training module on each of the five protective factors. SFG conducted multiple train-the-trainer sessions on the modules resulting in more than 100 trainers offering professional development opportunities to early childhood educators across the state

Parent to Parent of Georgia (P2P) - Funded through a combination of state, federal and private funds, P2P provides statewide support, information and leadership opportunities to families of children with disabilities birth to age 25. P2P serves as Georgia's Parent Training and Information Center, Georgia's Family to Family Health Information Center, the IDEA Part C Babies Can't Wait Central Directory, and the Parent to Parent USA State Affiliate. Parent to Parent offers seven core services to families, including the P2P Special Needs Database of providers and resources and the P2P Roadmap to Success, both of which are accessible through the website as well as through telephone contacts with staff. Parent to Parent of Georgia also supports the P2P Navigator Project, a network of grass roots parent run organizations located in communities across the state. These Navigator teams develop plans based on unique community needs, focusing on supporting families of children with disabilities as well as promoting inclusion of all families in their community.

Georgia's Part C program (Babies Can't Wait) - Babies Can't Wait employs Parent Educators to provide training, resources and support to families of children with disabilities across Georgia. These personnel are parents of children with disabilities who have been served through the Babies Can't Wait program. Bilingual Parent Educators are available to support families who are English language learners.

The Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership - This initiative was created and funded by the Georgia Department of Education and local education agencies, with 91 Parent Mentors employed by local school systems across the state. These mentors, parents of children with disabilities, work with school system partners to build communication with families of children with disabilities (3-21) and provide information and support to increase their engagement in their child's education.

Georgia Coalition for English Language Learners - Georgia is home to many dual language learning families with young children, including migrant and refugee families. Across the state there are numerous organizations and agencies serving these families at the local level. At the state policy level the Georgia Coalition for English Language Learners is a partnership of 60+ community organizations and individuals sharing a united voice and a common purpose, and committed to making a transformative change for English learners in Georgia, so that by 2020, all English learners are on a path to read to learn in English by third grade. The coalition, funded through private dollars, works to identify policies, programs, and resources that will support

English learners on this path, to ensure their maximum achievement and contributions as productive Georgians.

Refugee Resettlement and Immigration Services of Atlanta - There are numerous supports, funded through private donations, for refugee families in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Refugee Resettlement and Immigration Services of Atlanta offers a variety of services and programs for hundreds of refugees each year. Services include English language classes, education and cultural orientation, employment, housing and other social services. A variety of services to aid families in becoming self-sufficient are also available from Catholic Charities of Atlanta as well as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Telamon Corporation - Many English language learning families live in rural areas of Georgia and work as migrant and seasonal farm workers. Telamon Corporation provides a variety of services to these families including Early Head Start and Head Start, remedial education and GED preparation, job training and employment assistance and other services to support family self-sufficiency. These services are available in more than 20 counties in the southern region of the state. The Georgia Department of Public Health uses federal funding to offer the Georgia Farm Worker Health Program for 21 rural counties at six sites. Services include family planning, immunizations, WIC, adult care, health education, and pediatric services such as well baby checkups.

Georgia Family Connection Partnership, a strong, unified statewide network—the only one of its kind in the nation—consists of 159 state legislatively funded county-level collaboratives that seek to improve the health, economic well-being, and educational outcomes of Georgia's birth to eighteen children and families. Georgia Family Connection Partnership was first funded by the Georgia legislature in 1993 and by 2004 there were Family Connection Collaboratives located in all 159 counties in Georgia. These collaboratives, made up of partners representing diverse sectors of their community, including Public Health, Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services, faith and business communities, early learning and development programs, families and others, conduct community assessments to identify areas of need, using resulting information to create local strategic plans outlining how locally developed solutions will be implemented.

Collaboratives' areas of focus include healthy children, children ready to start school, children succeeding in school, stable, self-sufficient families and strong communities. In state

fiscal year 2014, 55% of Georgia Family Connection collaboratives are tracking Kids Count indicators related to “Healthy Children,” “Children Ready to Start School,” and “Stable, Self-Sufficient Families.” Annual plans for 46% of collaboratives include one or more family engagement activities with 96% including early literacy and adult education activities. As each collaborative works to address these priority areas, they identify a wide array of resources in their community with the purpose of linking families to services. This is often done by compiling and distributing resource guides to formal and informal “helpers” in the community, involving family members in meeting and activities, or conducting family-oriented events in neighborhoods, schools, and community centers.

Great Start Georgia - Through Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funding and funding from the Governor’s Office for Children and Families, Georgia has implemented a comprehensive early childhood system, which includes evidence-based, voluntary home visitation as one of the major service strategy to promote maternal, infant, and early childhood health, safety and development and strong parent-child relationships. This system, called Great Start Georgia (Appendix 42) is led by The Governor’s Office for Children and Families and includes partners from state and local child-serving agencies including Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Georgia Head Start Collaboration Office, Georgia Department of Public Health, Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services, Georgia Department of Behavioral Health, and Georgia Department of Education (see Appendix 43 for a membership list of the Leadership Team). The mission of Great Start Georgia is to provide wide-ranging support services for families and children to ensure that families have the information and support needed to provide their children with a great start in life. Community outreach, screening and linkage and basic parent supports are available to all Georgia families with voluntary home visitation provided to families with high needs.

The framework for Great Start Georgia reflects the basic activities necessary to support families in communities: outreach and referral, central intake (identification, screening and data management), linkage to community services, and coordination of care among providers, particularly for family with high needs. State partners are currently working together on initiatives to support the outreach and central intake functions, including the development of a Resource Linkage Center where staff are available to support communities in screening and

linking families to local supports and services.

These groups form an excellent foundation to build upon and Georgia will use the ELC grant to leverage the work of these groups to increase knowledge and use of family engagement strategies, provide tools and resources to families to enhance their ability to support their children's development.

Leveraging Resources to Enhance Georgia's Family Engagement Strategies

Given their focus on early literacy and family engagement, Family Connection Collaboratives are an ideal mechanism for delivering key family engagement messages to families in their community. For example, as part of the effort to increase families' knowledge of parenting and child development, Georgia will leverage the existing network of Collaboratives to serve as the community hub for the statewide GELDS awareness campaign. The Collaboratives will ensure that all families are reached by partnering with the Parent to Parent Navigator teams in their community. Parent to Parent of Georgia Navigator teams will provide information about strategies to reach families of children with disabilities and will also receive small grants annually to facilitate those families' participation in the activities through assistance with transportation, stipends, adaptation of materials.

Year one of the grant will be spent training collaboratives on family engagement strategies with a focus on the Strengthening Families Protective Factor: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development. As outlined in Section (C)(1), specific GELDS resources targeting families are being developed including online modules, a family toolkit, and an app for smartphones.

Additionally, the Center for Disease Control's Learn the Signs Act Early materials, designed to bring awareness to parents and providers about child development as well as concerns about atypical development, will be provided. Family Connection Collaboratives and their community partners will be trained during regional training events across the state designed to acquaint members with the tools and assist them with embedding family engagement strategies into activities in their community using these tools. The training and tools will allow collaboratives to expand the capacity of the families in their communities to support their children's development and school success. Additionally, each collaborative will be provided with quantities of the resources for distribution in their communities. Collaboratives will link to

existing community partners and identify additional community services supporting families who are dual language learners, such as Refugee Resettlement and Immigration Services, Catholic Charities, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Telamon Migrant Head Start, the Georgia Farm Workers Health Program, and others.

In the second year of the ELC grant, the local Family Connection Collaboratives in the four Early Education Empowerment Zones will be incentivized to embed family engagement strategies into their existing plans. Working with other partners such as their P2P navigator teams, Local Interagency Coordinating Councils, parent mentors and partners focused on families who are dual language learners, these groups will develop community based strategies to reach out to the families in their communities to encourage and support the use of developmental tools, activities and information to enhance their ability to support their children's development.

In subsequent years, the collaboratives in partnership with Parent to Parent Navigator teams, in other areas of the state who have chosen to focus on the 0-5 population will be invited to apply for small grants of up to \$5000 each, with preference given to collaboratives that are in rural areas of the state with large populations of families with high needs. Twenty grants will be awarded each year with a total of 44 grants will be given during the ELC grant period.

Goal: Promote family support and engagement through implementation of the Great Start Georgia framework, including home visitation, in early learning and development programs in the Early Education Empowerment Zones.

Extensive research has shown the effectiveness of evidence-based home visiting in improving outcomes for maternal and child health, home and child safety, school readiness, family safety, family economic self-sufficiency and referrals and linkages to community resources. Evidence-based, voluntary home visiting is a major service strategy of Great Start Georgia in targeted counties. These services provide families needing support with strategies and resources to provide safe, nurturing, and healthy environments for their children. Currently, seven of Georgia's neediest counties have embedded one or more evidence-based home visitation models in their local Great Start Georgia Systems, funded through the federal maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant Program.

In Georgia approximately 375,000 children ages 0-5 are cared for outside their home in a variety of models of child care. Working parents have the same desire to learn about effective

parenting and have other challenges unique to their situation. However, the demands of their job may limit their ability to participate in traditional home visiting models. Increasingly, providers of home visiting have begun to revise their models to address the particular needs of this group of families. Early Learning and Development center-based home visitation programs promote access to home visiting services for children with high needs and strengthen the partnership between families and their child's teacher through improved communication and mutual goal setting by parents and the teacher.

In response to this need, funding from this grant will be used to implement the Great Start Georgia home visiting framework in Early Learning and Development programs, with evidence-based, voluntary home visiting as a service strategy for families and children with high needs. Great Start Georgia currently uses strategies and practices from the following home visitation models: Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families, Nurse Family Partnership and Early Head Start Home-Based Option. The existing infrastructure, built through Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting funds, will support training, technical assistance, data collection and program evaluation for this project.

Large, multi-site Quality Rated early learning and development programs that are located in the Early Education Empowerment Zones and that serve a larger percentage of children and families with high needs will be selected. Approximately 400 children will receive Great Start Georgia services in each Early Education Empowerment Zone with approximately 100 children per zone receiving home visiting as an additional strategy. Selected Early Learning and Development programs will have experience with family resource coordination, have demonstrated a commitment to systemic change in early education practices that meet the child's and family's holistic needs and will offer the capacity and infrastructure to support program sustainability after grant funding ends. The first year of the initiative will be spent in planning, identifying, and training the sites, with rollout and evaluation in the second year.

Great Start Georgia will partner families of newborn and young children with home visitors who deliver voluntary prevention services in the early care and education center as well as the family's home. These services promote or address issues with parent-child relationships, maternal and child health, safety and development by providing parent education, connections to community-based services, and support throughout early childhood. Mirroring group socialization experiences in Early Head Start programs, group meetings at the center allow for

better attendance, community building, and opportunities for other families to participate in educational activities. Offering individual visits at the center also allows participation by families who might not be comfortable having others in their homes.

In this model, all children ages birth to five years in the Early Learning and Development program will receive periodic developmental screening and resource coordination activities. Additionally, Great Start Georgia staff will train early childhood educators in the use of developmental screening and resource coordination in order to build the early childhood educators' skills and the capacity of the early learning and development programs to better meet the needs of all the children and families they serve. Early childhood educators will also receive training in the Strengthening Families protective factors, cultural and linguistic competence, inclusion of children with disabilities and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards.

The innovative model proposed will build on the existing Great Start infrastructure and blend strong, evidence-based family engagement strategies and high-quality early learning and development programs. The model will provide families with additional services related to child development and self-sufficiency while providing resources to early learning and development programs committed to quality above and beyond the state licensing requirements. Families receive assistance in an environment that they have already determined best meets their needs; early childhood educators receive professional learning opportunities; and early learning and development programs receive resources to strengthen their business.

Key Elements of the Pilot will include:

- Involvement of families as partners in the planning process.
- Multi-site Quality Rated early learning and development programs adopting the Great Start Georgia framework.
- Services targeted to families receiving child care subsidies, families who are dual language learners and other families and children referred by the Center Director.
- Each program will employ a Coordinator and multiple Home Visiting professionals.
- Strengths-based, outcome-focused, and family-centered approaches to serving children and families.
- All home visitors and early learning and development program staff will participate in

professional development opportunities on Georgia's Early Learning and Development Standards, inclusion of children with disabilities, cultural and linguistic competency, and the Strengthening Families protective factors.

- A community-driven, data-informed approach that incorporates targeted services and supports.
- Emphasis on prevention, early identification, and intervention.
- Use of on-site (early care and education center) and in home parent education/intervention.

Lessons learned from the current work being done in the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grant Program (MIECHV), and the child care based home visitation model proposed, will guide the state toward ensuring the functions of the Great Start Georgia system in communities. The collaboration occurring on the state and local levels around the development and implementation of Great Start Georgia helps to ensure achievement of the vision. In addition, by providing community funding, professional development opportunities, and technical assistance, communities and families will be able to increase their own independence and productivity.

Georgia will continue to work with state and local collaborative partners to build capacity to continue this initiative once federal funding is no longer available. However, situating the work with Family Connection Collaboratives will also ensure sustainability of program activities following the grant conclusion. Through ongoing training and technical assistance, early learning and development programs will have the tools and skills needed to build internal capacity to implement an early childhood systems framework and integrate evidence-based home visiting program services such as quality screening and assessment, resource coordination and enhanced parent-child interaction within Early Learning and Development programs.

Piloting the center-based home visitation initiative in the Early Education Empowerment Zones will allow Georgia to determine the specific drivers to higher outcomes for children and families. Significant funding has been allotted to utilize implementation science methodologies to identify the highest returns on investment; therefore, allowing Georgia to scale up in the most cost effective manner.

Goal: Promote family support and engagement outreach to family, friend and neighbor

caregivers.

Informal child-care arrangements, including family, friend and neighbor caregivers, are the most common sources of child care for many low-income and immigrant families. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 33 percent of children ages 5 and under were likely to be cared for by a non-relative; 42 percent were cared for by a relative. Family, friend, and neighbor caregivers are often isolated and have limited opportunities for professional development. Although these providers will be offered training and information at level two of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy, ongoing relationships developed in their communities can also benefit them and the children with high needs in their care. Georgia will link Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers who receive subsidies with the Head Start program in the caregiver's community. Family engagement and support are cornerstones of Head Start and Early Head Start programs and early childhood educators in Head Start programs receive regular professional development on family support and strategies to engage families in their children's learning and development. These programs have the staff, resources, skills and expertise to support the Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers by developing relationships with the caregivers in their areas and including them in regularly occurring Head Start training and other activities.

The Head Start program will contact the caregivers to offer information, support, and encouragement to attend training. Using ELC funds, small grants will be awarded to the participating Head Start programs to cover additional space, trainer, and material costs. Building these relationships will allow the Head Start programs to share family engagement strategies, model family engagement practices, and deliver family engagement training to Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers.

High-Quality Plan for Engaging and Supporting Families

(a) Key Goals

1. To increase the number of early childhood professionals trained and supported in the family engagement principles in the Program Standards.
2. To increase knowledge and use of Family Engagement principles, strategies and parenting

support by families throughout the state with a particular focus on Early Education Empowerment Zones.

3. To promote family support and engagement through implementation of the Great Start Georgia framework, including home visitation, in early learning and development programs in the Early Education Empowerment Zones.
4. To promote family support and engagement principles and strategies through outreach to family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Conduct in depth review of the Program Standards for cultural and linguistic appropriateness and alignment to the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Framework and provide professional development to programs participating in QRIS.
2. Conduct statewide public awareness campaign through Family Connection Collaboratives.
3. Implement center-based home visiting initiative.
4. Outreach to Family, Friend, and Neighbor Caregivers through Head Start and Early Head Start.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
<p>Activity 1: Review of the Program Standards for cultural and linguistic appropriateness and alignment to the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Framework and provide professional development to programs participating in QRIS. Aligned Goal: 2</p>		
<p>Quality Rated Program Standards are already strong but will benefit from review to ensure that they are culturally and linguistically appropriate and aligned with the national indicators of quality. A comprehensive system of professional development on family engagement Program Standards is available for early childhood educators and expansion of Quality Rated to all licensed early learning and development programs will result in a workforce trained in these principles.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 2: Conduct statewide public awareness campaign centered on Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development through Family Connection Collaboratives. Aligned Goal: 3</p>		
<p>Families across Georgia need resources and information to support their children’s development and school success. Georgia is developing tool kits for families with resources and activities related to early learning and development standards. Information will be</p>	<p>Statewide, E³Zs</p>	<p>In years 3 and 4 collaboratives in communities with large populations of families with high needs will be awarded grants based on competitive applications</p>

disseminated through the Family Connection Collaboratives. These are community-based organizations focused on child and family issues and are uniquely placed to distribute information and supporting families' understanding of family engagement principles.		
Activity 3: Implement family support through center-based home visiting initiative. Aligned Goal: 4		
Children, families, and early childhood educators can benefit from resources and support in an early childhood system of care with home visiting as a key intervention strategy. All children will receive developmental screening, family resource coordination, and other services. Early childhood educators will receive training on screening, family engagement principles, developmental milestones and other information. Targeted families will receive targeted intervention through home visitation and other services.	Highest Quality Rated ELD programs in the Early Education Empowerment Zones	N/A
Activity 4: Outreach to Family, Friend, and Neighbor Caregivers through Head Start and Early Head Start. Aligned Goal: 5		
Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers are often isolated and have little opportunity for high-quality professional development. Head Start and Early Head Start programs have mandates to provide professional development to their teachers and it is of high quality. Connecting the FFN caregivers with their local Head Start will provide not only professional development but also exposure to quality early learning and development practices and other resources	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Review of Program Standards								
Review Program Standards for cultural and linguistic competency and align with Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Framework.	X	X						

State of Georgia: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application

Training for early childhood educators participating in Quality Rated.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2: Public Awareness								
Train Family Connection Collaboratives, parent groups representing families of children with disabilities and groups supporting families learning English in Family Toolkit.		X						
Provide family toolkits to all Family Connection Collaboratives and parent to parent.		X						
Provide grants to Family Connection Collaboratives in Early Education Empowerment Zones.			X	X				
Solicit plans from Family Connection Collaboratives for family engagement activities.					X			
Award incentives based on plans.					X			
Activities carried out by FC.					X	X	X	X
Activity 3: Home-visiting Initiatives								
Plan and identify programs based on E ³ Zs, Identify child care programs for participation, hire and train staff.	X	X						
Implementation of Great Start Georgia framework into child care centers in E ³ Zs.			X	X	X	X	X	
Evaluation of Center-based Home Visitation.					X	X	X	
Activity 4: Outreach to Family, Friend, and Neighbor Caregivers.								
Cross walk zip codes of FFN caregivers with Head Start and Early Head Start locations.	X							
Contact Head Start/Early Head Start programs in identified areas to plan for implementation.	X							
Send information to FFN caregivers about opportunities for training and support from Head Start/Early Head Start.		X						
Head Start programs contact FFN caregivers in their area to invite them to attend PD activities.		X						
Head Start and FFN caregivers participate in joint professional development.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

- DECAL Family Engagement Coordinator
- DECAL Inclusion Manager
- DECAL Standards Coordinator
- Head Start Collaboration Office Director
- Governor's Office for Children and Families staff

Family Connection Partnership staff

(e) Financial Resources

Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants **Selection Criterion:** C4

DECAL will utilize ELC funds to complete an alignment of the Georgia’s Family Engagement Standards with the Program Standards for Quality Rated and to provide professional development on family engagement standards to early childhood educators through Quality Rated. In addition, DECAL will launch a statewide family engagement awareness campaign using the GELDS resources created in Project 5. DECAL will partner with Family Connection Partnership to infuse the campaign into the Family Connection Collaboratives operating in all 159 counties in Georgia. ELC funds will also offer grants to support community family engagement plans developed by the local collaboratives.

Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants Selection Criteria: C4 Total Project Budget: \$1,208,679		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$408,677
Participating State Agency	Family Connection Partnership	\$0

Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care **Selection Criterion:** C4

The Governor’s Office for Children and Families is the lead agency for this project. GOCF will partner with DECAL to identify Quality Rated ELD programs in the empowerment zones for implementation. GOCF will employ supervisors and home visitation staff who work with the DECAL coordinator in each zone to ensure the activities in the High-Quality Plan are completed. In addition, DECAL will distribute ELC funds to support Head Start and Early Head Start programs in supporting Family, Friend and Neighbor providers in professional development on family engagement strategies.

Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care
 Selection Criteria: C4
 Total Project Budget: \$4,249,428

	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Governor’s Office for Children and Families	\$3,137,524
Participating State Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$211,904

(f) Supporting Evidence

- Great Start GA MIECHV diagram (Appendix 42)
- MIECHV executive summary
- Family Connection Partnership Executive Summary

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

Professional development and information, resources and support will be provided to early childhood educators working in programs participating Quality Rated, Georgia’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System through Georgia’s Professional Development Hierarchy and through professional development offered through the child care resource and referral agencies, private trainers, institutions of higher education and others. Professional development information and resources will be provided to early childhood educators working the IDEA Parts C and B 619 systems, and home visitors through targeted trainings by DECAL, Parent to Parent of Georgia and Governor’s Office for Children and Families staff. Community Head Starts and Early Head Starts will serve as training hubs to offer professional development, resources, and support to Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers in their communities.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

Activities and strategies will be designed to meet the needs of all families, with strategies targeted to assist early learning and development programs and early childhood educators in

reaching and supporting families of children with disabilities, children whose families are learning English are embedded in all activities. The Program Standards will be reviewed to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness and training will be offered to professional development providers and early childhood educators and program leaders to ensure knowledge and skills in supporting families of children with high needs. Existing groups supporting families of children with disabilities and families learning English will be engaged to ensure that all tools and activities are relevant and meaningful. Home visitation strategies in Great Start Georgia will be delivered using evidence-based models that reflect national research and strategies supporting children with high needs. Additionally implementing strategies in the Early Education Empowerment Zones will ensure that these families have access to the most intensive supports.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

Note: The total available points for (D)(1) and (D)(2) = 40. The 40 available points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D), each criterion will be worth up to 20 points.

The applicant must address one or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D).

(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative *how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion*; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs* are considered and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (D)(1):

- To the extent the State has developed a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework that meets the elements in selection criterion (D)(1), submit:
 - The Workforce Knowledge and Competencies;

- Documentation that the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework addresses the elements outlined in the definition of Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework in the Program Definitions (section III) and is designed to promote children's learning and development and improve outcomes.

Introduction

Through a public/private partnership implemented in 2001, Georgia has developed a solid ELD professional development system composed of five core components: (1) a professional Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework (the Georgia Professional Development Competency Framework), (2) Career Levels lattice of teacher qualifications and credentials, (3) professional learning opportunities vetted through a training and trainer approval system, (4) the Professional Development Registry (PDR), and (5) supports for ELD educators through scholarships and wage supplements. These core components are outlined below.

- 1) Georgia's **Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework**, called Professional Development Competencies (Appendix 30), is the framework that defines what Georgia's early educators are expected to know and be able to do when working with young children. Originally developed in 1994, they were formally revised in 2006. They will undergo a second revision to reflect new research, best practices, cross-sector alignment, and the now revised Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS).
- 2) Through continued partnership with the Technical College System of Georgia (TSCG), a progression of credentials or **Career Levels** from a basic knowledge, entry-level certificate to advanced degrees has been developed that incorporates the Professional Development Competencies into coursework at all levels (Appendix 36). TSCG continues to aggressively respond to the needs of the workforce, particularly non-traditional students returning to school. It is our intent to continue to incentivize and support educators to advance through this progression through tuition assistance, support stipends, rewarding educational attainment, and partnering with TSCG to increase access through hybrid and accelerated programs.
- 3) Georgia's **Trainer and Training Approval System** ensures that high-quality, competency-based training is available and accessible and aligns with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. Individual trainers are evaluated for experience, education, and training; additionally, individual training modules are evaluated and must align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies. The system also delineates requirements for trainers (Appendix 32). The revised

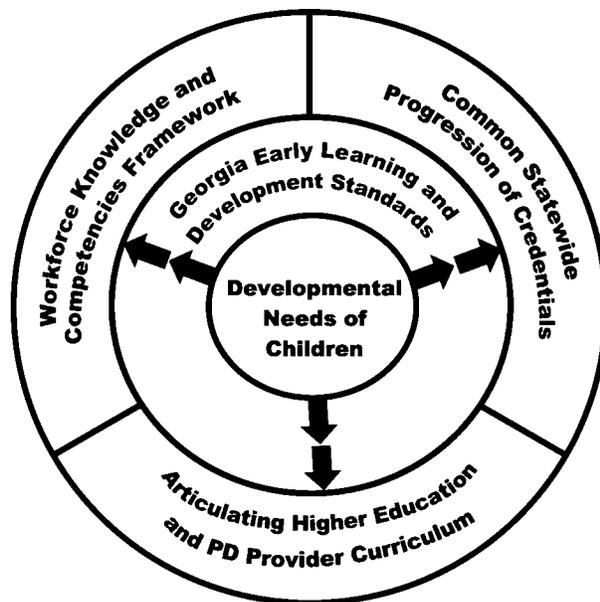
Workforce Knowledge and Competencies will guide the approval of training modules, and the competencies for trainers will reflect these revisions.

- 4) Georgia's **Professional Development Registry (PDR)** tracks the education, training, and experiences of early educators and assigns a career level on the "Career Level Lattice" (Appendix 31) based on a combination of indicators. A percentage of points for Standard 1 (Staff Education) in Quality Rated, Georgia's TQRIS, are awarded based on data pulled from the PDR of each early childhood educator's career level (see (B)(1)(a)).
- 5) **Supports for early learning and development educators** (see (D)(2)) include a Scholarships Program begun more than 10 years ago to promote increased education among the workforce and increase the number of early childhood educators with aligned credentials. Support is provided to educators pursuing credentials in early care and education, child development, or child care administration. Georgia's Incentives Program, established in 2001, supports workforce retention in ELD programs. Quality in ELD programs and school readiness has been linked to the education and experience of early childhood educators. The Incentives Program rewards educational attainment and retention.

As outlined in the mental model below, Georgia's High-Quality Plan ensures that it will:

- Have a revised common, statewide WKC Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes. Currently, the WKC Framework addresses children's physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development. The WKC review will ensure that the framework aligns with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (revised in 2013) and addresses competencies for working with culturally and linguistically diverse families.
- Maintain and build upon a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the WKC Framework. Currently, the framework, credentials and degrees are aligned with the state's former early learning standards.
- Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the WKC Framework.

The existing WKC Framework was developed by an advisory committee that included representatives from higher education, professional development trainers, early childhood educators, professional organizations, and state staff. A diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from higher education and professional development trainers, will be engaged in revising the WKC Framework.

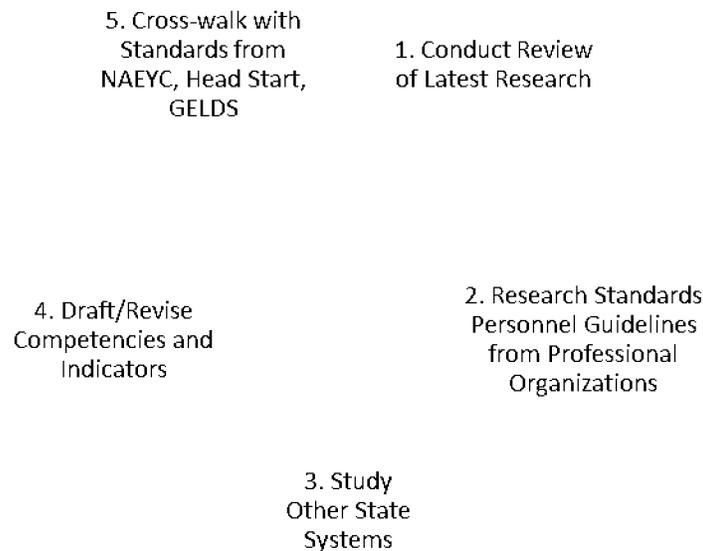


(D)(1)(a) Develop a common, statewide workforce knowledge and competency framework designed to promote children’s learning and development and improve child outcomes

Georgia has developed and fully implemented a common, statewide knowledge and competency framework, the Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies (Appendix 30), to promote children’s learning and development and improve child outcomes. The competencies describe what each early childhood educator should know, understand, and be able to do to promote children’s learning and healthy development. The framework is organized by competency goals with indicators and examples of educator behaviors that demonstrate that the indicator is met. Examples of behaviors are provided at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of competency for each indicator. Georgia’s WKC Framework meets the criteria defined in the RTT-ELC as outlined below.

1. **Evidence-based.** The WKC Framework was built on research and best practice. During 1994-1995, the Georgia Professional Development Advisory Team, led by the University of Georgia and composed of representatives from the state’s top education agencies, technical colleges, colleges and universities, Head Start, private ELD programs, private trainers, professional organizations, child care resource and referral agencies, technical assistance consultants, early childhood educators, and administrators worked together to review the research, review the standards and personnel guidelines from professional organizations, study other state’s systems, and draft the competencies and indicators. The advisory team reviews, assesses and realigns the WKC Framework every five years to incorporate new research and best practices. The competencies are cross-walked with the current Head Start, Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS), Quality Rated, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards; they are also cross-walked with the Council for Professional Recognition Child Development Associate Competency Standards and Functional Areas.

Georgia WKC Framework – 5 Year Development Cycle



2. **Incorporates knowledge and application of the state’s ELD standards; the comprehensive assessment systems; child development, health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with families.** The WKC Framework

incorporates a knowledge of and use of the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards, assessment systems, child development and health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate practices for working with families. For example:

Georgia Early Care and Education Competency #1	To understand and demonstrate the principles of child growth and development. (Advanced level)
Criterion B	Interprets how cultural, social, health, and economic statuses impact child development and learning.
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate each individual child’s interests, abilities, goals, and special needs to plan appropriate learning experiences. 2. Value the benefits of children participating at their own level of interest and ability. 3. Assess each child’s individual styles of interacting with others and making friends. 4. Identify and discuss the characteristics and special needs of children. 5. Advocate for quality experiences and interactions for children with special needs. 6. Analyze the interconnection of a variety of variables that affect a child’s development (family situations, peers, personality, temperament, time of day, weather, need for sleep, hunger, availability of materials, etc.).

3. **Includes knowledge of early mathematics and literacy development in young children.** The WKC Framework incorporates a knowledge of and use of mathematics, communication skills, emergent literacy skills, and early literacy development. For example:

Georgia Early Care and Education Competency #3	To Advance Physical and Intellectual Competence
Criterion D	Recognizes a variety of opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use emergent literacy skills, as demonstrated by the abilities to:
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe a developmentally appropriate, print-rich environment in which children learn about books, literature, and writing. 2. Identify rhymes, poems, songs, and finger-plays that help

	<p>children develop emergent literacy skills, such as phonological awareness.</p> <p>3. Identify ways to engage children in literacy activities, such as reading and writing.</p>
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4. Incorporates effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement.

The WKC Framework incorporates a knowledge of and use of data to guide instruction to respond to the needs of each individual child and to address ongoing program evaluation and improvement. For example:

Georgia Early Care and Education Competency #6	To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to each individual child’s needs.
Criterion B	Organizes, plans, and keeps records, as demonstrated by the abilities to:
Indicators:	1. Use observation and assessment as basis for planning individualized learning experiences and activities.

5. Includes effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors.

The WKC Framework incorporates a knowledge of and use of effective behavior management strategies and practices that support social and emotional development, provide positive guidance, and reduce challenging behaviors. For example:

Georgia Early Care and Education Competency #4	To support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance.
Criterion C	Appreciates a supportive environment in which children can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as members of groups, as demonstrated by the abilities to:
Indicators:	1. Identify strategies (e.g., routines, transitions, room arrangements, choice activities, etc.) for avoiding problems. 2. Identify appropriate positive guidance techniques that reflect knowledge of each child’s temperament and developmental level. 3. Explain a variety of appropriate, positive guidance/discipline

	<p>methods, such as listening, reinforcing, redirecting, offering choices, and setting and enforcing limits.</p> <p>4. List ways that allow children to experience both logical and natural consequences for their behaviors so that they can learn how to take responsibility for their actions.</p> <p>5. Describe consequences of negative discipline methods, such as spanking, threatening, shouting, or shaming so as not to incorporate these in classroom practices.</p> <p>6. Name the steps of conflict resolution that guide children through the process.</p> <p>7. Identify ways to involve children in the establishment of guidelines for acceptable and appropriate behaviors.</p>
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6. Incorporates feedback from experts at the state’s post-secondary institutions and other learning and development experts and early childhood educators. The WKC Framework incorporates feedback from experts from the state’s colleges and universities, professional organizations, and early childhood educators and administrators. Research and best practices from national experts also inform the WKC Framework through each revision.

7. Includes knowledge of protective factors and effective approaches to partnering with families and building families’ knowledge, skills, and capacity to promote children’s health and development. The WKC Framework incorporates knowledge of and use of effective approaches to strengthen families, establish positive and productive relationships with families, and foster family engagement to build the families’ capacity to support their children’s health and development.

Georgia Early Care and Education Competency #5	To establish positive and productive relationships with families.
Criterion A	Discusses an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child’s family that encourages the family’s involvement in the program and supports the child’s relationship with her/his family, as demonstrated by the abilities to:
Indicators:	1. Acknowledge opportunities to appreciate children’s families as part of the regular program.

	<p>2. Describe friendships and mutual support between families and staff, while respecting professional boundaries.</p> <p>3. Recognize the importance of using information about each family’s beliefs, cultures, and child-rearing practices in interactions and experiences with children.</p>
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The competencies are organized around five roles in early childhood education to best address the knowledge and competencies early childhood educators need for their specific roles. The five roles are: Early Care and Education Professionals working with children birth to five, School Age Care Professionals, Administrators, Technical Assistance Consultants, and Trainers. Each set of competencies represents a continuum for professional growth and development and is broken into specific content areas that clearly delineate the knowledge and skills needed for professionals working in a variety of ELD programs, such as child care learning centers and family day care homes. The competencies also provide a blueprint for individual professional growth. The Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies and the self-assessment tools for the competencies are located in Appendix 30 and Appendix 44 respectively.

Funds from the RTT-ELC will support the revision of Georgia’s WKC Framework, Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies, to show an overt alignment with the revised Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS), address competencies required to work with children with disabilities and English learners, and promote better outcomes for Georgia’s children. Specific revisions will address cultural competency, a comprehensive assessment system, Council for Exceptional Children/Division for Early Childhood competencies (Division for Early Childhood, 2007), and competencies related to teaching dual language learners (e.g., Lopez, Zepeda, and Medina, 2012). The state will also use this opportunity to develop workforce competencies for home visiting staff. This will better align Georgia’s home visiting program (see (C)(4)) to the state’s other early learning and development initiatives and will ensure that home visiting is overtly linked to the GELDS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and sufficiently meet criteria set forth in the Council for Exceptional Children/Division for Early Childhood competencies and in competencies for teaching dual language learners. Furthermore it ensures that home visiting staff

have a similar blueprint for individual growth as their other ELD colleagues.

(D)(1)(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

Georgia has an existing common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees that are aligned with the existing WKC Framework. The progression of credentials is reflected in the career levels lattice (Appendix 31) below which begins at the workforce entry level, a high school diploma/ GED, and advances to the highest level, a doctoral degree in early childhood education.

CAREER LEVELS



Professional preparation is vital to improving the quality of early care and learning environments. Professional development in the *Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System* takes into account training, education and experience. By noting your achievements and number of years experience in working with young children, you can mark your professional accomplishments using the following chart.

<p>Level I Professionals beginning their career in early care and education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ High school diploma or GED; and ◆ 0 to 3 years of Early Childhood Education experience with young children; and ◆ 0 to 30 clock hours of state approved/accepted training 	<p>Level V Professionals beginning their formal education in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development 	<p>Level IX Professionals with a Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) teaching certificate in the Early Care / Early Education field</p>
<p>Level II Professionals who have been in the early care and education field for a few years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ High school diploma or GED; and ◆ 2 or more years of Early Childhood Education experience with young children; and ◆ 31 to 60 clock hours of state approved/accepted training 	<p>Level VI Professionals who have earned formal education credit in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Technical College Diploma (TCD) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development 	<p>Level X Professionals with a graduate degree in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Masters degree (MA/MS/MEd) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development or ◆ Non-ECE Masters, with one of Associate ECE, TCD, ECE/ECE-related coursework (15 sem or 25 qtr hours) or PSC Cert Level 4 with one of FLD702, 708, 808 or 870
<p>Level III More experienced professionals in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ High school diploma or GED; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 3 or more years of Early Childhood Education experience with young children; plus ◆ 61 or more clock hours of state approved/accepted training <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 15 semester or 25 quarter hours in ECE coursework 	<p>Level VII Professionals with a two-year degree in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Associate degree (AA/AS or AAS/AAT) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development or ◆ Montessori Diploma 	<p>Level XI Professionals with a Specialist degree in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Specialist Degree (EdS) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development or ◆ Non-ECE Specialist, with one of Associate ECE, TCD, ECE/ECE-related coursework (15 sem or 25 qtr hours) or PSC Cert Level 5 with one of FLD702, 708, 808 or 870
<p>Level IV Professionals with a credential in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Unrelated Degree (Associate, Bachelor, Masters or Doctorate in non-ECE-related field) or ◆ Current Child Development Associate (CDA); or ◆ PSC-certified ParaProfessional (FLD691) 	<p>Level VIII Professionals with a four-year degree in the early care education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bachelor Degree (BA/BS) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development or ◆ Bachelor in Psychology or Social Work with one of Associate ECE, ECE TCD, ECE/ECE-related coursework(15 sem or 25 qtr hours), Montessori, TCC or CDA or ◆ Non-ECE Bachelor, with one of Associate ECE, ECE TCD, or ECE/ECE-related coursework (15 sem or 25 qtr hours) 	<p>Level XII Professionals with a Doctoral degree in the early care and education field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Doctoral Degree (PhD/EdD) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development or ◆ Non-ECE Doctorate, with one of Associate ECE, TCD, ECE/ECE-related coursework (15 sem or 25 qtr hours) or PSC Cert Level 6 with one of FLD702, 708, 808 or 870

Training, credentials, degrees, and coursework for the Career Levels must be in the field of Early Childhood Education (ECE), Child Development (CD), or related areas of study. ECE-related credits and coursework reflect the body of knowledge valued in the early care and education field. While many professionals may have a degree in a field outside of ECE, the Career Levels recognize specific academic preparation in ECE. If a degree major is not ECE or CD, the transcript will be reviewed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for ECE-related credits or coursework. Degrees are considered ECE-related if the transcripts document a minimum of 15 semester hours or 25 quarter hours of ECE-related coursework.

As of 2/18/2013

Early childhood educators enter the workforce with varying levels of credentials in early childhood education or child development. Georgia's system is designed to meet every early childhood educator at her level to enable her to gain the education, knowledge, and experience to improve teaching effectiveness and improve outcomes.

The common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the WKC Framework from the basic level to the highest level are: community-based training; the national Child Development Associate (CDA) credential; the Georgia Technical College Certificate of Credit; the Georgia Technical College Diploma; the associate degree, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, and doctoral degree.

Community-based Training	CDA	Technical Certificate of Credit	Technical College Diploma	Associate’s Degree	Bachelor’s Degree	Master’s Degree	Doctoral Degree
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Georgia’s Progression of Early Education Credentials and Degrees

All community-based training is required to align to the WKC Framework and to specify which competencies are addressed in the community-based training. Georgia’s Early Care and Education Professional Development System includes a trainer and training approval process for community-based training that evaluates the qualifications of the trainers, approves the trainers (if qualified), and evaluates each of the trainings. Staff at the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education conduct these evaluations. To become state-approved, the training modules must specify the workforce competencies that will be addressed (the competency-based learning objectives), the training methods, time and sequence, content, trainer assessment of learning outcomes, and participant evaluation, among other requirements.

The first credential that many early childhood educators earn is the national Child Development Associate (CDA) awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition. The Georgia Professional Development Advisory Team cross-walked the Council for Professional Recognition’s CDA Competency Standards and the Functional Areas to compare them with Georgia’s Early Care and Education competencies (Appendix 45). The national CDA competencies align perfectly with the Georgia competencies.

The CDA is aligned with Georgia’s higher education system. Specifically, all of Georgia’s technical colleges currently transform the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential into nine semester hours of early childhood care and education coursework for

students entering the technical college diploma program. The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) institutions are accessible statewide; there is a technical college located within a 50-mile radius of each Georgian, and programs are also offered online.

The institutions within the TCSG have developed a progression of credentials and degrees that are intentionally aligned with the WKC Framework. The Technical Certificate of Credit is the second credential within the progression after the CDA. The Technical Certificate program equips the early childhood educator with an understanding of child growth and development, developmentally appropriate practices, creating and maintaining a safe and healthy environment, nutrition, and an introduction to assessment and curricula (nine to 29 semester hours). The third in the progression of credentials is the Technical College Diploma. The diploma program (52 semester hours) builds on the certificate courses and adds additional early childhood education courses and general education courses in language, math, science, and social and behavioral sciences. The diploma program includes a practicum that provides opportunities for the early childhood educator to develop skills, increase teaching effectiveness, and reflect the competencies in their practices. The fourth in the progression of credentials and degrees is the Associate of Applied Science (72 semester hours), which requires additional core courses in language, math, science, and social and behavioral sciences.

Georgia's progression of degrees continues with the Bachelor of Science in Education, Major in Birth-Five Education, which was developed through a consortium of higher education faculty and staff funded by DECAL and approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission in 2007. The program reflects national and state standards, including the competencies, research and best practices in the field of early childhood development and education, and teacher education. Candidates receive content and pedagogy in developmentally and individually appropriate practices for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergarten age children. The program provides a multidisciplinary approach to working with young children and families in diverse settings. Field-based experiences are structured to provide candidates with opportunities to work with different ages and children of varying ability levels and educational needs. Successful completion of this program leads to a baccalaureate degree along with eligibility for the Birth through Five (B-5) certification. Candidates completing the Birth through Five preparation program are eligible for certification in both Birth through Kindergarten as well as the Endorsement in Pre-School Special Education (3-5). Currently five institutions in Georgia

offer this specific teacher preparation program leading to state certification, and 354 early childhood educators hold a Birth through Five Certification.

Demonstrating an alignment between Georgia's ELD and K-3 system, training, credentials, and degrees are verified by the same state agency that certifies Georgia's K-12 educators, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). In the same process used by their K-12 counterparts, early childhood educators enter their information into the Professional Development Registry (PDR) and submit their training certificates and transcripts to the PSC. PSC staff validate and verify the credentials of the early childhood educators and assign a career level. Georgia has recognized that early childhood educators are part of the broader teaching workforce and built the early childhood certification review and approval process based on the one used for K-12 teacher certification. More importantly, the state contributes considerable resources to ensure that this certification alignment happens. Since so many of the state's early childhood educators are housed in entities outside of public education, this also provides a crucial private-public link.

Twelve career levels represent a progression of credentials and degrees for the early childhood workforce; the career levels are based on training, education, and experience, and the data is maintained in the Professional Development Registry (PDR). As of September 1, 2013, more than 27,000 early childhood educators are active in the PDR. Enrollment in the PDR is required for ELD programs participating in Quality Rated, Georgia's TQRIS. By 2017, when participation in the TQRIS is required for all licensed and registered programs, 100% of Georgia's ELD workforce will be accounted for in one database.

(D)(1)(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

Georgia is committed to engaging stakeholders in the work of developing, implementing, evaluating, and improving our Early Care and Education Professional Development System. As outlined in (D)(1)(b), Georgia's professional development includes state-approved, community-based professional development and formal education leading to credentials and degrees. Representatives from post-secondary institutions and other professional development providers serve on the Georgia Professional Development Advisory Team. The team includes

representatives from the state's education agencies, technical colleges, colleges and universities, Head Start, private ELD programs, private trainers, child care resource and referral agencies, technical assistance consultants, professional organizations, and early childhood educators and administrators (see(D)(1)(a)). Involving a diverse group of stakeholders has allowed us to leverage the knowledge and experience from the members. It has also built feedback loops that inform system improvements and sustain the commitment to maintaining an alignment to the WKC Framework when creating curricula or professional development modules.

Among the technical colleges, four-year colleges and universities, articulation agreements allow for better alignment of course offerings and thus an alignment to the WKC Framework because the framework is aligned to the standards of the Bachelor of Science in Education, Birth through Five Major. Between 2005 and 2008, DECAL invested heavily in building relationships and articulation agreements between the Technical College System of Georgia institutions and some of the state's four-year institutions. As a result, the Technical College System has system-wide articulation agreements with two private institutions, Mercer University and Concordia University. Eight of the technical colleges have individual agreements with regional four-year institutions.

In the past, maintaining alignment between professional development opportunities offered outside of the scope of postsecondary institutions with the WKC Framework has been a challenge. In 2011, Georgia began requiring all trainers and professional development modules to meet stringent competency-based criteria. Community-based professional development trainers must overtly align coursework with the WKC Framework. As discussed in (D)(1)(b), all community-based training is required to align to the WKC Framework and to specify which competencies are addressed in the community-based training. Georgia's Early Care and Education Professional Development System includes a trainer and training approval process for community-based training. Staff at the University of Georgia (UGA) Center for Continuing Education evaluate each training module seeking state approval. Before approving the training for delivery, the UGA staff ensures that workforce competencies are addressed with the competency-based learning objectives, the training content, the training methods, time and sequence, and trainer assessment of learning outcomes.

Using RTT-ELC grant funds, DECAL, in partnership with the University System of Georgia, Technical College System of Georgia, and in collaboration with the Alliance of

Education Agency Heads (AEAHS) (see (A)(3) for a description), proposes to: 1) survey current post-secondary courses and curricula and make recommendations to the AEAH (Appendix 21) for changes based on the WKC Framework, alignment to the GELDS, and overt attention to cultural competency; and 2) evaluate current articulation agreements and ensure that 100% of the technical schools in Georgia have updated agreements that support seamless transitions between the regional two- and four-year institutions. Georgia's AEAH is the state's P-20 Council. Through collaboration and partnerships, the members of the AEAH work together to create a stronger education system for all of Georgia's students, from ELD programs, K-12 classrooms, higher education institutions, and the workforce. The mission of the AEAH is to strengthen collaboration among public, business, and nonprofit agencies and organizations to achieve Georgia's education priorities.

High-Quality Plan for Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a Progression of Credentials

(a) Key Goals

1. Revise to better align Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework (Appendix 30) with the ELD standards, address competencies required to work with children who have disabilities and English learners, and develop competencies for home visiting staff.
2. To review all post-secondary ELD coursework (syllabi and curricula) to ensure alignment to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards and to ensure that the courses include materials focused on cultural competency and training teachers to serve children with high needs.
3. To ensure that articulation agreements between regional two- and four-year institutions are updated and create a continual monitoring process for all articulation agreements.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Revise Georgia's WKC Framework to better align with the ELD standards and address competencies required to work with children who have disabilities and English learners. Specific revisions will address: the revised GELDS, cultural competency, comprehensive assessment system, Division for Early Childhood/Council for Exceptional Children competencies, and competencies for teaching dual language learners. Additionally,

competencies for home visiting staff will be developed.

2. Increase the number of articulation agreements between all regional two- and four- year institutions to promote teacher continuity.
3. Make recommendations to the AEAH for changes based on the WKC Framework, alignment to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards, and overt attention to cultural competency, and review (survey and content analysis) current post-secondary courses and curricula.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
<p>Activity 1: Revise Georgia’s WKC Framework to align with the ELD standards and address competencies required to work with children who have disabilities and English learners. Specific revisions will address: the revised GELDS, cultural competency, comprehensive assessment system, Division for Early Childhood/Council for Exceptional Children competencies, and dual language learner teacher competencies, and create competencies for home visiting staff. Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
<p>Framework has not been revised since the 2012 launch of Georgia’s TQRIS, the revised GELDS, and DECAL’s position statement on cultural competency.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 2: Increase the number of articulation agreements between all regional two- and four- year institutions to promote teacher continuity. Aligned Goal: 2</p>		
<p>The Governor has required that all regional two- and four- year institutions promote teacher education continuity and access via articulation agreements. A multi-year effort to ensure that the goal is met with fidelity is necessary.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 3: Make recommendations to the AEAH for changes based on the WKC Framework, alignment to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards, and overt attention to cultural competency, and review (survey and content analysis) current post-secondary courses and curricula Aligned Goal: 3</p>		
<p>Create alignment statewide</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1 Revise Georgia’s WKC Framework to show alignment with the ELD standards and address competencies required to work with children who have disabilities and English learners. Specific revisions will address: the revised GELDS, cultural competency, comprehensive assessment system, Division for Early Childhood competencies, and dual language learner teacher competencies. Activity 1: Revise Georgia’s WKC Framework to align with the ELD standards and address competencies required to work with children who have disabilities and English learners. Specific revisions will address: the revised GELDS, cultural competency, comprehensive assessment system, Division for Early Childhood/Council for Exceptional Children competencies, and dual language learner teacher competencies, and create competencies for home visiting staff.								
Work group convened		X	X					
Recommendations submitted			X	X				
Revised WKC Framework published				X	X			
Activity 2 Ensure that articulation agreements between all regional two- and four-year institutions are updated and promote teacher continuity.								
Review of current agreements		X	X					
List of gaps			X	X				
Draft new agreements to achieve 100% participation				X	X	X		
Activity 3 Survey current post-secondary courses and curricula and make recommendations to the AEAH for changes based on the WKC Framework, alignment to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards, and overt attention to cultural competency.								
Survey and status report		X	X					
Recommendations presented to AEAH			X	X				
AEAH accepts recommendations and sets reasonable time limits for changes				X	X			

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

DECAL Professional Development Manager

Articulation Project Manager

(e) Financial Resources

Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies

Selection Criterion: D1

Project 9 focuses on the revision of Georgia’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the review of all post-secondary ELD coursework to ensure alignment to the WKC Framework and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards. In addition, ELC funds will be used to develop or update articulation agreements between regional two- and four-year institutions and create a continual monitoring process for all articulation agreements.

DECAL is the lead agency for this project and will enter into a contract with an institute of

higher education to facilitate the review, alignment and articulation work.

Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies		
Selection Criteria: D1		
Total Project Budget: \$1,410,874		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$112,000
Participating State Agency	Professional Standards Commission	\$971,716
Participating State Agency	Georgia Public Broadcasting	\$27,930
Participating State Agency	Technical College System of Georgia	\$0
Participating State Agency	Board of Regents/University System of Georgia	\$0
Participating State Agency	Alliance of Education Agency Heads	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework/GA Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies (Appendix 30)

Career Levels Chart (Appendix 31)

Self-Assessment Tools for Competency (Appendix 44)

Documentation that the state’s WKC Framework addresses the elements outlined in the definition and promotes children’s learning and development and improves outcomes (Appendix 30)

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

The WKC Framework is applicable to early care and education professionals working in each type of ELD program setting. This includes Early Care and Education Professionals working in child care centers, family day care homes, programs for school-age care, and preschool classrooms operating in local school system or Head Start.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

This High-Quality Plan is focused on strengthening the WKC Framework and embedding it consistently throughout the post-secondary educational system in Georgia. A revision of the WKC will be completed to ensure that competencies related to supporting children with disabilities and dual language learners are included. The framework is foundational for adults working with diverse children including those with disabilities. Also, by creating competencies for home visiting staff – a critical program for children with high needs – ensures that this work aligns to other early learning and development initiatives.

(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that-

(1) Are aligned with the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(2) Tightly link training with professional development approaches, such as coaching and mentoring; and

(3) Are supported by strong evidence (e.g. available evaluations, developmental theory, or data or information) as to why these policies and incentives will be effective in improving outcomes for Children with High Needs;

(b) Implementing effective policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) to promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that-

(1) Are aligned with the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(2) Tightly link training with professional development approaches, such as coaching and mentoring; and

(3) Are supported by strong evidence (e.g., available evaluations, developmental theory, or data or information) as to why these policies and incentives will be effective in improving outcomes for Children with High Needs;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) 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 with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) 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.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs* are considered and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (D)(2):

- Evidence to support why the proposed professional development opportunities, policies, and incentives will be effective in improving outcomes for Children with High Needs (e.g., available evaluations, developmental theory, or data or information about the population of Children with High Needs in the State).

Additionally, the State must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measure under (D)(2)(d)(1) and (D)(2)(d)(2).

Introduction

As articulated throughout Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda, increasing investments made in the Early Learning and Development workforce is one of the major strategies in improving school outcomes for children with high needs and reducing the achievement gap. Increasing investments includes building on the state’s experience with Georgia’s Pre-K program and more recently, Quality Rated. It also includes investments in the system of professional development which extends beyond, but obviously includes, classroom level early childhood educators. It also includes trainers, home visitors, center directors, and the staff of various agencies that work with young children. Only by increasing investments in total ELD workforce can the state “move the needle” in improving the experience of children and impacting school readiness skills.

For the last twenty years, Georgia has recognized that supporting early childhood educators in improving their knowledge, skills and abilities is an explicit driver that directly improves program quality and correlates with the improved outcomes of children, especially children with high needs. Embedded in this support is professional development that extends beyond basic knowledge transfer, includes hands-on experiences, is series-based, locally delivered, coordinated, and is aligned with what actually happens in the classroom. Specifically, it is tied to improving children’s experiences and interactions in the classroom. Research suggests that children’s experiences and interactions are closely tied to development and learning—and teachers are critical to those experiences and interactions (Hamre and Pianta, 2001).

Georgia’s experience is most evident in the work that has been done with Georgia’s Pre-K educators. Over the past twenty years, the state has provided free annual training to all Pre-K lead and assistant teachers and Pre-K directors. The trainings are offered statewide and are in conjunction with an annual technical assistance visit to each of Georgia’s 3,800+ Pre-K classrooms. Most recently, the state used funds from the K-12 Race to the Top grant to test different training delivery models for CLASS-based professional development. This experience has informed the professional development offered by Quality Rated for teachers and directors. Quality Rated takes professional development a step further and embeds reflective practice in two out of the five standards. All of the training offered to Quality Rated programs is also free of charge.

Despite the investments Georgia has made, it is clear that more could be done and this is one area where the state can make improvements. Therefore, as part of the Early Learning Challenge agenda, the state has developed a Professional Development Hierarchy. The Hierarchy (discussed in detail in Section D (2)(a)(2)) is built on a foundation of learning and development standards (GELDS) and encompasses the entire ELD workforce and others who directly work with children and families. Past the foundation, the hierarchy translates into professional development opportunities that directly impact classroom instruction and hence children's experiences- including coaching and mentoring frameworks. This hierarchy builds on Georgia's past but is moving the state forward.

The following section demonstrates Georgia's success in providing access to quality professional development while detailing the state's plan to take it to the next level. Georgia has and will continue to invest in our ELD workforce by expanding access, increasing financial support, and improving effectiveness of the professional development system, thereby improving the knowledge, skills and abilities of early childhood educators across the state in all ELD settings.

(D)(2)(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

Georgia's experience in offering access to effective professional development is most evident in the work that has been done with Georgia's Pre-K educators. The state long ago recognized that degrees and certifications are just one piece of the high quality puzzle and that, even though over 95% of the lead teachers have a four-year degree in early childhood (or a related field), ongoing experiential professional development was vital to the success of the program. All Georgia's Pre-K teachers, assistant teachers, and directors are required to attend professional development beyond licensing requirement each year. And professional development has to be tied directly to children's learning and delivered by trainers who meet the highest standards of early childhood educators' Competencies and Experience (see below). The state has continually revised its training and is in the process of developing new opportunities based on the early learning work being completed under Georgia's K-12 Race to the Top Grant. As discussed above, this initiative took four different delivery models of CLASS based

professional development, randomly assigned teachers, and measured the impact on quality. Based on this research, the state designed the top two levels of the two tiers of the professional development hierarchy discussed throughout this section.

Expanded Access to Georgia's formal education system is ensured through the Georgia Lottery for Education's **Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally (HOPE)** program that provides financial support to students for post-secondary studies and through two ECE programs, the Scholarships Program and the Incentives Program. Georgia's Scholarships Program enables early childhood educators to attend regional technical colleges and universities by first leveraging HOPE and the Pell Grant and then paying 80% of the remaining tuition fees assessed. The Incentives Program offers early educators salary bonuses for completing an additional credential and/or educational level.

Currently, free community-based professional development is delivered in a variety of formats, including instructor led, online, and blended online and instructor-led courses. For early childhood educators working in programs participating in Quality Rated, expanded access to community-based professional development is offered at no cost by local child care resource and referral agencies. Additionally, other state agencies and organizations, such as the Georgia Public Library Service, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Head Start, and Georgia County Extension Services, provide professional development to early childhood educators. Efforts to improve access for professional development include:

- Online Learning Library Initiative (OLLI) – online learning modules and podcasts linked to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards are available statewide via a secure site with access given to the early childhood educators for viewing at times convenient to them.
- Online coursework leading to credentials and degrees through the Technical College System of Georgia and the Board of Regents college and university system.
- Free community-based professional development offered by the local CCR&Rs for early childhood educators and family, friend, and neighbor caregivers. This professional development is offered statewide; for ELD programs participating in the TQRIS, the child care resource and referral staff will deliver professional development on site.
- A professional development calendar available online through the Training Approval

System (www.training.decal.ga.gov). Trainers who offer sessions to English language learners are identified specifically in the professional development calendar and in the professional development system.

(D)(2)(a)(1) Professional Development Alignment with the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework

Georgia has made great strides in improving access for all early childhood educators to professional development that meets the highest standards. Georgia’s early care and education degrees and coursework within the formal education system are aligned with the WKC Framework. Additionally, effective, state-approved, community-based professional development is monitored by Georgia’s early care and education professional development system, which includes a rigorous approval process for each trainer and each professional development module. Professional development based in higher education and professional development that is community based and is reviewed by the Training Approval System (Appendix 32) at the University of Georgia to ensure alignment with the WKC Framework. This includes a trainer review to ensure that trainers have sufficient education in child care, knowledge of adult education, experience supporting adult learners, and experience with children. It also includes evaluating professional development modules to determine if the courses are well-researched, well-prepared, and congruent with the Georgia WKC Framework (Appendix 30). These review and monitoring processes ensure that professional development offered to the early childhood community is aligned with the WKC Framework.

Georgia has four trainer designations: 1) Trainer I – providing content for beginner level ELD professionals; 2) Trainer II – providing content for intermediate ELD professionals; 3) Trainer III – providing content for advanced ELD professionals; and 4) Specialty Trainers – providing content for a specific need, such as asthma response. Georgia’s current cadre of approved trainers totals 546 trainers. Of these, 178 are Trainer I, 190 are Trainer II, 104 are Trainer III, and 74 are Specialty Trainers. In addition to these approved trainers, the cadre includes 12 Approved Entities. These approved entities consist of departments and agencies that provide specific professional development in their area of expertise, such as the Division of Family and Children Services, which provides child abuse and prevention professional development, and the Department of Public Health, which provides professional development on

immunization requirements. Georgia’s universities, colleges, and technical colleges also are Approved Entities and provide coursework for which they can issue a certificate for continuing education to meet specific, required competencies aligned with the WKC Framework.

DECAL AP

As discussed earlier, all community-based professional development courses are submitted for state approval and must demonstrate alignment with the workforce competencies for the intended audiences. The chart below indicates the number of state approved community-based trainings as of September 2013.

State Approved Training Level By Competency Level	Number of State Approved Trainings
Beginning	5203
Intermediate	489
Advanced	118
Classroom face to face	4690
State Approved Training Level By Delivery type	
Online Distance Learning	907
Blended	32

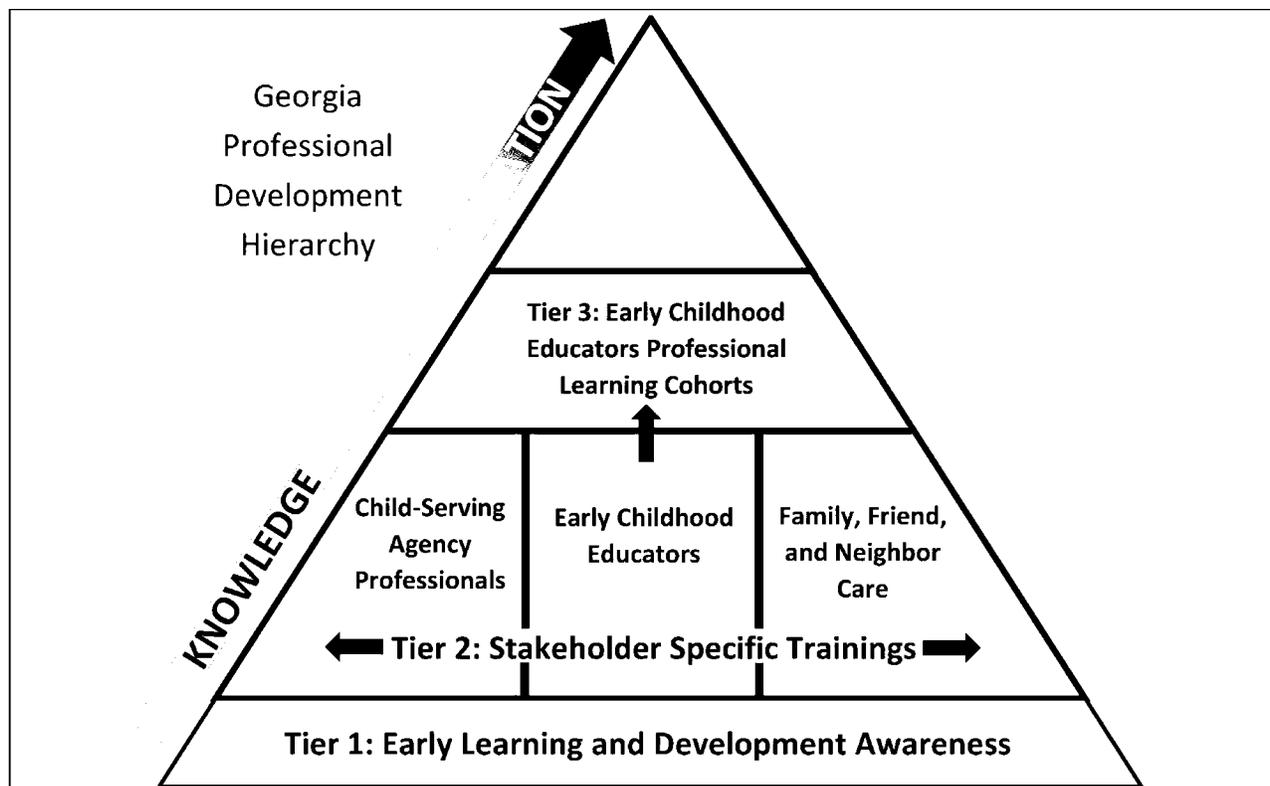
(D)(2)(a)(2) Tightly link training with professional development approaches such as coaching and mentoring

Georgia has developed a four-tiered approach to **Professional Development**, called the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy (GPDH) (introduced in (C)(1)(b)). This hierarchy is based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) definition of professional development:

Early Childhood Education Professional Development is a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of early education professionals. Professional development encompasses **education, training, and technical assistance**.³²

The GPDH is designed to move Georgia's early childhood educators from the knowledge phase to the high-performing application phase. The hierarchy starts with a broad audience of stakeholder groups and awareness-level content in tier one and becomes more targeted to early childhood educators teaching students birth to age five with focused content that supports high-quality teacher child interactions in the top tiers. As individuals move from tier to tier, professionals begin applying their knowledge of early learning and development to their own instructional approach with support from coaches and mentors. All levels of the hierarchy are embedded in the Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework.

³² http://www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf



The four tiers are described below:

- **Tier One:** This tier focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and includes a broad base of stakeholders (e.g., families, advocates, and business leaders) with the goal of increasing awareness and emphasizing a solid understanding of early learning and development, with the GELDS as a key driver (see (C)(1)).
- **Tier Two:** This tier builds on and enhances the knowledge and competencies of early childhood education professionals; and focuses on information dissemination, comprehension of content and application of knowledge or skills. Tier two targets three groups: child-serving agency professionals, early childhood educators, families, and family, friend, and neighbor caregivers. The groups in tier two receive specific, targeted professional development through face-to-face instruction in a group setting, web- or e- based learning, and blended learning.
- **Tier Three:** Tier Three and Four focus on Georgia’s early childhood educators. The early childhood educators group includes educators from center-based child

care, family child care, Georgia's Pre-K Program, special education preschool, early intervention, Great Start Georgia System Implementation, Head Start, and Early Head Start. Tier Three focuses on reflective processes that professionals need to translate theory into practice. This level includes technical assistance and cohort institutes.

- Tier Four: Tier Four will be the more intensive level and will focus on coaching and mentoring. DECAL has invested significant resources developing coaching and mentoring skills in internal field staff- both in the Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GAPITC) and in Georgia's Pre-K Program. Infant Toddler Specialists are all certified as trainers in the Program for Infant Toddler Care. For the past three years, Georgia's Pre-K consultants have been trained and have implemented the My Teaching Partner (MTP) coaching model and the Making the Most of Classroom Interactions cohort model as part of the state's K-12 Race to the Top Grant, which relies on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) (detailed in Section (C)). Evaluation results are available in Appendix 6.

With ELC funding, Georgia will build professional development models in Tier Three and Four. In Tier Three, a cohort institute will be developed. In the institutes, the early childhood educators will receive comprehensive professional development through five-day, community based institutes. The institute is a series of trainings implemented over five months- one day per month. The content will be focused theory to practice in using standards, assessment and curriculum. The cohort institute will be developed in the first year of the grant based on the evidence-based models currently implemented in Georgia. ELC funding will support the development of the institute through contracts with experts in the field. In the second year, the cohort model will be piloted in the E³Zs by a team of DECAL Infant Toddler Specialist and Pre-K Consultants. In the third year, a train- the-trainer model will be developed and trainers from the child care resource and referral agencies will be used to scale up to cohort institutes throughout the state.

With ELC funding, early childhood educators in E³Zs will receive coaching as part of the fourth tier of the GPHD. DECAL coaches will be work with early childhood educators on site. Through observation, feedback, and mentoring, the coaches will guide early childhood educators

toward high-quality application with the goal of improving child outcomes for children with high needs.

(D)(2)(a)(3) Supported by strong evidence as to why these policies and incentives will be effective in improving outcomes for Children with High Needs

The revisions to Georgia’s WKC Framework and the proposed professional development activities serve as drivers for improving instruction and improving outcomes for children with high needs. To meet the state’s goals of ensuring that children are ready to succeed in kindergarten, thus reducing the achievement gap, a workforce of early childhood educators with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively support the holistic development of every child in Georgia is paramount. As outlined in (D)(1), accessible professional development both in formal and community-based settings aligned with a strong, comprehensive WKC Framework and a professional development model that incorporates coaching, mentoring, technical assistance, and a commitment to bridging theory to practices will be effective in improving outcomes for children with high needs (Pianta, et.al, 2008).

Through the proposal of the Professional Development Hierarchy, Georgia is poised to move away from a professional development model built on stand-alone training sessions to a more intensive approach of professional development that includes coaching and mentoring. A recent exploratory evaluation of the child care resource and referral system (Appendix 9) found that a more intensive model with clearly identified drivers is needed. Georgia is experienced in the delivery of evidence-based intensive professional development. As previously discussed, Georgia’s Pre-K teachers receive Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)-based professional development. The Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GAPITC) utilizes professional development based on the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and West-Ed Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) models. Quality Rated utilizes professional development modules created by the Center for the Study of Social Policy and Georgia Association on the Education of Young Children (GAYC) and based on the Strengthening Families Protective Factor Framework. The validation and evaluation studies discussed in (B)(5) ensure that DECAL will continue to gather data from Quality Rated professional development activities and modify, learn, and report progress on our professional development strategies. Section (D)(2)(b) further outlines activities that will support success in

building a highly qualified workforce.

(D)(2)(b) Implementing effective policies and incentives to promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway

DECAL has a long history of successful policies and financial incentives to promote professional development, career enhancement, and retention. Many of the Technical Certificates of Credit and certain diploma courses can be earned online. The HOPE Grant can help early childhood educators pay for the cost of a credential while they continue to work in the industry on a full- or part-time basis. The HOPE program is fully funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education; it pays a percentage of tuition and fees for eligible students. The Scholarships Program for early childhood educators is funded with CCDF to help eligible early childhood educators with tuition and fees which remain after HOPE and the federal PELL grants are applied. This allows the department to leverage CCDF to provide maximum access to early childhood educators.

The Georgia Lottery for Education provides financial support to students for post-secondary studies through the HOPE program. HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally) is Georgia’s scholarship and grant program to help eligible students attend Georgia’s public and private colleges and universities and public technical colleges. **Since the HOPE program began in 1993, \$7 billion in scholarships and grants have been awarded to more than 1,509,000 students in Georgia.**

Disbursements of Georgia's HOPE Scholarships and Grants to Georgia's Educational Institutions (SEPTEMBER 01, 1993 - SEPTEMBER 28, 2013)		
Educational Institution	Recipients	Awards
Public Colleges and Universities	653,404	\$4.6 billion
Private Colleges and Universities	163,626	\$739.8 million
Public Technical Colleges	826,579	\$1.6 billion
Total Scholarships Earned	1,643,609*	\$7.0 billion

* Students who transfer to another institution are duplicated in this count. The individual student count is **1,509,927**.

In state fiscal year 2012, over \$530 million was dispersed in HOPE grants and scholarships for 211,325 students. The HOPE Scholarship is based on a student achieving and

maintaining a prescribed grade point average. The HOPE Grant is available to residents of Georgia who enroll at any Georgia technical college to earn a certificate or diploma, regardless of high school graduation date or GPA upon graduation. Many of the Technical Certificates of Credit can be obtained online, and the HOPE Grant helps early childhood educators pay for the cost of the credential while they continue to work in ELD programs on a part-time or full-time basis. In state fiscal year 2013, 180 early childhood educators working toward these early care and education credentials or diplomas received both the HOPE grant and assistance from the Scholarships Program. During the 2013 session of the Georgia General Assembly, Governor Nathan Deal proposed and the General Assembly approved adding funding to the HOPE Grant for the Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grants (SIWDG). Beginning in the fall of 2013, this grant will provide funding for three career areas identified as high-demand careers for Georgia. One of the career areas is early childhood education. The grant provides \$500 for eligible students enrolled in Early Childhood Education courses of study and taking nine or more credit hours. Students enrolled in ECE programs but taking eight credit hours or less will receive \$250. These amounts are in addition to the amounts normally provided under the HOPE Grant.

**Georgia’s Investments of HOPE Scholarships and HOPE Grants
in ECE Degree-Seeking Students, Fiscal Years 2011-2015**

	2011	2012	2013	2014*	2015*
Students Served	7,413	4,972	4,004	4,492	4,582
Dollars Paid	\$9,288,484	\$4,467,226	\$3,099,816	\$3,477,994	\$3,547,553
SIWDG Students	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,995*	4,155*
SIWDG Dollars	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$3,895,621*	\$3,895,621*

* Estimates provided by the Georgia Student Finance Commission

Since 2002, Georgia’s Scholarships and Incentives Programs have offered educational counseling and financial assistance for early childhood educators pursuing credentials or degrees in early childhood education. Child care licensing data indicate that more than 1,400 early childhood educators are currently enrolled in programs leading to credentials. Yet that same

child care licensing data indicate that currently more than 4,100 early childhood educators have an improvement plan to obtain a credential.

Using funds from the RTT-ELC grant, the Scholarships and Incentives programs will be expanded to increase the number of early care and education professionals moving up a knowledge and career pathway. The FIRST and SECOND programs provide incentives for teachers to navigate through and up the career lattice and obtain their first or a higher credential. The expansion of the Scholarships Program supports an increase in critical field credentials (e.g., infant toddler teachers, teachers working with English language learners, teachers supporting children with disabilities). The Incentives Program provides salary supplements to encourage the retention of teachers who have progressed in their professional career. Each of these is described in more detail below.

FIRST and SECOND Programs: Funds from the RTT-ELC grant will support the reinstatement of the FIRST program (Appendix 46) and expand it to include a SECOND program. Between October 2009 and July 2011, using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, the First-time Incentive for Raising Standards for Teachers (FIRST) provided a \$1,200 award to 2,290 early childhood educators who received their first credential in early childhood education. Current estimates suggest that 38% of the workforce does not hold a credential. We propose to use RTT-ELC funding to **reinstate the FIRST Program and implement the SECOND Program.**

The SECOND Program will award a financial incentive to early childhood educators who complete a second credential or diploma that elevates their career level as verified by the staff at the Professional Standards Commission and as entered in the Professional Development Registry. The SECOND Program will specifically focus on supporting and encouraging early childhood educators who hold the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or technical college certificates to earn the next higher level (diploma) or greater. It will also actively encourage and incentivize early childhood educators holding an associate's degree to pursue a bachelor's degree. By 2017, 800 early childhood educators will earn their first credential in early childhood education and a \$1,200 award, and 660 early childhood educators will earn their second credential or diploma in early childhood education and a \$1,500 award. Georgia's ambitious but achievable goal is to infuse an additional 1,460 more qualified early childhood educators into ELD programs.

Scholarships for Critical Early Education Fields: Funds from the RTT-ELC grant will **expand the Scholarships Program** (Appendix 47) to target critical early childhood education credentials, degrees or endorsements such as special education, dual language learners, and infant and toddler care. The Scholarships Program pays directly to the educational institution up to 80% of tuition costs (after the HOPE grant/scholarship and PELL grant) for eligible Georgia early childhood educators. The early childhood educators may be enrolled part time or full time in a certificate, diploma, or degree program in an approved program of study at an eligible institution of higher education. The Scholarships Program also provides a stipend each term to help with the costs of books. In state fiscal year 2013, 1,639 early childhood educators received \$951,987 through the Scholarships Program. Of these early childhood educators, 123 were enrolled in four-year institutions pursuing bachelor's degrees.

Incentives: The Incentives Program is a retention initiative funded with CCDF quality dollars that rewards professionals with two payments in a 12-month period for attaining a credential or degree and remaining employed in eligible ELD programs. Eligible ELD programs are Quality Rated, nationally accredited, participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), or receive subsidies for at least 25% of the children in care. The Incentive is a salary supplement that promotes early childhood educator retention in high-quality programs (as evidenced by Quality Rated, or national accreditation) and programs that serve children with high needs (as evidenced by CACFP or subsidies). The Incentives Program requires early childhood educators to remain in their ELD program for at least one year before an Incentive is awarded and to continue working in the same program during the 12-month Incentive period to receive their next payment. In state fiscal year 2013, **1,376 early childhood educators received an Incentive award** (Appendix 48). The amount of the Incentive award is based on the type of credential (CDA, TCC, TCD, AA, BA, MA); the higher the credential, the greater the Incentive award. An early childhood educator who earns increasingly higher credentials and remains in the ELD program can receive an Incentive retention payment. Currently, each Incentive payment amount is:

- Level 1 – Child Development Associate = \$250
- Level 2 – Technical Certificate of Credit = \$375
- Level 3 – Technical College Diploma = \$500
- Level 4 – Associate Degree = \$750

- Level 5 – Bachelor’s Degree = \$1,000
- Level 6 – Master’s Degree = \$1,250

Because early childhood educators are often working and attending school part-time, it usually takes more than 12 months to advance from one credential to the next. Progressing from an associate degree to a bachelor’s degree may take three or four years rather than two years. Currently, the 12-month Incentive period does not span the period from one credential to the next. Funds from the RTT-ELC grant will increase the Incentives period from 12 months to 24 months (two payments per year for two consecutive years) to promote the retention of early childhood educators in high-quality ELD programs that serve children with high needs.



Georgia's System of Financial Assistance and Incentives for Professional Development

(D)(2)(b)(1) Aligned with WKC Framework

As outlined in (D)(2)(a)(1), all policies to promote professional development programs in Georgia are aligned with the WKC Framework (Appendix 30). The policies and incentives described above require the utilization of approved professional development or community college/university coursework—all of which is reviewed for verification of its alignment with the WKC Framework.

(D)(2)(b)(2) Linked with Professional Development Approaches

The policies and incentives described in this section are tightly linked to Georgia’s

professional development approaches including training, mentoring, coaching, and technical assistance. As described in more detail in (D)(1) and (D)(2)(a), the incentives are designed to support the early childhood workforce's continued professional development using effective approaches such as mentoring and coaching. The Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy appropriately uses one-time workshops for awareness and basic skill development, then builds additional depth through the more intensive, hands-on technical assistance and coaching that has been demonstrated to be more effective in changing classroom practices.

(D)(2)(b)(3) Evidence Based Professional Development

As evident throughout this application, Georgia is committed to utilizing research to drive quality improvement. As described in Section (D)(2)(a)(3), much of the professional development models utilized in the state are evidence-based (i.e., CLASS, PITC, CSEFEL, Strengthening Families). The incentives and policies are designed to encourage more early childhood educators to take advantage of these research-based professional development models to improve their practices and interactions with children.

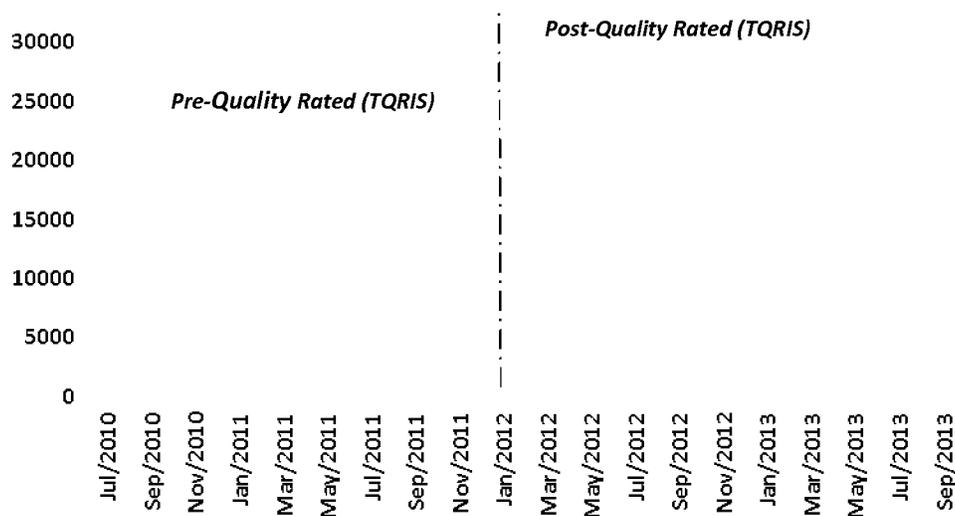
The Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy is built upon the national research for implementing appropriate ECE professional development. The tiers represent the appropriate progression of knowledge to practice. DECAL has invested significant resources into verifying the qualifications of external trainers through the Trainer Approval System and in developing internal, high-quality field staff with experience in mentoring and coaching. With ELC funding, Georgia will contract with national experts to develop modules in Tier Three and Four of the GPDH to further support evidence-based professional development.

(D)(2)(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on early childhood educator development, advancement, and retention

Currently, Georgia publically reports aggregated data on Georgia's Pre-K Program and Quality Rated educator development, advancement, and retention. Funds from the RTT-ELC grant will support Georgia in gathering and reporting data regarding professional development, advancement, and teacher retention more effectively through the Professional Development Registry (PDR) and a new professional development registration system, GA TRAINS. Aggregate level ECE development, advancement, and retention aggregate-level data will be

publicly reported on DECAL’s website.

The PDR (Appendix 29), overseen by the Georgia PSC, verifies early childhood educators’ credentials, assigns career levels to our ELD workforce, and currently tracks all professional development activities for Georgia’s TQRIS. Early childhood educators receive a unique identifier when registering with the PDR. This identifier is aligned with the ELD program and provides a point-in-time snapshot of the career levels and credentials of the early childhood educators working in Georgia’s Pre-K Program or ELD programs participating in our TQRIS, and receiving Scholarships or Incentives. **By 2017, all early childhood educators working in ELD programs that receive state or federal funds or are licensed or registered will be represented in the PDR.**



Enrollment in Georgia Professional Development Registry (07/2010 – 09/2013)

Using RTT-ELC funding, a new data system, the Georgia Professional Development Registration and Information System (GA TRAINS) as described fully in (E)(2), will soon be merged with the PDR to capture: all professional development offered; the credentials of the trainers; registration information for specific professional development opportunities by site with a list of early childhood educators who have registered; rosters for all professional development successfully completed; and a detailed account of workforce professional development gaps. GA TRAINS will allow the state to better monitor and report trends in the providers of professional development and allow the state to develop strategies to fill in gaps.

(D)(2)(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets

Georgia has two specific workforce development goals:

1. Increase the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs aligned with the WKC Framework and the number of early childhood educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers aligned with the WKC Framework; and

2. Increase the number and percentage of early childhood educators progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the WKC Framework.

Georgia’s **High-Quality Plan** for the enhancement of the WKC Framework and Progression of Credentials and for supporting early childhood educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities is outlined below:

High-Quality Plan for Supporting Early Childhood Educators

(a) Key Goals

1. Increase the number of teachers with credentials, advanced degrees
2. Increase the numbers of teachers into credential programs
3. Retain teachers in ELD environments
4. Improve the capacity of highly trained teachers to serve areas with large populations of children with high needs
5. Evaluate Georgia’s efforts to meet its workforce goals by regularly reporting and reviewing data that details movement in the field by credential

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
<p>Activity 1: FIRST Program – provide financial incentives and supports for providers to obtain a “first” credential. Aligned Goal: 1,2,4</p>		
<p>Building on the success of this program between 2009 and 2011, the state will use the FIRST Program to increase the credentials of the state’s early childhood workforce.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 2: SECOND Program – provide financial incentives and supports for providers to obtain a second credential.</p>		

Aligned Goal: 1,2,4		
While a CDA or TCC is an improvement for the state's ELD workforce, an additional number of teachers with multiple credentials or degrees will improve quality.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 3: Scholarships Program – Expand current Scholarships initiative.		
Aligned Goal: 1,2,4		
Increase # of early childhood educators accessing professional development that leads to credentials, diplomas or degrees in early childhood education. Increase # of early childhood educators enrolled in formal education.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 4: Incentives Program		
Aligned Goal: 3		
Provide Incentives for two years at each education level to early childhood educators who earn credentials, diplomas, and degrees and remain in their ELD programs. This will help retain the workforce and ensure continuity of care.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 5: Professional Development Hierarchy pilot in E³Zs		
Aligned Goal: 4		
Tightly link professional development approaches such as mentoring and coaching to improve teacher effectiveness in areas serving children with high needs.	E ³ Zs	Pilot in the four E ³ Zs. Based on pilot and modifications, implement model statewide after 2017
Activity 6: Publicly reporting data		
Aligned Goal: 5 (Section (E)(2))		
Report trends in early childhood educator professional development, advancement in career level/degree level, and retention. Modify incentives/activities to better support early childhood educators.	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1 FIRST Program								
Re-establish application process.	X							
Issue FIRST awards.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 2 SECOND Program								
Develop and implement application process.	X							
Issue SECOND awards.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 3 Scholarships Program								

Revise application process.	X							
Provide Scholarships.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 4 Incentives Program								
Revise application process.	X							
Provide Incentives.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 5 Professional Development Pilot								
Pilot the professional development hierarchy in the four E ³ Zs, with an emphasis on coaching and mentoring.			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 6 Publicly reporting data								
Report trends in early childhood educator professional development to drive future initiatives.			X	X	X	X	X	

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

Professional Development Manager – DECAL
 Professional Standards Commission/Professional Development Registry Staff
 University of Georgia/Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System
 Georgia’s Pre-K Program Staff, GAPITC Staff

(e) Financial Resources

Project 10: Supporting Early Childhood Educators

Selection Criterion: D2

The Department of Early Care and Learning is the lead agency for this project. Project 10 expands DECAL’s existing Scholarships and Incentives programs to increase the number of early care and education professionals moving up a knowledge and career pathway. The FIRST and SECOND programs provide incentives for teachers to navigate through and up the career lattice and obtain their first or a higher credential. The expansion of the Scholarships Program supports an increase in critical field credentials. In addition, this project also includes the development and implementation of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy (GPDH) to provide more in-depth professional development opportunities (cohort and coaching models) to help educators use standards, improve teacher child-interactions, and align instruction with formative assessments.

Project 10: Supporting Early Educators

Selection Criteria: D2		
Total Project Budget: \$5,826,436		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$3,880,238
Participating State Agency	Technical College System of Georgia	\$0
Participating State Agency	Board of Regents/University System of Georgia	\$0
Participating State Agency	Professional Standards Commission	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

FY 2012 Scholarships Annual Program Summary (Appendix 47)

FIRST Final Program Outcomes Report: 11/1/2009-7/1/2011(Appendix 46)

FY 2012 Incentives Annual Program Summary (Appendix 48)

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

The activities above will help meet the targets in the Performance Tables (D)(2)(d)(1) and (D)(2)(d)(2).

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

This High-Quality Plan is focused on strengthening the ELD workforce across each ELD program setting. Each activity will include public and private providers in child care learning centers, family day care homes, group day care homes, Head Start and Early Head Start and Special Education Preschools.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

This High-Quality Plan is focused on strengthening the ELD workforce. The activities provide a foundation for supporting access to education for adults working with diverse young children including those with disabilities and other needs. Support for increased early childhood educators with credentials in critical fields such as dual language learners and special education will ensure the availability of a skilled workforce to support the success of children with high needs.

Professional development activities, including coaching, mentoring, and technical

assistance, described above as a part of Georgia’s Professional Development Hierarchy, are based on models such as the center for the Social and Emotional Foundations of Learning model that are evidence-based and proven as successful interventions for children with high needs. Early childhood educators participating in these activities will have enhanced knowledge and skills to use in working with children with high needs and their families. The programs targeted for services in the E³Zs will include Head Start and Early Head Start programs that not only benefit from the intensive professional development model but that can also mentor programs with less experience in supporting families with high needs.

Performance Measures for (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 (Today)	Target-end of calendar year 2014	Target-end of calendar year 2015	Target-end of calendar year 2016	Target–end of calendar year 2017
Total number of “aligned” institutions and providers	31	31	31	31	31
Total number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an “aligned” institution or provider	4,333	4,500	4,950	5,445	5,990

The number of Early Childhood Educators who are credentialed by an “aligned” institution or provider for each year is the unique number of Early Childhood Educators who receive a credential or degree during that year (not a cumulative total); 10% growth is projected each year. Numbers will be reported in the format of Table (A)(1)-11.

Baseline data on public institutions extracted from the University System of Georgia “By the Numbers” data system; Technical college data provided by the Technical College System of Georgia Curriculum Office; Child Development Associate numbers provided by the Council for Professional Recognition; and Mercer University data provided by the Tift College of Education. This does not include several private institutions that did not make data available.

Performance Measures for (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..										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	Baseline and Annual Targets -- 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									
	Baseline (Sept., 2013)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target-end of calendar year 2015		Target- end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Credential Type 1: Child Development Associate (CDA) (Lowest Credential)	5,894	15%	6,814	17%	6,950	17%	7,923	19%	8,507	20%
Credential Type 2: Technical College Early Childhood Care and Education Certificate of Credit	3,929	10%	4,008	10%	4,497	11%	5,004	12%	5,529	13%
Credential Type 3: Technical College Early Childhood Care and Education Diploma	2,358	6%	2,405	6%	2,862	7%	2,919	7%	3,403	8%
Credential Type 4: Early Care and Education Associate Degree (AA, AAS)	4,715	12%	4,810	12%	5,315	13%	5,421	13%	5,955	14%
Credential Type 5: <i>Bachelor's Degrees</i> , including Bachelor of Science in Education, Major in Birth-Five	5,108	13%	5,210	13%	5,315	13%	5,838	14%	5,955	14%
Credential Type 6: <i>Master's, Specialist, and Doctoral Degrees</i> (M.S., M.Ed., M.A.T., Ph.D.) (Highest Credentials)	2,358	6%	2,405	6%	2,453	6%	2,502	6%	2,552	6%
Non-credentialed	14,932	38%	14,429	36%	13,491	33%	12,093	29%	10,633	25%

Performance Measures for (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..

Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	Baseline and Annual Targets -- 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									
	Baseline (Sept., 2013)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target-end of calendar year 2015		Target- end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total	39,294		40,080		40,881		41,699		42,533	

Georgia’s total current workforce is estimated using child care licensing, Pre-K, Head Start, and special needs program data (including directors, lead teachers, assistant teachers, family child care providers and assistants, group child care providers and assistants, inclusion teachers, early intervention specialists, early childhood special educators, family service workers, and home visitors). Current credential data are estimated using Professional Development Registry (PDR) data, workforce findings from the studies of child care quality in Georgia conducted by the FPG Child Development Institute (Maxwell, et al., 2009a; 2009c; 2010a; Appendices 3, 4, and 5), and workforce findings from the study of the economic impact of the Georgia child care industry (Child Policy Partnership, 2008). The total current workforce is estimated at 39,294, and 62% of the workforce are estimated to hold one of the above credentials. A 2% growth in total workforce has been estimated per year, for a 2017 workforce of 42,553, of whom 75% will hold one of the above credentials. (The workforce will grow, for example, when the family child care definition is revised to include those caring for two or more unrelated children for pay.) Full workforce credential data will become available by 2017 when all ELD programs are participating in the TQRIS, which requires educators to register in the PDR.

The FPG studies of quality captured education levels of directors, lead teachers, and assistant teachers in representative samples of child care centers and Georgia’s Pre-K programs, broken out by infant toddler, preschool, and Pre-K classrooms. They also captured education levels of family child care providers and their assistants. However, the education levels do not capture CDAs or technical college certificates or diplomas, instead measuring “some college.” The estimated baseline above distributes these educators with some college among those with no credential and those in credential types 1 to 3.

The PDR, a Georgia Professional Standards Commission credentialing system, reports the following degrees/credentials for ELD program directors, lead teachers, and assistant teachers as of 9/16/2013: 1,910 CDAs, 730 technical college certificates, 634 technical college diplomas, 1,131 associate’s degrees, 4,873 bachelor’s degrees, 2,146 master’s degrees or higher, and 5,014

Performance Measures for (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..										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	Baseline and Annual Targets -- 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									
	Baseline (Sept., 2013)		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target-end of calendar year 2015		Target- end of calendar year 2016		Target-end of calendar year 2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<p>non-credentialed. The PDR captures active registrants of staff in programs participating in TQRIS, educators in Pre-K classrooms, educators in the tuition assistance program, the salary bonus/educational award program, and all other early childhood educators in the state who voluntarily elect to track their professional development through this system. However, because registration at this time is required for some programs where higher credentials are expected (e.g., Pre-K, Quality Rated) but voluntary for others (e.g., licensed programs), PDR numbers are not representative of the total ELD workforce.</p> <p>An earlier study of the economic impact of the child care industry in Georgia, commissioned by DECAL and begun in 2007, found a total of 61,203 employees in the child care industry, including support staff as well as educators (Child Policy Partnership, 2008). However, research for this study was conducted prior to the national recession.</p>										

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Note: The total available points for (E)(1) and (E)(2) = 40. The 40 available points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E), each criterion will be worth up to 20 points.

The applicant must address one or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E).

(E)(1) Understanding the status of children’s learning and development at kindergarten entry.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--

(a) Is aligned with the State’s Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) 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;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of the school year ending during 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;

(d) 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

(e) 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 ESEA).

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the *unique needs of the State’s special populations of Children with High Needs* are considered and

addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (E)(1):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Introduction

Currently, Georgia utilizes a formative assessment – the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) in all public Kindergarten classrooms across the state. GKIDS is a year-long performance-based assessment that is aligned to the state’s learning standards. GKIDS has been built to be developmentally and culturally appropriate and allows flexibility to meet the individual needs of students. As part of the state’s ELC agenda, Georgia will augment its current Kindergarten Assessment (GKIDS) (Appendix 49) by creating a Kindergarten Entry Profile which will provide formative assessment information during the first six weeks of Kindergarten.

The augmentation process will be grounded in the National Research Council’s report on early childhood assessment and will ensure that data from the Kindergarten Entry Profile is valid, reliable, and appropriate for all populations. Georgia already uses formative assessment to guide instruction in both Pre-K and Kindergarten, though the assessment approaches currently used do not provide reportable data within the first six weeks of Kindergarten. The information gleaned from this profile will be used to inform and individualize Kindergarten instruction, report aggregate data on school readiness measures for populations of Kindergarten students, and provide families with valid and reliable information regarding their child’s growth and development. Additionally, the data will be incorporated into the state’s longitudinal data system.

Kindergarten entry is an important time to assess children’s skills because it’s in essence the “gateway” between the early childhood system and the K-12 educational system. The information gathered through Georgia’s Kindergarten Entry Profile will provide valuable information for kindergarten teachers to individualize instruction, provide the K-12 educational system with an understanding of the skills of children entering public schools (which will affect instructional and professional development supports), and provide the early childhood system an understanding of the skills of children leaving the system—which should provide system-level information about supports and resources needed to ensure that every kindergarten student starts school with the skills needed to be successful. The Kindergarten Entry Profile will expand the state’s ELD measurement capacity and provide a crucial linkage between the state’s ELD and K-3 system.

The remainder of the introduction will detail Georgia’s High-Quality Plan to expand and augment the current Kindergarten Assessment. First, the narrative will describe the state’s current assessment system – both for children in Georgia’s Pre-K (approximately 60% of four year olds) and for Kindergarten. Second, the narrative outlines the steps that will be taken to develop this profile – specifically the steps needed to augment the current Kindergarten Assessment. This includes expanding the current Kindergarten assessment so that it is appropriate for administration during the first six weeks of Kindergarten. The plan will outline a new approach that meets the criteria outlined in the RTT-ELC application and supports Georgia’s efforts to close the achievement gap between children with high needs (children of different races, linguistic, cultural, and geographic backgrounds, abilities and needs) – and their peers – both before and after they enter kindergarten.

Georgia’s education leaders and policy makers recognize the importance of implementing an appropriate assessment that can inform teachers, families, and other administrators of children’s status as they enter the K-12 system. The proposed Georgia Kindergarten Entry Profile will be appropriate in its development, implementation, and dissemination. It is a crucial project in Georgia’s ELC agenda because the information provided will further the strengthening of Georgia’s educational foundation – its strong ELD system.

Background

Georgia has a long record of working to ensure young children begin school on a sound foundation. The Georgia General Assembly recognized the importance of this in 1985, charging the State Board of Education with establishing first-grade readiness criterion. The purpose of this requirement was to determine a student’s “readiness” for first grade so that appropriate instructional supports could be provided when warranted. Ultimately, the Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program (GKAP) was established and administered periodically, at key intervals, throughout the kindergarten school year. The program consisted of (1) a series of individually administered structured student assessment activities (SAA) based upon teacher-supplied stimuli and (2) a behavioral checklist representing a series of teacher judgments regarding student behaviors that were observed during regular classroom activities. These structured assessment activities were developed so that they could be administered to students as part of an ongoing educational experience. Each SAA was presented in an instructional context and was designed to

be as naturalistic as possible. The information gathered was used to identify children who might need additional support services in kindergarten and/or first grade.

This history of using formative assessment to identify children's growth and development currently extends to Georgia's Pre-K program. The statewide program currently utilizes the formative assessment - Work Sampling System (WSS). WSS measures children's progress across 69 indicators in seven domains of learning. Teachers assess children throughout the year and provide ratings (not yet, in process, or proficient) on each indicator twice a year. Information is shared with parents and the final assessment ratings are transferred to the state's longitudinal system that kindergarten teachers can access.

WSS is not sufficient to use as a Kindergarten Entry Assessment for all children because the assessment is conducted throughout the Pre-K year and is only completed for students attending Georgia's Pre-K (approximately 60% of the state's four-year-olds). However, WSS aligns with the state's early learning and development standards (GELDS), informs Pre-K instruction throughout the year, and provides kindergarten teachers with assessment data on the incoming kindergartners who attended a Georgia's Pre-K program. This effective use of WSS data demonstrates Georgia's capacity in appropriately implementing a statewide, formative assessment for students in an ELD program.

The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) is utilized in all public Kindergarten classrooms across the state. GKIDS is a year-long formative, performance-based assessment that is aligned to the state's learning standards. GKIDS has been built to be developmentally and culturally appropriate and allows flexibility to meet the individual needs of students. The purpose of the GKIDS is to provide teachers with ongoing formative information about kindergarten students' developing skills and to provide a summary of individual student performance at the end of the kindergarten school year. GKIDS was developed through a statewide consortium of educators and assessment experts. As the state transitioned to new performance standards in 2006, it was designed to align with the Georgia's Pre-K assessment-Work Sampling System. To provide idea of what GKIDS currently looks like, sample aligned activities can be found in Appendix 50.

GKIDS provides teachers with ongoing information, in real time, about kindergarten students' developing skills in seven areas or domains of learning that cover the five Essential

Elements of School Readiness defined in the ELC application³³: 1) English Language Arts (language and literacy), 2) Mathematics (cognition and general knowledge), 3) Social Studies (cognition and general knowledge), 4) Science (cognition and general knowledge), 5) Approaches to Learning (approaches to learning), 6) Personal and Social Development (social and emotional development), and 7) Motor Skills (physical well-being and motor development).

GKIDS has been built as a flexible tool, used by teachers throughout the school year to gauge how students are progressing. GKIDS allows teachers to assess student performance during instruction, record student performance in an online database, and generate reports for instructional planning, progress reports, report cards, student support teams, and family conferences. These reports detail the degree to which students have achieved the expectations set forth in the content standards (e.g., not yet demonstrated, emerging, progressing, met, exceeded). Many districts around the state use GKIDS as a standards-based progress report, issued at various points of the school year, to inform families of the progress made by their student(s).

Data collected through the GKIDS protocol is used to inform instructional practices during the kindergarten year and to help plan for the successful transition into first grade. A web-based data collection system was developed for GKIDS to capture teacher recorded information at multiple points throughout the school year. Although there is a state-required, single end of year reporting deadline, districts, schools, and teachers are able to generate reports at any time throughout the school year.

The web-based data collection system also provides for individual student reports to be printed on demand. As previously mentioned, many districts use these reports to provide families with progress reports about their student's accomplishments and areas of need. At the end of the school year families are provided with a final report outlining the progress the student has made over the course of the school year.

Georgia has invested significant resources towards professional development on GKIDS including administering the instrument and how to use GKIDS to inform and improve instruction.

³³ The corresponding essential school readiness domain is shown in parenthesis.

Overview of Georgia’s Proposed Kindergarten Entry Assessment

As an expansion and augmentation to the current GKIDS, already aligned to Georgia’s Pre-K assessment, Georgia proposes the development of a formal statewide Kindergarten Entry Profile. This profile will be added to the existing GKIDS administration and will provide data about the skills of children at Kindergarten entry. Results will be provided following an initial period of assessment at the opening of the academic year, within the first six weeks. It will be based upon both direct (structured tasks) and indirect (observational) measures of concepts and skills that are deemed essential at the beginning of a student’s kindergarten experience. The existing GKIDS processes, timelines, and reporting structures will be expanded to augment the assessment for this new purpose while maintaining what is necessary to allow the assessment to continue its role as an informant of first-grade readiness³⁴.

Although the data will be used primarily by kindergarten teachers to guide instruction, the information will also be shared with parents during family-teacher conferences to help families better understand the skills of their children and areas of growth at kindergarten entry. It will assist the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), districts, and schools in strategically planning policy and professional learning opportunities for kindergarten teachers. It will also help the K-12 educational system to determine the additional resources and supports needed to ensure that each child succeeding. Similarly, the information will be used by DECAL to inform policies and professional learning needs for the state’s early learning and development programs.

The paramount goal of this work is to improve the quality of education provided to Georgia’s youngest students by identifying where more support, professional development, and/or funding is needed. In addition, data from the profile will link to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) to enable state, district, and school administrators and policymakers to address key policy questions. It is important to note that this data will only be used for aggregate reporting and not for any program level accountability or as the single source of data for high-stakes decisions, such as promotion and retention.

By providing data that informs both the ELD and K-3 system, Georgia’s Kindergarten Entry Profile will serve as a bridge between two of Georgia’s education agencies: DECAL and

³⁴ GKIDS may not, per state policy, be used as a single source for promotion/retention decisions.

GaDOE. Leaders from both are committed to a partnership in which both agencies will play a crucial role in the augmenting of GKIDS in order to provide for a robust measure of each child's knowledge and skills at kindergarten entry. The proposed entry profile will inform state policy on how to best meet the needs of Georgia's children with high needs and thereby reduce the achievement gap. The measure will be built using research-based best practices for young children. Georgia will work diligently to ensure the measure is developmentally appropriate, addresses the Essential Domains of School Readiness, and is valid and reliable (for all students, including children with disabilities and English language learners). The results of the assessment will provide clear, accurate, and actionable information about the skills of children when they enter kindergarten. The primary purpose of the measure will be to inform instruction so that all students, regardless of where they begin, are afforded the opportunity to excel. Ultimately, Georgia seeks to close the gap between those students who arrive ready to succeed and those who may need additional supports and/or interventions.

(E)(1)(a) KEA Aligned with ELDS and Covering All Essential Domains of School Readiness

As outlined in Section (C)(1), Georgia has invested significant resources in aligning early and development standards from birth through third grade. The first step in developing the GKIDS Kindergarten Entry Profile will be to review the alignment between current GKIDS and the GELDS. GKIDS has already been aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for Kindergarten. The GKIDS alignment review will highlight potential gaps and will inform the specific development of GKIDS Kindergarten Entry Profile and also inform the Birth to Eight Workgroups charged with creating opportunities for better alignment between Georgia's ELD and K-3 system (see Competitive Priority Four).

Key to this review will be a thorough analysis of the GELDS and GPS for the purpose of identifying the essential concepts and skills to be sampled for measurement. The vertical articulation between these two sets of standards must be carefully analyzed with the entry profile measure in mind to establish which concepts and skills are likely to signal success in future learning opportunities for young students.

To facilitate this process, an independent contractor, with demonstrated experience in developing early childhood measures, will be hired through Georgia's competitive bid process.

The contractor will convene a Kindergarten Entry Profile work group of representatives including: Georgia educators who serve in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade settings, national early childhood experts, and key staff from DECAL, GaDOE, and institutions of higher learning, along with staff from other stakeholder groups such as the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. The input of these experts will be important in ensuring that the essential concepts and skills identified, and the tools created, are developmentally appropriate and accessible for these young learners as they enter kindergarten. The identified contractor will be charged with conducting an extensive literature review in the early stages of the project in order to equip all engaged in this work with the necessary knowledge to enter into productive discussions regarding the design of this new function and role for GKIDS. The contractor's work will be supervised by an Assessment Specialist hired to oversee this work. GaDOE's Associate Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability, as well as DECAL's Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K, will be very involved throughout the development process.

It is important to note that the process of developing a GKIDS Kindergarten Entry Profile will support school readiness by:

- Informing K-12 instruction;
- Aligning GELDS and kindergarten standards, programs, and practices of early learning professional and kindergarten teachers;
- Involving families as partners in their children's education.; and
- Providing data to support state and local policy.

GKIDS already focuses on domains that are well-aligned to the National Research Council's (NRC) Essential Domains of School Readiness. Enhancing GKIDS to create a GKIDS Kindergarten Entry Profile is an opportune time to incorporate an early assessment window to evaluate the skills of children upon entry into kindergarten. This entry assessment will be designed to assess, in a developmentally-appropriate manner, the domains of language and literacy development, cognition, general knowledge of early mathematics and science; approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development; and social and emotional development. These concepts are already integral to the GKIDS program. This profile will form a bridge between DECAL's early childhood learning goals and GaDOE's kindergarten GPS.

(E)(1)(b) KEA Valid, Reliable, and Appropriate

The Kindergarten Entry Profile will serve two purposes: 1) to inform instruction in the early grades, and 2) to close the school readiness gap at kindergarten entry. It will not be used to prevent a student's entry into kindergarten or as a single measure used for high-stakes decisions. The following will detail the development process, how reliably will be handled, how validity will be approached, and finally how the assessment is appropriate for different types of children.

Development

The development process must begin with the identification of essential concepts and skills that students must possess to excel in their kindergarten experience. The National Research Council (NRC) provides guidelines in the area of early childhood assessment that will be important to consider and apply to this work. Key considerations and steps include, but are not limited to: 1) ensuring the alignment and fidelity between the standards and the instrument; 2) allowing for multiple approaches to document a student's learning; 3) providing meaningful reporting tools to all potential users; and 4) professional development and training for staff, both in terms of administering the instrument as well as in the uses of the data emanating from the measure. Paramount to all developmental work in early childhood is the inclusion of all students, including those with special needs.

Assuring technical quality is vital. Throughout the development process, GaDOE will consult frequently with its established Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)³⁵. Georgia's TAC consists of nationally-recognized experts in the fields of standards and educational measurement. The purpose of the TAC is to provide the state with impartial, expert advice on the technical qualities of the state's assessments. The TAC meets quarterly and reviews every step of the test development, scoring, and reporting process for each criterion-referenced test the state mandates. Important considerations in this area would include ensuring the fidelity of administering and scoring through quality training; the calibration to the rubric scoring; and reliability of the ratings that result, ensuring that there is sufficient evidence of reliability and

³⁵ Georgia TAC members include Susan Embretson, Georgia Institute of Technology; George Engelhard (University of Georgia); Claudia Flowers, University of North Carolina, Charlotte; Ric Luecht, University of North Carolina, Greensboro; Bill Mehrens, Michigan State University (Emeritus); and Mark Reckase, Michigan State University.

validity for the uses of the assessment – including evidence for the most vulnerable students, those who are economically disadvantaged, English learners, and/or have disabilities; the design of the item try-out and field testing process. The TAC will be crucial in reviewing all aspects of reliability and validity along with ensuring that it serves for all populations of children. For this project, the TAC will be augmented with an early childhood assessment expert.

The development process will include the design of tools and structured performance tasks, with the input of a subcommittee from the larger KEA work group. This development committee will be composed of members from the KEA work group plus additional teachers of Pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade students. The independent contractor will be charged with facilitating this group and keeping record of all recommendations and decisions reached. Once the protocols (observational checklists/instruments) and structured performance tasks are developed, a pilot test will be conducted in a representative sample of kindergarten classrooms statewide. This process, which will allow for the collection of information regarding both student interaction with the observational tools and structured performance tasks, and will guide any necessary revisions prior to field testing. Once these revisions are incorporated and the development of field test materials, resources, and pre-administration training is complete, a formal field test will be conducted in a sampling of kindergarten classrooms. Additionally, a small sample of Pre-K and Head Start classrooms will be selected in order to identify any potential gaps that may not be picked up in the kindergarten classrooms.

The establishment of protocols and performance activities and tasks that comprise this new Kindergarten Entry Profile will necessitate that all Georgia kindergarten teachers receive training to prepare them to properly assess students and maintain fidelity of the administration and rating/scoring. All Kindergarten teachers will receive professional development related to the Kindergarten Entry Profile-specifically the changes that have been made to GKIDS. The training content will include a robust set of online modules showing and detailing kindergarten teachers using the newly developed tools to assess students. Modules will also be built to allow teachers to practice applying the scoring rubrics to ensure consistent (reliable) scoring throughout the state. Working with DECAL and utilizing the web-based training platform developed for the GELDS, Georgia will take advantage of technology to build robust, engaging, and interactive professional development modules. Importantly, GaDOE will house these

modules within its state learning management system to ensure sustainability after the grant. The state learning management system already houses online professional learning courses for Georgia educators and is linked to the statewide longitudinal data system, allowing for a single log-in for educators and access within one location. Additionally, the selected contractor will redesign administration manuals and supporting documents for GKIDS to include information necessary to complete the kindergarten entry assessment. The ongoing Kindergarten Entry Profile training will continue through existing GKIDS annual professional development.

Full statewide implementation will occur in fall 2017, scaling-up from a smaller launch in a representative sample of Kindergarten classrooms in fall 2016. The following is a high-level overview of the major development tasks to achieve full implementation:

Summer 2014:	Development Vendor Selected
Summer/Fall 2014:	Development Committee Meetings / Essential Concepts and Skills Identified/ Protocol Development Commences (continues into Winter 2014/2015)
Spring 2015:	Initial Pilot in Pre-K Classrooms (exiting Pre-K to serve as proxy for entering Kindergarten)
Summer 2015:	Refine and Prepare for Fall Field Test based on Initial Pilot
Fall 2015:	Pilot in Kindergarten Classrooms
Winter 2015- 2016:	Analyze Pilot Results / Revise Protocols and Tasks/ Begin Development of Training and Scoring Modules (continues into Summer 2016)
Spring 2016:	Field Test in Pre-K Classrooms (exiting Pre-K to serve as proxy for entering Kindergarten)
Summer 2016:	Analyze Field Test Results Prepare for Launch
Fall 2016:	Launch in Representative Sample of Kindergarten Classrooms
Fall/Winter 2016:	Compile Technical Documentation (including reliability and validity evidence)
Winter/Summer 2016:	Scale Administration and Usage Training Statewide
Fall 2017:	Statewide Implementation

Reliability

Technical quality, including establishing reliability and validity, will be emphasized and documented to throughout the development process and documented well. Reliability must be attended to during development and throughout implementation both from the protocol task perspective as well as from a scoring perspective. GaDOE must ensure the protocols and tasks developed reliability elicit good information about student skill and understanding as well as ensure those administering the instrument are doing so with fidelity and applying scoring rubrics consistently (establishing inter-rater reliability). GaDOE will work with the TAC to establish appropriate reliability analyses during the development. This will include, but will not be limited to, in-depth analysis of data when teachers are using the KEA with similar populations of children. Teachers who differ greatly in their percentage of children meeting or exceeding key standards may indicate reliability issues with the assessment itself or with inconsistent application of scoring rubrics. To help illuminate scoring fidelity, GaDOE and DECAL will conduct a reliability study in which groups of teachers will assess the same child. This will be done in a school setting or through the use of videos within the training modules. Finally, comparing Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers' assessments of the same children can indicate items with reliability concerns. Though one would expect differences due to age, differences in magnitude or high percentages of regression (even accounting for summer learning loss) may reveal items or constructs with concern that will need to be addressed.

Validity

Establishing and evaluating validity is a process not an event, and as such, validity must be attended to from the design phase through implementation. As evidence of how Georgia has attended to validity for the GKIDS program, two reports are provided in the appendices. During the development of GKIDS, the Bracken Basic Concept Scale was administered to a small number of kindergarten students to assess if the two instruments were measuring similar constructs (see GKIDS Development Report, page 34, Appendix 51). This report is provided as a technical brief, found in Appendix 52.

GaDOE will apply a similar process to measure validity with the current expansion and augmentation of the GKIDS to develop the KEA. Working with the TAC, educators, and early childhood experts, GaDOE will establish content validity and then select an instrument to assess

construct validity. Furthermore, GaDOE will work with the selected contractor and the TAC to establish additional studies that must be conducted to establish, in part, the overall validity of the GKIDS entry assessment. Studies could include any potential correlations with the different types of ELD experiences in which children participated. This will give the state initial information about any program or age level gaps.

Data from the Kindergarten Entry Profile will not be entered into the state longitudinal data system or reported publicly until there is evidence that the Profile produces data that are technically sound. Georgia further commits to continually assessing the validity and reliability of the tool throughout the years it is in use, beyond the life of this grant.

Appropriate for Target Population (including populations of children with high needs)

Part of the reliability and validity process is the assurance that the Kindergarten Entry Assessment is appropriate for the target population including those with high needs. It is well documented that young children develop rapidly and at varying rates. Great care must be taken to ensure assessment tools developed for this population are appropriate and accessible for all students, including those most vulnerable, be it due to economic hardship, a disability or limited English proficiency. GaDOE has experience developing measures that are appropriate for English language learners and children with disabilities. This expertise will help ensure that the Profile will be appropriate for all children. Working with the TAC committee, GaDOE and the development committee will identify special populations and areas to include in the initial development pilot and the larger field test. Teachers of these populations will be included in all aspects of the development work, including serving on the development committees and workgroups. This will ensure that the KEA is appropriate across multiple populations. Key groups to include in the process are: 1) rural areas; 2) children with identified special needs or developmental delays; 3) English language learners; and 4) areas with large numbers (or large percentage) of low-income children.

(E)(1)(c) KEA Administered by Fourth Year of Grant

Georgia will implement the Kindergarten Entry Profile, as part of the augmented GKIDS, in a representative sample of Georgia kindergarten classrooms in the fall of 2016. Georgia will scale to statewide in the fall of 2017. Georgia's timeline for this implementation is detailed in its

High-Quality Plan. All teachers will be trained in the administration of the assessment; only trained teachers will be allowed to administer to students. Technical quality will be attended to throughout the development and implementation process, and as stated earlier, Georgia further commits to continually assessing the validity and reliability of the tool throughout the years it is in use, beyond the life of this grant.

(E)(1)(d) KEA Reported to Statewide Longitudinal Data System and Early Learning Data System

KEA data will be included in both the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS), the Early Learning Data System (Cross Agency Child Data System), and the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). The mechanisms are already in place to include this data with a child's Kindergarten record in all three systems. Currently GKIDS data are loaded into the SLDS and are available to inform instructional planning at the local level. Access to the data will be restricted and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Georgia proposes to leverage technology in the development of the KEA. Development of protocols will include an electronic platform, allowing teachers to record their observations and scores electronically, in real time. Online learning modules will be developed for training of kindergarten teachers in the administration protocols and policies as well as scoring. Such modules will serve as an important mechanism to ensure educators across the state are calibrated to apply observational criteria and scoring rubrics accurately and with fidelity. Collection, storage, aggregation, and reporting of data are a critical function of the platform. Georgia will build upon its current GKIDS platform and continue its work to incorporate the process of GKIDS into the State Longitudinal Data System so that the data are ultimately housed there at the conclusion of the assessment process (as is currently the practice).

In conjunction with the pre-established TAC, the KEA work group will create a set of recommendations for sharing aggregate results directly to DECAL and whether program-identifying results can or should be shared directly with those respective programs. The group will also review current GaDOE and DECAL policies for reporting data to parents.

(E)(1)(e) Funded with Other Federal or State Resources

While a contractor will be hired to assist with the development of the Kindergarten Entry Profile, existing GaDOE and DECAL personnel will be oversee the development of the assessment. While funds for an Assessment Specialist dedicated to this initiative are sought, funds from the RTT-ELC are not being requested to cover the salaries of other key DECAL and GaDOE leadership. After development, the Kindergarten Entry Profile will be implemented as part of the GaDOE budget. Georgia's plan has been developed with a keen eye toward sustainability, leveraging technology so that maintenance costs are minimal. Georgia will use existing resources, such as GaDOE's learning management system, part of the statewide longitudinal data system, to mitigate ongoing costs.

In addition to Georgia's current annual GKIDS budget, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) has agreed to support this initiative, in part, through their Reading Mentor Program staff members' time. This program provides research-based professional development, formative assessments, instructional resources, and ongoing literacy coaching to pre-kindergarten through third grade teachers by placing a reading mentor in selected schools. In addition to providing professional development to educators, reading mentors support schools' ongoing initiatives surrounding reading skills. The budget for GOSA Reading Mentor Staff is approximately \$1.6 million. GOSA staff dedicated to the Reading Mentor program will assist in the statewide rollout and implementation of the Kindergarten Entry Profile. In addition, DECAL will support the professional development on the KEA in partnership with GaDOE through existing funds. It is important that pre-k and kindergarten teachers are cross-trained on the profile to strengthen alignment of instruction and assessment practices.

Cost related to data and data sharing will be borne by the state. The state currently funds the Longitudinal Data System (K-12), GA Awards (P-20), and the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS). Parents will have access to the data similar as they do with other assessments. DECAL will incur the data transfer costs.

High-Quality Plan for Kindergarten Entry Assessment

The following High-Quality Plan outlines the specific efforts Georgia will undertake to develop a Kindergarten Entry Assessment. As detailed in the above narrative, the essence of Georgia's High-Quality Plan is to augment the current kindergarten assessment which spans the entire school year with a Kindergarten Entry Profile that will be administered during the first six weeks of Kindergarten. Specifically, the state proposes to revise the current measures or develop new ones that can be administered in a naturalistic manner so as to minimize disruption to instruction and be developmentally appropriate for students at varying levels. The data from this augmentation will serve as the Kindergarten Entry Assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to provide educators, parents, and the state with high-quality information about individual student readiness so that appropriate supports and interventions can be put into place as needed to ensure all students, regardless of where they began, leave kindergarten ready to learn at high levels and thrive. Information will be shared with early learning and development programs to inform instructional planning and professional development in an effort to ensure increasing numbers of students exit Pre-K ready for kindergarten.

The measures that are used to develop Georgia's KEA consist of both indirect (e.g., observational) and direct (e.g., performance tasks) tools. In order to develop the protocols, tasks, and rubrics that will serve to provide this Kindergarten Entry Profile, consideration must be given to DECAL's School Readiness Definitions for the conclusion of a student's Pre-K experience. The vertical articulation between the GELDS standards and the GPS for kindergarten must be Tools will be developed and piloted with Georgia students in both Pre-K and kindergarten settings.

(a) Key Goals

- 1) Create a Kindergarten Entry Profile by augmenting the current Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills to ensure valid and reliable entry level data across all key domains by Fall 2017, with smaller scale implementation in Fall 2016.
- 2) To prepare all Georgia kindergarten teachers to properly assess students and maintain fidelity in the administration of the instrument.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Form a Kindergarten Entry Profile workgroup to identify the essential concepts and skills that are likely to signal success in future learning opportunities for children.
2. Design a Kindergarten Entry Profile to augment the already established GKIDS that will evaluate the readiness of kindergartners upon entry into kindergarten.
3. Collaborate with TAC to ensure validity, reliability, and assurance of appropriateness for target population.
4. Train kindergarten teachers on the effective use of the KEA

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Form a Kindergarten Entry Profile workgroup to identify the essential concepts and skills that are likely to signal success in future learning opportunities for children		
Aligned Goal: 1		
Workgroup will design the augmentation of GKIDS that will results in the Kindergarten Entry Profile. This is important to ensure statewide “buy-in” for educators at all levels. This will also help with alignment of the new Kindergarten Entry Profile with the GPS and GELDS.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 2: Design a Kindergarten Entry Profile to augment the already established GKIDS that will evaluate the readiness of kindergartners upon entry into kindergarten.		
Aligned Goal: 1		
Kindergarten Entry Profile, an augmentation of GKIDS, will provide valuable information as children enter Kindergarten.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 3: Collaborate with TAC to ensure reliability, validity, and appropriateness to all populations		
Aligned Goal: 1		
Reliability and Validity (along with assurances that it is appropriate for all populations) are vital for successful implementation.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 4: Train kindergarten teachers on administration and effective use of the KEA Profile.		
Aligned Goal: 2		
Continual professional development is important for reliability assurances and to ensure that the data is being appropriately used to plan instruction.	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1:								
Request for Proposal (RFP) Developed and Issued	X							
Issue Contract to Selected Vendor	X							
Establish Development Committees, including National Early Childhood Experts		X						
Analyze Vertical Articulation between GELDS and CCGPS		X						
Conduct Comprehensive Literature Review		X						
Activity 2:								
Identify Essential Concepts and Skills (in identified domains) based upon Literature/ Expert Opinion – Begin Development		X						
Design Protocols and Structured Tasks including Administration Protocols and Data Collection/Reporting Platform			X	X				
Conduct Informal Try-Outs in Pre-K Classrooms to Inform Development			X	X				
Pilot in Kindergarten Classrooms				X				
Review Pilot Results/Revise Protocols and Tasks					X			
Conduct Field Test in Pre-K Settings ((exiting Pre-K to serve) May – June 2016 as proxy for entering kindergarten)					X			
Analyze Field Test Results and Finalize Design					X	X		
Conduct Administration in Representative Sample of Kindergarten Classrooms						X	X	
Issue Reports via Platform						X	X	
Compile Technical Documentation						X	X	
Administer and Report Statewide								X
Activity 3:								
Ongoing Validation Activities			X	X	X	X	X	X
Ongoing Reliability Activities			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 4:								
Design Online Training and Scoring Modules					X	X	X	X
Scale Administration & Usage Training Statewide								X

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

The Georgia Department of Education will be the lead agency on this project. An independent contractor will be hired to facilitate the project. The Assistant Superintendent of Assessment will be responsible for overseeing the project and supervising the contractor.

Additionally, the Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K will assist in overseeing the project. Principals, teachers, early childhood educators, and key staff from DECAL and GaDOE will participate in the Kindergarten Entry Profile.

(e) Financial Resources

Project 11: Kindergarten Entry Assessment **Selection Criterion:** E1

The Department of Education is the lead agency for this project. Project 11 outlines Georgia’s High-Quality Plan to enhance our current kindergarten assessment by implementing a revised assessment that will be administered within the first six weeks of school. Georgia will design and implement a statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment composed of measures that examine children’s learning and development from the five domains represented in the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards.

Project 11: Kindergarten Entry Assessment		
Selection Criteria: E1		
Total Project Budget: \$6,250,000		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Education	\$6,250,000
Participating State Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

- GKIDS Activities (Appendix 50)
- GKIDS Technical Reports (Appendix 52)

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

The Kindergarten Entry Profile will be piloted in school year 2016-2017 and implemented statewide by Fall 2017. Data from the Kindergarten Entry Profile will be crucial in measuring the impact of Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda and the process that has been made in reaching goals—particularly school readiness gains for children with high need and a reduction in the achievement gap.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

A purpose of the Kindergarten Entry Profile is identify gaps in terms of school readiness among key groups of children-especially children with high needs. Once these gaps are identified, the state can create professional development opportunities for teachers in all types of ELD programs. This includes family child care and infant/toddler classrooms-where these gaps can be addressed at the “front end.” An example of this could be the Summer Transition Program for Rising Pre-K. As discussed in (A)(2) and (B)(4), this program is geared to English language learners. Gaps identified by the Kindergarten Entry Profile could be incorporated into this program.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

Appropriate psychometric testing will be conducted to make sure that the Kindergarten Entry Profile is culturally competent and is appropriate for children with high needs. This includes English language learners, children identified with special needs or developmental disabilities, and children from families with low incomes. As discussed above, gaps identified with the Kindergarten Entry Profile for groups of children with high needs could be addressed in earlier ELD programs.

(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State’s existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) 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;

(d) 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 to share with parents and other community stakeholders; and

(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the unique needs of *the State's special populations of Children with High Needs* are considered and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (E)(2):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Introduction

Georgia began executing its high-quality data plan in 2010 when it used State Advisory Council funds to begin designing a unified cross agency child data system linked to the state's longitudinal data system. The Strategic Roadmap for this system can be found in Appendix 53. In December 2012, the first phase of the Cross Agency Child Data System was completed, allowing Georgia to match children across state programs in order to determine services a child is receiving. Also during this time Georgia completed constructing its new integrated child licensing and TQRIS data system (KOALA) – which, through the Cross Agency Child Data System, complements the Pre-K data system and professional development data systems already in place and greatly streamlines the collection of Essential Data Elements.

Through its existing and proposed work, Georgia will emerge from the grant period with a data system that will help improve instruction, practice, service, and policy. The system will:

- (a) Include all of the Essential Data Elements. Indeed, all of the Essential Data Elements are currently included in the Cross Agency Child Data System (see (E)(2)(a)), and Georgia's work under the grant will expand the number of programs in the Cross Agency Child Data System.
- (b) Enable uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs. Proposed in this grant is the expansion of two key operational systems that will greatly increase the amount of Essential Data Elements data collected and make it much easier to enter data into the system.
- (c) Facilitate the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies. Georgia has a uniform data collection method in place that facilitates the collection of data elements from multiple agencies (Data Sharing Agreements Appendix 54). This grant will enable Georgia to focus on increasing the volume of data available about children with high needs. Georgia will have the ability to match this data with the TQRIS data already housed in the Cross Agency Child Data System and thus help ensure that children with high needs are being served in quality settings.
- (d) Generate information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for programs and educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making and to share with

parents and other community stakeholders. Georgia has built a system that ties the Cross Agency Child Data System to the P-20 state longitudinal system and the K-12 data system. Linking early child data to the K-12 data system allows access for parents, teachers, and school administrators through each school district's student information systems. While this work has been important, Georgia would like to provide more information to stakeholders about children during their years prior to Pre-K. The expansion of the operational systems proposed in this grant will generate timely and relevant data to a wide variety of stakeholders about children before they enter Kindergarten.

(e) Meet the Data System Oversight Requirements and comply with all relevant laws.

To meet these goals and continue building on the strong base that Georgia has established, Georgia will use Early Learning Challenge grant funds to undertake four significant activities that are included in the High-Quality Plan at the very end of this section:

- **Activity 1:** Complete Phase 2 of the Cross Agency Child Data System to include additional data from other agencies about children with high needs
- **Activity 2:** Increase the amount of Essential Data Elements data collected by expanding the Licensing Data System
- **Activity 3:** Increase the amount of Essential Data Elements data collected by completing Georgia's vision of a seamless Professional Development Data System.
- **Activity 4:** Establish a Data Governance Policy to accommodate these new data sources.

Each of the four activities are described below. Then, Georgia's response to each of the requirements (E)(2)(a) through (E)(2)(e) is provided. The final section is the High-Quality Plan.

Activity 1

The first activity to execute Georgia's High-Quality Data Plan is to complete Phase 2 of the Cross Agency Child Data System. This will increase the amount of Essential Data Elements data from other agencies. This activity will be accomplished through a standard interface

structure (details to follow) that has already been developed and will greatly enhance the utility of the system by focusing on the collection of crucial data about children with high needs not currently in the system.

Cross Agency Child Data System

Georgia has built an Early Learning and Development data system called the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) that facilitates the exchange of Essential Data Elements with Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs. The first phase of the Cross Agency Child Data System was completed at the end of 2012 using State Advisory Council grant funds. The system currently captures data from the following data sources:

- CAPS Data System
 - Georgia's child care subsidy program
 - Housed by vendor
- Licensing/TQRIS Data System
 - Housed at DECAL
- Head Start and Early Head Start child demographic information
 - Data Sharing Agreements have been signed with all grantees in Georgia
- Georgia's Pre-K Data System
 - Housed at DECAL
- Pearson Work Sampling Online Data System
 - Pre-K child assessment data
 - Housed by vendor

To ensure that data collected is useful to major stakeholders, Georgia held a Data Roundtable in 2010, bringing together major stakeholders to identify key questions that a unified data system could help answer. Questions focused on child enrollment, child characteristics, child health and development (including whether the child is on track to succeed in school), information about programs and staff, and longitudinal connections (such as how a child enrolled in an early learning program does in K-12). These questions served as the basis for the initial Cross Agency Child Data System RFP and can be found in Appendix 55.

After the Roundtable, design work focused on meeting with Participating State Agencies.

Each of the questions from the Data Roundtable was posed during interviews with program and technical representatives from each agency to determine which agencies housed the data that could provide answers to the questions generated by the Roundtable. An example interview document can be found in Appendix 56. Based on these interviews, a strategic roadmap was created. As part of the Strategic Roadmap, a Value Proposition was created dividing the various data sources into four quadrants – strong targets, partnering opportunities, growth opportunities, and challenged targets. This Value Proposition was one of the inputs used in determining which data sources fell into which phase of the build out. The data sources above that were included in Phase One were determined to be strong targets with plans to address more challenging targets in later stages.

During Phase One, the foundation architecture was built to collect the Essential Data Elements from the systems listed above and to accommodate ramp up across all participating agencies and programs. The Cross Agency Child Data System is tightly integrated with the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS) which was built with K-12 Race to the Top funds. The Cross Agency Child Data System leverages the GA AWARDS hardware and software platform to perform child level data deduplication - ensuring that child data in the system is accurate and ensuring that each child has a unique identifier (Appendix 57). This unique identifier links children in the Cross Agency Child Data System back to the Longitudinal Data System for research purposes. By integrating the Longitudinal Data System's deduplication and unique identifier functionality with the Cross Agency Child Data System, Georgia was able to effectively deliver the Cross Agency Child Data System at a reduced cost, thus maximizing State Advisory Council grant dollars.

Since the beginning of 2013 Georgia has worked to ensure the data integrity of the Cross Agency Child Data System. The state has emphasized the accuracy of child data and mechanisms to notify source systems to correct data discrepancies. While a great deal of emphasis has been placed on linking this child data, Georgia has found that focusing attention in other areas also increases the integrity and value of the data. For example, Georgia found that although a child might be able to be matched across programs, the locations of those programs from the various sources were not always accurate. Routines were built to ensure all addresses conform to US Postal Service address standards. This helped ensure that provider locations across various programs can be matched, creating a clearer picture of where children actually

are. Also, standardizing addresses helped in auditing programs by identifying all programs offered at a particular location and ensuring program integrity.

The completion of Phase One of the Cross Agency Child Data System provided the foundation for answering several of the questions generated by the Data Roundtable, including:

- What children are enrolled in which programs?
- Are they enrolled full or part time?
- For what portion of the year are they enrolled?
- How long have the children been enrolled in their current programs, and in what other programs have they been enrolled?

One of the most valuable features of the work done to date is that children in Georgia's Pre-K Program (both public and private providers) are linked to the K-12 data system so that Kindergarten teachers can view Pre-K assessment data. This has helped Kindergarten teachers in planning instruction. This Pre-K child assessment data is also positioned to be included in GA AWARD, the state longitudinal data system. Georgia will be able to answer the following important longitudinal questions that were raised in the Roundtable:

- How do children enrolled in ELD programs do in K-12?
- Did children enrolled in ELD programs end up in the juvenile justice system?

The links between systems are now in place and are ready to be scaled to accommodate additional data sources. Funding from this ELC grant will enable data to be collected from the following partners:

- Department of Public Health (IDEA Part C data and birth registration data about children with developmental risk factors)
- Department of Human Services (TANF and SNAP data)
- Department of Education (IDEA Part B data)
- Governor's Office for Children and Families (Home visitation data)
- Head Start and Early Head Start (Child assessment data)

Activity 2

The second activity to execute Georgia's High-Quality Data Plan is to expand the collection of Essential Data Elements data by enhancing the Department of Early Care and

Learning's Licensing/TQRIS data system. Completion of this activity will greatly enhance Georgia's ability to offer timely and relevant data to stakeholders and increase the utility of the Cross Agency Child Data System. This activity will provide capabilities for ELD programs and child care resource and referral agencies to enter information directly into the state licensing database through a new web portal.

Georgia's Licensing and TQRIS Data Systems

Georgia has built an extremely robust Licensing and TQRIS data system that allows for the collection of many of the Essential Data Elements.

Features of the system include:

- A totally automated TQRIS process that includes provider applications and portfolio submissions; annual renewals; online portfolio review and scoring; automated population of Environment Rating Scales (ERS) scores; access by child care resource and referral agencies for technical assistance information; links to Family Connection Partnerships for ordering and processing incentives; links to the Georgia Professional Development Registry and the Pre-K data system; and extensive metrics and reporting capabilities.
- A scheduling module that allows field staff to schedule visits and meetings. Supervisors can schedule specific tasks and visits on a staff member's calendar. An annual visit scheduling process automates much of the process in assigning licensing and monitoring visits.
- A visit module that has functionality for field staff to record multiple types of visits such as initial licensing visits, monitoring visits, technical assistance visits, and complaint follow-ups. Citations and plans of improvement are captured in the database and used for subsequent visits. Compliance is calculated on-site within the visit module at the completion of each visit. The licensing visit report, including compliance, is printed on-site and signed by the provider. This report is subsequently published and is accessible to the public on the DECAL website.
- A DECAL web portal is available for internal use. Functionality of this portal includes licensing application management; complaint intake and tracking; criminal records check management; fee payment management; variance and

waiver processing; adverse action and enforcement fine processing; and standardized reports and metrics.

Funding from the ELC grant will be used to expand the Licensing Data System to allow ELD programs and child care resource and referral agencies to input information directly into the licensing database. Timely and relevant data will be collected about ELD programs that will be made available to all stakeholders. Child care resource and referral agencies will access a single, statewide database that will greatly enhance accuracy of services. Many of the ELD processes like criminal records check processing, license fee and adverse action payments, accident/incident reporting, and updates of services will be streamlined and result in greater efficiencies for ELD programs and state administrative staff. Child care subsidy case workers will have access to up-to-date information about ELD program services with which to make referrals. Data about ELD program rates will be populated in the Cross Agency Child Data System that will inform the bi-annual CCDF child care market rate survey. Relevant and up to date information will be provided to the public by enhancing the DECAL website ELD program search application to include this additional data. A mobile application that offers the same functionality as the DECAL website ELD program search application will also be developed making information more readily available for families and other members of the public.

Activity 3

The third activity to execute Georgia's High-Quality Data Plan is to complete its vision for integrating its Professional Development Data System. Currently, teachers register in the Professional Development Registry and then use various methods to register for approved trainings. There is no way to determine who is participating in what training because no system collects this data in one place. This grant will enable the members of the ELD workforce to have a single data application that allows them to easily register for Georgia approved training and maintain their credential and workforce information. Also, this grant will enable the training registration system to be rolled out for almost all of Georgia approved trainings. Training data will be consolidated and available for inclusion in the Cross Agency Child Data System. This activity will increase the volume of data about the ELD workforce that is populated in the Cross Agency Child Data System allowing detailed analysis that Georgia has been unable to perform to

date, and allow for an accurate assessment to be made of what and where training is being delivered as well as whether proper content areas are being addressed. Georgia will ensure a large majority of teachers are included in the Professional Development Registry through this activity which will further increase Georgia's understanding of the ELD workforce.

Georgia's Professional Development Data Systems

Georgia recognized the need to have a better understanding of what professional development opportunities are occurring throughout the state. Because of this, Georgia is currently constructing the first phase of a training registration system called GA TRAINS. When completed, GA TRAINS will complement a professional development data system that already includes the Professional Development Registry, the Training/Trainer Approval System, the Online Learning Library Initiative, and the Infant Toddler Learning Management System.

The first phase of GA TRAINS that is already underway will be completed in August 2014. This first phase will consist of a training registration system to accommodate four of the large group trainings that take place in Georgia each year; licensing core rules training, Pre-K teacher training, Infant Toddler training, and Quality Rated training. In the 2012-2013 school year 11,582 teachers were trained through these courses. When this current phase is completed, instructors of these classes will manage class offerings and rosters through the system. ELD teachers will be able to enroll in classes. Upon course completion, teachers will have their training automatically updated in the Professional Development Registry by the instructors without the need to send proof of training to the Professional Standards Commission. This will streamline the completion of the verification process and ease the time burden placed on teachers and state administrative staff.

Funding from the ELC grant will be used to complete the vision for GA TRAINS. This vision includes:

- The rollout of GA TRAINS for almost all approved trainings
 - Integrating the training registration module into the Professional Development Registry creating a "one stop shop" for teachers to manage their professional credentials and trainings.

By expanding GA TRAINS to house all approved trainings, Georgia will be able to

greatly increase the effectiveness of how professional development is delivered. Through Georgia's investments in its licensing, TQRIS, and Pre-K data systems, detailed information can be obtained about things such as citations, accidents and injuries, Pre-K CLASS data, and TQRIS Environment Rating Scale data. Using these data, training can be targeted through GA TRAINS to content areas that need improvement. Also, because it will be able to determine which parts of the state are receiving what types of training, training can be targeted to geographic areas that are most in need.

By having teachers register for approved trainings through this system, all teachers will be assigned a unique registry number. One of the TQRIS requirements in Georgia is that all teachers in an ELD program must be registered in the Professional Development Registry. By offering one interface through which ELD teachers will enter their registry data and register for training, entering information about the ELD workforce is made much easier. This data will provide a much greater volume of data about the ELD workforce in the Cross Agency Child Data System. This additional data helps link not just Pre-K teachers (as is the case currently), but the majority of ELD teachers to a classroom and ultimately to a student. Additionally, the metrics that will be available about what and where approved trainings are taking place in Georgia will help guide professional development policy and decision making.

Activity 4

The fourth activity to execute Georgia's High-Quality Data Plan is to create a Data Governance Structure that includes the Participating Agencies that will supply data to the Cross Agency Child Data System. Currently, with the exception of Head Start/Early Head start, all the data in the Cross Agency Child Data System resides at DECAL. Data sharing agreements with DECAL are in place for all 31 of Georgia's Head Start/Early Head Start grantees. Georgia is proud of these data sharing agreements with Head Start/Early Head Start so that the data that typically is reported only to the regional and federal HS office can be shared with DECAL. This sharing of data will help Head Start and DECAL provide better services for Georgia's young children. Data Sharing Agreements for all Head Start grantees can be found in Appendix 58.

DECAL has data oversight and is responsible for security policies and usage of the Cross Agency Child Data System and the shared Head Start/Early Head Start data. However, because this ELC grant proposes that additional data elements be added from other agencies, an updated

Data Governance Structure is necessary.

Georgia is fortunate to have already set up a Data Governance Structure for GA AWARDS, the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System. This governance structure defines Data Stewards, a Data Research Committee, a Data Management Committee, and a reporting path through the Alliance of Education Agency Heads that ensures the data integrity, security, and proper use of personal identifiable information. The details of this structure can be found in (E)(2)(e).

Activity 4 will set up a governance structure similar to the one already in place for GA AWARDS. The Georgia Children’s Cabinet will hold ultimate responsibility for the use of data in the Cross Agency Child Data System. A Data Management Committee will be set up consisting of commissioner designated agency representatives – in most cases agency Chief Information Officers. Written roles will be defined by this committee for the Data Stewards and the Data Research Committee. Policies for ensuring the quality, privacy, and integrity of data contained in the system will be documented and made available to all stakeholders including families and ELD programs.

The next five sections present Georgia’s response to each of the five criteria delineated in selection criterion (E)(2), organized by the headings provided in the application.

(E)(2)(a) Essential Data Elements

Essential Data Element	Current State
A unique statewide child identifier or another highly accurate, proven method to link data on that child, including Kindergarten Entry Assessment data, to and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the coordinated early learning data system (if applicable);	The Cross Agency Child Data System utilizes the GA AWARDS (state LDS) ID as its unique identifier. This identifier allows links back and forth between CACDS and GA AWARDS. The Kindergarten Entry Assessment data proposed in (E)(1) will be easily linked between the two systems.
A unique statewide early childhood educator identifier	Early childhood educators are assigned a Professional Development Registry identifier.
A unique program site identifier	All providers are assigned a license number. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed Child Care Learning Centers • Licensed Group Day Care Homes • Licensed Family Day Care Homes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal Providers • Head Start and Early Head Start • Department of Defense Sites • Technical School Sites • University Sites • Local School System ELD Programs • Unlicensed Providers* <p>*Unlicensed Providers are those that have been alleged to be operating illegally CACDS includes 9,174 active license numbers</p>
<p>Child and family demographic information, including indicators identifying the criteria that states use to determine whether a child is with high needs</p>	<p>A wealth of child demographic information is collected in the CACDS system including demographic and program participation information. The child subsidy system collects child and family demographic information and indicators for children with high needs such as low income, parent’s primary language, child disabilities, teen parents, and foster care and child protective services cases. Family demographic information is self-reported in the Quality Rated data system and Georgia’s Pre-K data system. English language learner data is collected in Georgia’s Pre-K data system. Where appropriate, much of this data is passed on to CACDS to help inform program policy.</p>
<p>Early childhood educator demographic information, including data on educational attainment and state credential or licenses held, as well as professional development information</p>	<p>Early childhood educator demographic and education data is collected in the Professional Development Registry. This data is linked into the TQRIS data system and the Georgia’s Pre-K data system to allow more timely and accurate decision making. Georgia is working with Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to require all teachers be registered in the Professional Development Registry.</p>
<p>Program-level data on the program’s structure, quality, child suspension and expulsion rates, staff retention, staff compensation, work environment, and all applicable data reported as part of the state’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</p>	<p>Structure: Program structure data is collected in the TQRIS, Pre-K, Licensing, and child care subsidy data systems.</p> <p>Quality: Extensive quality data is collected in the TQRIS data system including Environmental Rating Scale data. The Pre-K data system collects CLASS data. The Licensing System collects health, safety, and compliance data.</p> <p>Child Suspension and Expulsion Rates: This data is collected for Pre-K.</p>

	<p>Staff Retention: This data is collected in the Licensing/TQRIS and Pre-K data systems.</p> <p>Staff compensation: This data is collected in the Scholarships and Incentives data system. Benefits data is collected in the Professional Development Registry.</p> <p>Work Environment: The data is collected in the TQRIS, Pre-K, and Licensing data systems.</p> <p>The Cross Agency Child Data System consolidates much of the information above so that a comprehensive view of programs can be obtained to help inform decision making.</p>
<p>Child-level program participation and attendance data</p>	<p>Child-level program participation data is collected in CACDS for Georgia’s Pre-K, child care subsidies, and Head Start/Early Head Start. This grant will expand the program participation data collected to TANF, SNAP, IDEA Part B and C, and home visitations. Attendance data is captured in the child subsidy system. This grant will create the capability for licensed centers to submit attendance data.</p>

(E)(2)(b) Uniform Data Collection and Easy Entry

Georgia has several operational systems in which ELD data is collected. Many of these systems are housed at DECAL where much progress has been made over the last several years in simplifying how these data are collected. All DECAL operational systems are structured for uniform data collection. This data is available to DECAL personnel through a web dashboard that details a wealth of information about ELD programs.

Examples of these systems include the Pre-K Data System, the Professional Development Registry, and the Licensing/TQRIS Data System.

- **The Pre-K Data System** is a web-based system that facilitates easy entry of data for rosters, payments, reconciliations, waiting lists, applications, and field staff monitoring visits. Enhancements have been made to the roster and wait list data entry screens to include edits that standardize data entry and ensure uniform data collection. Rosters can

also be uploaded utilizing a standard Excel template that can be populated from the school's student information system ensuring data integrity. School year calendars can be entered directly into the system rather than mailing paper copies to state admin staff. The data collected in this system is populated in the Cross Agency Child Data System allowing detailed analysis of Georgia's Pre-K Program. The collection of additional Essential Data Elements data proposed in this grant will offer new insight into how Georgia's Pre-K is reaching children with high needs.

- **The Professional Development Registry** is a web-based system that facilitates easy entry of teacher demographic data, employment history, and education and training information. Certifications are automatically updated from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission database. Career levels are automatically calculated and populated in the Pre-K and Licensing/TQRIS data systems without the need for manual intervention. This grant will enhance the value of the Professional Development System by changing it to a "one stop shop" for teachers to, not just maintain professional development information, but to also register for classes simplifying the collection of ELD workforce data.
- **The Licensing/TQRIS Data System** was constructed with the idea that data needs to be easily captured at the source. Features of the system include: TQRIS portfolio application, submission, and scoring; automated management of the entire TQRIS process; modules for licensing visits, scheduling, and reporting; and a web portal for administrative tasks with workflow capabilities. The system has brought a new level of understanding about ELD programs and services in Georgia. With funding from this grant, Georgia will continue to enhance the utility of the Licensing/TQRIS Data System by allowing direct input of information by ELD programs and child care resources and referral agencies that will be populated into the Cross Agency Child Data System.

The ability to collect Essential Data Elements in Georgia was greatly increased with the implementation of the Licensing/TQRIS Data System in Georgia. The system offers many features that allow for easy collection of data. For the TQRIS division, the system offers the following:

- TQRIS data is entered by ELD programs through a web interface that walks ELD programs through the portfolio process from start to finish.
- The entire portfolio process is performed online. Each component of the portfolio includes guidance about how to submit and update information. Progress is indicated through colored icons that clearly show what has been completed and what remains to be done.
- Documents are uploaded and tracked through the system.
- Action plans are generated and displayed by the system from surveys completed for nutrition and physical activity.
- Applicants can order and track delivery of incentive packages.
- Environment Rating Scale reports are updated automatically from an interface with the ERS vendor thereby preventing data entry errors by ERS assessors.
- Updates in the Professional Development Registry to teacher credentials are automatically populated in the portfolio thereby freeing applicants from having to duplicate entry.
- Child care resource and referral agencies have access to TQRIS applications and portfolios in their regions.
- Programs participating in Quality Rated are eligible to receive bonus and incentive packages throughout their technical assistance and rating process. Family Connection Partnerships, a non-profit organization located in all 159 counties, is charged with managing these packages and can easily update and track packages through the TQRIS data system.

DECAL field staff are required to capture a large amount of information during regulatory visits. To assist this process, the new Licensing/TQRIS Data System has many features that enhance ease of data entry. For the Licensing division the system offers the following:

- When a field consultant marks a visit as complete, the data is automatically updated in the database at DECAL.
- Field staff enter room measurements, and square footage is calculated

automatically. The square footage determines the child capacity allowed in the room.

- Previous citations are redisplayed on subsequent visits to save field staff from having to re-enter data. Staff data, credential information, and child record data (such as immunization records, emergency contacts, and special care instructions) are also saved on subsequent visits saving data entry time.
- Compliance determination is automatically calculated based on the citations reported which eliminates errors.
- Certain citations automatically trigger the adverse action process eliminating the need for field staff to manually create adverse actions.
- Follow-up visits are automatically scheduled when certain conditions are met.
- Tasks for complaint visits are scheduled on field staff calendars after they are entered by the complaint intake unit.

The Licensing/TQRIS Data System was designed to be extensible and add functionality as required. This grant will greatly expand the data collection capabilities of the Licensing/TQRIS system by allowing direct entry of data by ELD programs and child care resource and referral agencies, greatly increasing the volume of Essential Data Elements data available to the Cross Agency Child Data System. Data will be collected through newly developed web portals that will mirror the ease of data entry of other DECAL systems. In addition, the DECAL website search functionality will be enhanced to reflect this additional data to make it easy for stakeholders to search appropriate ELD programs. A mobile application will also be developed that will expand the reach of the system giving families an additional option to match their child's needs with quality ELD programs.

(E)(2)(c) Data Exchange among Participating State Agencies

Georgia currently has the architecture in place to exchange child and program level data among Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs. A standard interface structure for the Early Learning domain has been created for the Cross Agency Child Data System to facilitate the exchange of ELD data. This structure includes defined data formats and definitions

that streamline the process of moving data between the source systems, the Cross Agency Child Data System and the P-20 Longitudinal Data System. This format has proven efficient in exchanging data with Head Start and Early Head Start, Georgia's Pre-K, the child care subsidy system, Pearson assessments, and Licensing.

The Common Education Data Standards specify domains for Early Learning, K-12, and Postsecondary. Georgia is in the process of converting to the Common Education Data Standards for the K-12 domain. The standards for the Early Learning domain are currently being examined and a conversion plan is under consideration. While the current Cross Agency Child Data System data standard is working well, DECAL understands the utility of converting to a format that can be easily shared among states.

(E)(2)(d) Timely, Relevant, Accessible, and Easy Information for Programs and Educators

Georgia has made a priority to create data systems that provide value to programs and educators. This High-Quality Plan will continue to build on the progress already made to provide timely, relevant, and accessible information to ELD programs and educators.

Timely

Georgia's new Licensing Data System allows visit information to be automatically updated in the database as soon as a visit is marked complete. Because this update process is quick and seamless, important information is available immediately to ELD programs such, as citations or compliance issues. These visit reports are automatically posted on the DECAL website making them available to the public.

The TQRIS automated portfolio process provides applicants with real time information as they work through their portfolio. Colored icons offer immediate feedback to the applicant about what has been completed and what remains to be done. Automated emails inform and remind applicants about important application milestones. Child care resource and referral agencies have access to the portfolios of TQRIS applicants in their regions to help with technical assistance. Also, action plans are generated immediately for TQRIS applicants upon completion of surveys for physical activity and nutrition.

Relevant

Based on the feedback received in the Data Roundtable, ELD programs and educators found it important to be able to tie ELD programs to the public school system to provide crucial relevant information to educators. With the creation of the Cross Agency Child Data System, Georgia has put a platform in place to make this possible. Lottery funded Pre-K students in public and private programs are now linked to the K-12 data system. Pre-K demographic and assessment data is made available to Kindergarten teachers, school administrators, and parents through the school student information system in almost all of Georgia's 159 counties. Kindergarten teachers have access to Pre-K assessments to help formulate and guide instruction. This link between Georgia's Pre-K Program and the public school system puts in place the mechanism to answer one of the most important questions posed by the Data Roundtable: How do children enrolled in early learning programs do in K-12?

Currently, Head Start and Early Head Start demographic data is being collected for all 31 of Georgia's grantees in the Cross Agency Child Data System. This demographic data will also be made available to the K-12 system. This High-Quality Plan addresses expanding the Head Start data to include assessment data that can easily be made available to educators and parents in a manner similar to Pre-K.

The Cross Agency Child Data System has helped answer questions posed by the Data Roundtable about the state programs in which a child is enrolled. This has proven useful in looking at program integrity. For example, it is possible to identify children participating in Georgia's Pre-K and also receiving full day child care subsidies. This has helped prevent providers from receiving double payments.

Analysis has been done by DECAL Quality Initiatives staff to determine if those children receiving child care subsidy payments are enrolled in a quality ELD program. This has been helpful in targeting areas of the state that need more high-quality programs and in identifying technical assistance to programs serving a high percentage of children in the child care subsidy program. The proposed addition of TANF and SNAP data to the Cross Agency Child Data System in this ELC grant will allow even further analysis across programs and will be important in identifying services provided in the Early Education Empowerment Zones (refer to selection criterion (A)(2)).

Accessible and Easy to Use

The DECAL ELD program search application on the DECAL website makes it easy for stakeholders to access important information about ELD programs – including visit and complaint investigation reports. This High-Quality Plan calls for developing an application that will duplicate the same functionality in an easy to use format that can be accessed from a mobile device. All stakeholders will benefit from the increased accessibility of this data that will include more detailed information of ELD program services and rate information.

This High-Quality Plan will also make professional development information more readily accessible to ELD programs and teachers. ELD programs and teachers will be able to better locate approved trainings. Teachers will be able to easily register for approved trainings through an enhanced Professional Development Registry. The data that will be collected will offer new insight into how to better deliver professional learning by understanding what and where training is taking place in Georgia.

(E)(2)(e) Meeting Data System Oversight Requirements

The Cross Agency Child Data System is housed at DECAL. DECAL’s data governance policy is adopted from the Georgia Technology Authority Department (GTA). Agencies’ technology resources must comply with GTA’s statewide standard specifications, architecture for technology infrastructure, and security standards outlined in GTA’s “Georgia State Government Information Technology Policies, Standards, and Guidelines V2.3 June 2013”. Georgia has in place strong governance policies at DECAL that apply to existing systems in the Cross Agency Child Data System and a plan for incorporating new agencies to the Cross Agency Child Data System based on existing state frameworks. This narrative briefly explains the existing governance policies and the proposed multi-agency framework and then explains how this governance structure meets all of the Data System Oversight Requirements.

Governance Policies

The State of Georgia enterprise information security policies and standards are based on the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) and ISO 27000 series standard of best practices. DECAL is responsible for developing internal policies and procedures to facilitate

compliance with these enterprise security policies and standards. DECAL has developed and implemented policies, processes, and technology to adequately protect the information assets, personnel, and facilities under its control; and ensure compliance with Enterprise policies and standards, and federal and state requirements.

DECAL follows the guidelines in Section 2.5 Statewide Data Sharing PM-07-003 from GTA's Government Information Technology Policies, Standards, and Guidelines V2.3 to identify data elements that address Data Ownership and Stewardship along with Data Classification for the Cross Agency Child Data System.

DECAL has developed the Cross Agency Child Data System access control to confidential information following guidelines in Section 2.7 of GTA's Government Information Technology Policies, Standards, and Guidelines V2.3 – which requires that each agency is responsible for establishing access control measures that limit access to information assets to only those individuals that are authorized to obtain it. DECAL has implemented access controls and utilizes section 2.7.7. Security Awareness Program PS-08-010 to train personnel on level of access and distribution of the Cross Agency Child Data System.

Cross-Agency Governance

With the exception of Head Start data, with which DECAL has grantee data sharing agreements in place, all data in CACDS is administered by DECAL. This grant will expand data sources to other Participating Agencies. This expansion will require that a data governance policy that includes Participating Agencies be put in place to ensure the security and proper use of child data.

Georgia has already established a Data Governance Structure for GA AWARDS, the State P-20 Longitudinal Data System. This governance structure is a hybrid approach incorporating a top down/bottom up model. At the top, vision and direction is set by the Alliance of Education Agency Heads. At the bottom, agency designated researchers participate in work groups that offer input into appropriate data usage.

A Data Management Committee is responsible for the direction and implementation of GA AWARDS. This committee is made up of commissioner assigned representatives (in most cases the Chief Information Officer) and is responsible for the direction and implementation of GA AWARDS. A chair and vice chair are elected by the Data Management Committee and

report directly to the Alliance of Education Agency Heads. This committee meets every two weeks and promotes collaboration between participating agencies. It also resolves disputes between parties and is responsible to ensure reports, products, articles, and exchanges of information comply with law. The designated research work group reports to the Data Management Committee about requests for data. Designated researchers are allowed access to individual level data provided by GA AWARDS for research and review but cannot publish the data at an individual level.

A Data Steward is designated in each agency to review, research, and resolve any data discrepancies that occur, including near matches and duplicates of child records. The Data Stewards sign a FERPA Compliance Statement because in the course of reconciling a record they might view individual level data for another program. This Data Steward reports to their respective agency representative on the Data Management Committee.

This ELC grant proposal includes an activity to establish a Data Governance Structure for the Cross Agency Child Data System. This structure will be similar to the structure created for GA AWARDS. A Data Management Committee will be created consisting of commissioner assigned representatives from each Participating Agency. This Data Management Committee will set up the research workgroups and designate the Data Stewards. A chair and vice chair who report directly to the Georgia Children's Cabinet will be elected.

The Data Management Committee will establish the Data Governance Policy ensuring that data collection and dissemination meet with all applicable state and federal privacy and confidentiality laws. Written policies and procedures will be created and adopted detailing access, security, and use of personal information data. Policies will be adopted in conjunction with the Governor's Office legal team relating to open records requests.

Georgia's experience setting up a Data Governance Structure for the P-20 longitudinal data system will prove valuable when establishing the structure for the Cross Agency Child Data System. Two experienced members of the GA AWARDS Data Management Committee (GaDOE and DECAL) will also sit on the Cross Agency Child Data System Data Management Committee bringing valuable experience to the process.

Meeting the Data System Oversight Requirements

The existing data systems and the proposed expanded system will meet all of the Data System

Oversight Requirements.

- Identifying the elements that are collected and maintained. DECAL already tracks all elements currently included in the Cross Agency Child Data System. For the expansion supported by this grant, identification of the additional elements to collect will begin with the finalizing of Data Sharing Agreements within 90 days of the awarding of the ELD grant. Specific data elements will be detailed in these Data Sharing Agreements. A data dictionary of all available data will be provided to each Participating Agency and be posted to the DECAL website.
- Providing for training on internal controls to system users. Training for internal controls currently takes place within DECAL. Training will be expanded to include those with access from Participating State Agencies.
- Establishing who will have access to the data in the system and how the data may be used. DECAL has existing written policies for access control and data usage relating to its own systems. To expand the system, written policies for access control and data usage will be modified and approved by the Data Management Committee. The Georgia Children's Cabinet will have final approval.
- Setting appropriate internal controls to restrict access to only authorized users. Internal access controls are currently managed by DECAL for its existing systems and will continue to be used for the expanded system.
- Setting criteria for determining the legitimacy of data requests. Data requests within DECAL are currently generated by the research team in conjunction with the appropriate programs. Open records requests are reviewed, logged, and tracked by the DECAL legal staff. For the expanded system, data requests will be reviewed by the Data Research Committee, which will make recommendations to the Data Management Committee. Any concerns by the Data Management Committee will be taken to the Georgia Children's Cabinet for its final decision. Open records requests will continue to be managed by the DECAL legal staff in conjunction with legal staffs from appropriate agencies.
- Setting procedures for determining the sensitivity of each inventoried element and the risk of harm if those data were improperly disclosed. These procedures will be

examined and documented upon the awarding of this grant and established when the detailed Data Sharing Agreements are finalized.

- Establishing processes that verify the accuracy, completeness, and age of the data elements maintained in the system. Data Stewards from each Participating Agency will be responsible for verifying the integrity of their data. Currently, the Cross Agency Child Data System has a process to notify DECAL programs about data discrepancies. This same process will be established with the Data Stewards from the Participation Agencies.
- Establishing procedures for disclosure review and auditing. DECAL has an eight member audit team responsible for ELD program integrity. The Cross Agency Child Data System is one of the tools used by this team to help with analysis of ELD programs. This audit team will help establish procedures for disclosure review and auditing of the expanded system.
- Informing the public, including families, early childhood educators, and programs, of the existence of data systems that house personally identifiable information. Information about the Cross Agency Child Data System will be posted on the DECAL website. This information will detail what the system is, the purpose of the system, the data elements included, and contact information to respond to questions.
- Explaining what data elements are included in such a system. The data dictionary of all elements included in the system will be posted on the DECAL website for access by the public.
- Enabling parental consent to disclose personally identifiable information as appropriate. Parental consent is determined at the point of data entry. For instance, Head Start and Early Head start have an opt-out clause from inclusion in the Cross Agency Child Data System when the child is enrolled in the program. These processes are already in place for individual programs. In the Cross Agency Child Data System, each Participating Agency will be responsible for determining if data will require parental consent and how this should be communicated. Processes will be set up at the source system so that child records that do not have

parental consent will not be passed to the Cross Agency Child Data System.

- Describing allowable and potential uses of the data. Currently, allowable and potential uses of the data are determined by the DECAL legal team with input from the audit department. For the expanded system, members of the Data Management Committee, with approval from the Georgia Children’s Cabinet, will be responsible for defining and documenting the allowable and potential uses of the data.

High-Quality Plan for Building and Enhancing an Early Learning Data System

The purpose of this High-Quality Data Plan is to increase the amount and type of data collected about children with high needs in the Cross Agency Child Data System and to make this data readily available to relevant stakeholders

(a) Key Goals

1. To further Georgia’s understanding of the programs in which children with high needs are participating to help inform policy decisions.
2. To make additional data available to Kindergarten teachers at the beginning of the school year to aid in instruction.
3. To increase the amount of data available to the public when making decisions about the location of high-quality providers and services.
4. To make data available to programs that will streamline processes, increase effectiveness, and aid in decision making.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Complete Phase 2 of the Cross Agency Child Data System.
2. Expand the collection of Essential Data Elements by enhancing the Licensing Data System to allow input of data from ELD programs and child care resource and referral agencies.
3. Complete the rollout of GA TRAINS, the Georgia ELD training registration system.
4. Establish a Cross Agency Child Data System governance structure.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
<p>Activity 1: Complete Phase 2 of the Cross Agency Child Data System Aligned Goal: 1, 2</p>		
<p>Expanding the Cross Agency Child Data System will allow more timely access to critical program data for relevant stakeholders. The focus of this activity is to continue to expand the data available on children with high needs. When appropriate, this data will be linked to the state longitudinal data system to track a child’s development through the education system and into the workforce.</p> <p>This activity will focus on collecting additional data from the following Participating State Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Public Health: Birth registration data about children with developmental risk factors and IDEA Part C data (Goal 1) • Department of Human Services: TANF and SNAP data (Goal 1) • Department of Education: IDEA Part B data (Goal 1) • Governor’s Office for Children and Families: Home visitation data (Goal 1) • Head Start and Early Head Start: Assessment data (Goal 2) 	<p>The Cross Agency Child Data System is housed at DECAL. Agency operational systems collect the data statewide.</p>	<p>The infrastructure for the Cross Agency Child Data System is currently in place. A unique child identifier (GA AWARDS ID) is assigned when a child enters the system. DECAL will work with Participating State Agencies to create extracts that conform to the standard interface file format for inclusion in the system.</p> <p>Currently, Georgia collects assessment data for Georgia’s Pre-K students and provides this data through the Cross Agency Child Data System to the Department of Education for access by Kindergarten teachers. This activity will expand this same functionality to Head Start and Early Head Start.</p>
<p>Activity 2: Expand the collection of Essential Data Elements by enhancing the Licensing Data System to allow input of data from ELD programs and child care resource and referral agencies Aligned Goal: Key Goals 3 and 4</p>		
<p>Currently, data is collected from providers through disparate sources. Licensing consultants collect paper copies that are entered into the Licensing Data System manually. Providers may contact DECAL directly to have their data updated. Child care resource and referral agencies collect data through their call center but maintain this data in an entirely different database. Child care subsidy case workers have clients take a paper form to the provider to obtain information. Georgia needs to streamline this process and have all stakeholders making</p>	<p>The data system is housed at DECAL and accessible statewide.</p>	<p>This activity requires the development of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider Web Portal: allows providers to enter data and to perform other functions that will streamline provider operations • CCR&R Web Portal: allows CCR&Rs to enter provider data and provides detailed

<p>decisions from one central database. This activity will fill that need. A wealth of data collected as a result of this activity, such as provider rates and services, will be added to the Cross Agency Child Data System. Additionally, much of this data will be made available to the public on the DECAL website and through a mobile application to help inform families where quality ELD programs can be located.</p>		<p>information for referrals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidy Case Worker Portal: provides detailed information for referrals • DECAL website: enhancements to the provider search functionality to add additional data elements that will allow the public to make more informed decisions about appropriate child care. <p>A provider stakeholder group will be engaged to ensure the portal meets their needs for ease of entry of data. Child care resource and referral agencies and DECAL will work jointly in design sessions to ensure the system meets call center needs.</p>
<p>Activity 3: Complete the rollout of GA TRAINS, the Georgia ELD training registration system Aligned Goal: Key Goals 3 and 4</p>		
<p>Georgia currently does not have a holistic view of what types and amounts of training are being offered throughout the state. Also, there is no one central place for teachers to go to view what training is available in their area. Teachers are required to send copies of their training completion certificates to the Professional Standards Commission for verification so their Professional Development Registry record can be updated. Tracking “no shows” and repeat trainings varies by program and is a manual process.</p> <p>GA TRAINS remedies these deficiencies. Features will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability for teachers to register for training through the Professional Development Registry offering a “one stop 	<p>The data system is housed at DECAL and accessible statewide.</p>	<p>The first phase of GA TRAINS is already underway and will be completed August, 2014. This first phase addresses several of the major trainings that occur each year such as Core Rules training, Pre-K training, Infant-Toddler training, and TQRIS training. This activity will expand GA TRAINS to include all state approved trainings.</p> <p>Stakeholder meetings with CCR&Rs, provider chains, private trainers, and teachers will be reconvened. These stakeholders met in 2011 to provide input about the system but action was never taken due to</p>

<p>shop” for them to manage their professional development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will no longer have to send their credentials to the Professional Standards Commission. Instructors will verify class completion in the system so that records can be updated automatically in the Professional Development Registry. • Ability for trainers to maintain rosters • Accurate metrics that detail what training is being offered throughout the state, where the training is occurring, and who is taking the training • Specific types of training can be targeted throughout the state based on state licensing metrics (injuries, accidents, citations) and assessment data (CLASS, ERS) 		<p>lack of funding.</p> <p>A public relations plan will be created to educate the ELD community about the system.</p>
<p>Activity 4: Establish a Cross Agency Child Data System governance structure Aligned Goal: All</p>		
<p>Currently, with the exception of Head Start and Early Head Start, all programs in the Cross Agency Child Data System are housed at DECAL. Because additional agencies will be adding data to the system, a cross agency governance structure is required. This structure will be modeled after the data governance structure already in place for the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System.</p>	<p>Georgia Children’s Cabinet</p>	<p>A Data Management Committee will be appointed by the Georgia Children’s Cabinet and tasked with developing the written policies and procedures that ensure the quality, privacy, and integrity of the data in the Cross Agency Child Data System. This committee will also be responsible for setting up and assigning members to the Data Research Committee as well as designating Data Stewards in each Participating Agency. This committee will be appointed at the start of the grant period and complete the written policies prior to the completion of the new data feeds into the system.</p>

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Cross Agency Child Data System								
CACDS – Dept of Education	X	X	X	X				
CACDS – Dept of Public Health	X	X	X	X				
CACDS – Dept of Human Services		X	X	X	X			
CACDS – Governor’s Office for Children and Families		X	X	X	X			
CACDS - Head Start Assessment Data			X	X	X			
Activity 2: Enhancement of Licensing Data System								
Expansion of Licensing to include Provider Self-service		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Activity 3: GA Trains								
Expansion of GA TRAINS to all approved trainers		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Activity 4: Governance Structure								
Establish a cross agency governance structure	X	X	X					

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

Activity 1: Complete Phase 2 of the Cross Agency Child Data System

DECAL’s Chief Information Officer will be responsible for delivery of Activity 1. The Commissioner of the DECAL will be the executive sponsor. The Cross Agency Child Data System Project Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day deliverables and budget. IT specialists will be engaged from the Participating Agencies (GaDOE, DHS, DPH, and GOCF). The DECAL Research Director will oversee data integrity and ensure proper data elements are being collected.

Activity 2: Expand the collection of Essential Data Elements by enhancing the Licensing Data System to allow input of provider data by providers and child care resource and referral

agencies

DECAL's Chief Information Officer will be responsible for delivery of Activity 2. The Deputy Commissioner of Programs at the DECAL will be the executive sponsor. The Licensing Data System Project Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day deliverables and budget. In addition, this person will be responsible for organizing key stakeholders meetings with providers and child care resource and referral agencies to finalize requirements. The Assistant Commissioner of Child Care Services will be responsible for communicating with providers during the rollout. IT specialists from the child care resource and referral agencies will be engaged.

Activity 3: Complete the rollout of GA TRAINS, the Georgia ELD training registration system

DECAL's Chief Information Officer will be responsible for delivery of Activity 3. The Deputy Commissioner of Programs at the DECAL will be the executive sponsor. The Professional Development System Project Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day deliverables and budget. In addition, this person will be responsible for reconvening the key stakeholders to ensure that requirements have not changed. These meetings will include family and center providers (including major chains), the Professional Standards Commission, child care resource and referral agencies, training providers, university and technical colleges, and teachers. This person will also be responsible for managing the awareness campaign of the system to the ELD community.

Activity 4: Establish a Cross Agency Child Data System governance policy

The lead responsibility for completing Activity 4 will rest with the Georgia Children's Cabinet. Agency heads from Participating Agencies will designate a representative (preferably the CIO) to serve on the Data Management Committee. A chair and vice chair will be elected that will report progress to the Georgia Children's Cabinet. The Data Management Committee will be responsible for creating the written policies to ensure the quality, privacy, and integrity of the Cross Agency Child Data System. This committee will also set up and assign members of the Data Research Committee and Data Stewards in each Participating Agency. The project manager who oversees all the data projects in E(2) will coordinate the tasks necessary for the setup of the governance structure and ensure successful completion.

(e) Financial Resources

Project 12: Unified Data System

Selection Criterion: E2

This project will build on the existing data systems and expand our data collection capacity. This data collection capacity will continue to inform our research efforts and facilitate stronger evaluation capacity. Activities for this project include expanding the quantity and quality of data collected and creating access points for providers to both enter and extract data for their own use. DECAL is the lead agency for this project. The enhancements to the early learning data system will be managed by a Project Manager residing at DECAL. This Project Manager will create the project plan and will be responsible for delivery of the project on time and within budget. The Project Manager will work with Participating Agency Data Stewards and representatives on the Data Governance and Research Committees to ensure all tasks in other agencies are completed. Efforts in this area will also be used to facilitate greater family engagement by making data more readily available at the program and child level.

Project 12: Unified Data System Selection Criteria: E2 Total Project Budget: \$ 5,142,027		
	Name	Funds Requested
Lead Agency	Department of Early Care and Learning	\$3,042,290
Participating State Agency	Department of Education	\$0
Participating State Agency	Department of Human Resources	\$70,145
Participating State Agency	Department of Public Health	\$57,433
Participating State Agency	Governor’s Office for Children and Families	\$0

(f) Supporting Evidence

Supporting evidence can be found in the narrative above where it is referenced in the appendices.

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable.

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

The needs of all early learning and development programs are represented on the Georgia Children’s Cabinet. Unified child data is a major emphasis for the Cabinet, and its members strongly agree on the importance of the Cross Agency Child Data System. Funding from the ELC grant will allow the expansion of data to important areas such as home visitation data, birth record data, and children with disabilities. The activities in this section will expand the number of state programs represented in the Cross Agency Child Data System.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

The expansion of the Cross Agency Child Data System is clearly targeted to children with high needs. Additional data elements to be collected in CACDS include:

- Child and family participation in TANF
- Child and family participation in SNAP
- Children at high risk for developmental delays identified through birth record screenings
- Child participation in IDEA Part B and Part C
- Assessment data from Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant Head Start that will help inform Kindergarten teachers

Georgia’s Cross Agency Child Data System has the infrastructure already in place to allow this data to be readily added into GA AWARDS, the state’s P-20 longitudinal data system. By addressing the programs listed above, Georgia will have a better understanding about the programs in which children are participating, how prepared they are when entering Kindergarten, and how they progress through school.

The collection of additional data elements through the proposed expansion of the Licensing Data System to allow data entry of information by ELD programs and child care resource and referral agencies will allow parents of children with high needs to more easily identify appropriate quality early learning and development facilities and services. This expansion will also allow child care subsidy case workers access to more timely and relevant information to direct applicants to quality providers.

The completion of GA TRAINS will provide data that will allow detailed analysis of professional learning opportunities for teachers. Georgia will be able to identify the types, amounts, and locations of trainings offered throughout the state to ensure that training for ELD professionals who serve children with high needs is properly addressed.

VII. COMPETITION PRIORITIES

Note about Absolute Priorities: Absolute priorities describe items that a State must address in order to receive a grant.

Priority 1: Absolute Priority -- Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Applicants do not write a separate response to this priority. Rather, they address this priority throughout their responses to the selection criteria. Applications must meet the absolute priority to be considered for funding. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority.

Note about Competitive Preference Priorities: Competitive preference priorities can earn the applicant extra or "competitive preference" points.

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Including All Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (10 points)

Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will meet this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30th of the fourth year of the grant--

(a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number

of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will determine whether an applicant has met this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

If the State chooses to respond to this competitive preference priority, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring this priority, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the priority is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); and the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Introduction

To ensure the availability of safe, healthy, high-quality ELD programs to all families, the Department of Early Care and Learning is authorized and empowered to establish, maintain, extend, and improve the regulation of early care and education programs by providing consultation and implementation of such programs and by licensing and inspecting periodically all such programs to ensure their adherence rules and regulations. Said authority is granted by general statute O.C.G.A. § 20-1A et seq. As part of Georgia’s ambitious yet achievable plan to enhance our ELD system, Governor Nathan Deal has set the expectation that:

- 1) All providers granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs shall be required to participate in Quality Rated no later than June 30, 2017.
- 2) Current statute O.C.G.A. § 20-1A-2(7) defining a “Family day care home” be changed to reflect enrollment of at least two but not more than six children under 13 years of age who are not related to such person.

Quality Rated, Georgia’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, is the framework that is improving quality statewide and is increasing the number of high-quality options available to children and families. Quality Rated serves as the implementation driver for improving access to higher quality experiences for children with high needs. It is through Quality Rated that such access will be ensured for children in every type of ELD program in every county in the state.

Priority 2 (a) Licensing and Inspection System Covering All Programs

1. Georgia’s licensing and inspection system currently covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the state and meet the statutory definition of child care, including family day care homes (FDCH) that regularly care for three or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting. As discussed in Priority 2 subsection (b) and in the High-Quality Plan below, Georgia will propose a statute change (O.C.G.A. §20-1A-2(7)) for the definition of a FDCH to lower the minimum number of children regularly in care required to be included in licensure requirements from

three to two. This change will be phased in with a proposed effective date of June 30, 2017. Georgia currently groups ELD programs in three general categories: **Family Day Care Homes (FDCH)** – defined in statute O.C.G.A. §20-1A-2(7) “Family day care home” means a private residence operated by any person who receives therein for pay for supervision and care fewer than 24 hours per day, without transfer of legal custody, at least three but not more than six children under 13 years of age who are not related to such person and whose parents or guardians are not residents in the same private residence; provided, however, that the total number of unrelated children cared for in such home, for pay and not for pay, may not exceed six children under 13 years of age at one time.

2. **Group Day Care Homes (GDCH)** – defined in statute O.C.G.A. §20-1A-2(8) “Group day care home” means any place operated by any person or group wherein are received for pay not less than seven nor more than 18 children under 18 years of age for care and supervision for less than 24 hours per day.
3. **Child Care Learning Center (CCLC)** – defined in statute O.C.G.A. §20-1A-2 (2) “Child care learning center” means any place operated by a person, society, agency, corporation, institution, or group wherein are received for pay for group care for less than 24 hours per day, without transfer of legal custody, 19 or more children under 18 years of age.

The following types of programs serving children birth to age 5 are exempt from licensure (see Georgia R. & Regs. r. 591-1-1-.46 Exemptions) and are not otherwise regulated by the state. These programs will be **REQUIRED** to participate in Quality Rated if receiving state benefits or federal CCDF funds starting June 30, 2017:

1. Accredited private non-public educational programs with an established curriculum for four-year-old children for the customary school day, as defined in Georgia law, that are not part of a full day child care learning center and are an integral part of an accredited private non-public school that provides elementary or secondary instruction or both, providing the accreditation specifically covers these ages; any before and/or after school

hours for four-year-old children who attend such a program as described above, provided the children do not leave the premises of the accredited private non-public school and the program is staffed with employees of that private non-public school.

2. Parent's Morning Out, Parent's Night Out, or similar programs which operate for no more than one session of up to four (4) consecutive hours per day and which limit attendance to no more than eight (8) hours a week per child.
3. Nursery schools, playschools, kindergartens or other educational programs for children two (2) years through six (6) years of age which operate for no more than four (4) consecutive hours per day.
4. Short-term educational or recreational activities or classes for children in which the supervision and care of the children are incidental to their participation in the activity or training in specific subjects, such as, but not limited to, music lessons, dance classes, swim lessons, etc. The provider is not assuming responsibility for supervision and care of the children outside of the classes or activities the children participate in and shall not advertise or otherwise represent that child care services are offered.
5. Any short-term child care service provided by an establishment, such as, but not limited to, a religious facility, health club, or retail store.
6. A center that is licensed by the department may request an exemption from licensure if the center's program is an integral part of an established religious congregation or religious school that conducts regularly scheduled classes, courses of study, or educational programs and is a member of or accredited by or certified by a state, regional, or national accrediting agency for religious educational instruction or a state, regional, or national accrediting agency for educational instruction as recognized and approved by the department if such accrediting entity uses standards that are substantially similar to those established by the department.

Priority 2 (b) All ELD Programs Participating in TQRIS

All ELD programs in Georgia granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs shall be required to participate in Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System no later than June 30, 2017. Governor Nathan Deal has set the expectation that a proposed rule change be brought before the Board of Early

Care and Learning in February 2014. It is expected that the full board, acting on recommendation from the Governor and Commissioner Bobby Cagle, will vote to move forward with the recommendation for the rule change. If the Board authorizes DECAL to begin the process of amending our rules, the Child Care Services division, in cooperation with the Quality Initiatives division, will start the process of rule drafting. Consultation with affected ELD providers and provider associations will be specifically sought at this point in the process. Typically, drafting a proposed rule takes between 30-90 days. Once DECAL legal staff and the Child Care Services division properly draft the new rule, and it is approved by the commissioner, it will be posted to the agency website for a minimum of 30 days as required by the Georgia Administrative Procedures Act § 50-13-4 (procedural requirements for adoption, amendment, or repeal of rules; emergency rules; limitation on action to contest rule; legislative override), and the public will be invited to comment on the proposed rule. Concurrently with the public posting and comment period, a series of regional community forums and webinars will be convened to present the proposed rule and provide an opportunity for public feedback and discussion. At the close of the 30-day public comment period, the rules will be finalized for consideration by the Board of Early Care and Learning. The new rule requiring All ELD programs in Georgia granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds to participate in Quality Rated by June 30, 2017 will then be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Board of Early Care and Learning. The target date for enactment of the new rule will be September 2015 with full implementation by June 30, 2017. Once adopted, the final rule is forwarded to the Secretary of State's Office for inclusion in the administrative code for Georgia.

High-Quality Plan to Include All ELD Programs in the TQRIS

(a) Key Goals

1. 100% of ELD programs in Georgia granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs shall be participating as per state statute in Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, no later than June 30, 2017
2. Current statute O.C.G.A. §20-1A-2(7) defining a "Family day care home" be changed to reflect enrollment of at least two but not more than six children under 13 years of age who are

not related to such person.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
<p>Activity 1: Proposed rule changes (Quality Rated required participation and FDCH definition) be brought before the Board of Early Care and Learning in February 2014</p>		
<p>Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
<p>Increase ELD program quality, supporting higher outcomes for young children increasing access to high-quality ELD programs for ALL families</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 2: Child Care Services division in cooperation with the Quality Initiatives division starts the process of rule drafting</p>		
<p>Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
<p>Increase ELD program quality, supporting higher outcomes for young children increasing access to high-quality ELD programs for ALL families</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 3: Consultation with affected ELD providers and provider associations will be specifically sought</p>		
<p>Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
<p>Increase ELD program quality, supporting higher outcomes for young children increasing access to high-quality ELD programs for ALL families</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 4: Invite public to comment on the proposed rules</p>		
<p>Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
<p>Increase ELD program quality, supporting higher outcomes for young children increasing access to high-quality ELD programs for ALL families</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Activity 5: Convene a series of regional community forums and webinars to present the rules and provide an opportunity for public feedback and discussion</p>		
<p>Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
<p>Increase ELD program quality, supporting higher outcomes for young children increasing access to high-quality ELD programs for ALL families.</p>	<p>Statewide</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p>Activity 6: Finalize rules for consideration by the Board of Early Care and Learning placed on the agenda for the next Board of Early Care and Learning meeting. The target date for enactment of the new rule will be September 2014 with full implementation by June 30, 2017 Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
Increase ELD program quality, supporting higher outcomes for young children increasing access to high-quality ELD programs for ALL families	Statewide	N/A
<p>Activity 7: Provide training and technical assistance targeted to ELD settings to support seamless transition to participation in Quality Rated Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
Support success for all ELD settings participating in Quality Rated	Statewide	N/A
<p>Activity 8: Develop internal policies and procedures to support new rule Aligned Goal: 1</p>		
Support success for all ELD settings transitioning into Quality Rated	Statewide	N/A
<p>Activity 9: Change current statute O.C.G.A. §20-1A-2(7) defining a "Family day care home" to reflect enrollment of at least two but not more than six children under 13 years of age who are not related to such person Aligned Goal: 2</p>		
Support success for all ELD settings transitioning into Quality Rated	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1	X	X						
Activity 2	X	X						
Activity 3	X	X						
Activity 4	X	X						
Activity 5	X	X						
Activity 6							X	
Activity 7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 8	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 9		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

DECAL Commissioner
 Board of Early Care and Learning

DECAL Director of Quality Initiatives
DECAL Legal Counsel
DECAL Assistant Commissioner of Child Care Services
Stakeholder Groups
Governor's Policy Staff
Resource and Referral TA Staff

(e) Financial Resources

No funds required

(f) Supporting Evidence

New Rule
Revised statute

(g) Performance Measures, where applicable

Not applicable

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

The proposed rule change requiring 100% of ELD programs in Georgia granted a license or registration and/or receiving public funds for operation of ELD programs to participate as per state statute in Quality Rated, Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, no later than June 30, 2017 will address all early learning and development programs including:

- State-licensed or state-regulated programs or providers
- Georgia's Pre-K programs
- Any preschool program funded by the federal Government or state or local education agencies (including any IDEA-funded program)
- Early Head Start and Head Start programs
- A non-relative child care provider regulated by the state and who regularly cares for **two or more unrelated children for a fee** in a provider setting
- Early Head Start and 619 classrooms

Targeted focus groups prior to the rule adoption will be held to gather feedback on how to implement the change in a manner that is respectful and supportive of providers throughout

the state.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

Meeting the needs of ALL children, including children with high needs, is the priority in requiring participation in a quality rating and improvement system by all ELD settings.

Participation in Quality Rated provides all ELD settings and their staff access to: technical assistance, coaching, mentoring, and intentional professional development targeted to the diversity of Georgia's children and families. All Quality Rated policies and practices are designed to specifically address the needs of ALL children and families with specific attention to children:

- From low-income families
- Have disabilities or developmental delays
- English learners
- Migrant
- Homeless
- In foster care

Priority 3: Competitive Preference Priority -- Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry. (10 points)

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application, address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

For Competitive Preference Priority 3, a State will earn all ten (10) competitive preference priority points if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the competitive preference priority. A State earns zero points if a majority of reviewers determines that the applicant has not met the competitive preference priority.

Applicants do not write a separate response to this priority. Rather, applicants address Competitive Preference Priority 3 by writing to selection criterion (E)(1).

Priority 4: Competitive Preference Priority -- Creating Preschool through Third Grade Approaches to Sustain Improved Early Learning Outcomes through the Early Elementary Grades. (10 points)

Priority 4 is designed to build upon the State's High-Quality Plan to improve birth through age five early learning outcomes, and to sustain and extend improved early learning

outcomes through the early elementary school years, including by leveraging existing Federal, State, and local resources. The State will meet this priority based on the extent to which it describes a High-Quality Plan to improve the overall quality, alignment, and continuity of teaching and learning to serve children from preschool through third grade through such activities as--

- (a) Enhancing the State's kindergarten-through-third-grade standards to align them with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards across all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (b) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs from preschool through third grade, and building families' capacity to address these needs;
- (c) Implementing teacher preparation and professional development programs and strategies that emphasize developmental science and the importance of protective factors, pedagogy, and the delivery of developmentally appropriate content, strategies for identifying and addressing the needs of children experiencing social and emotional challenges, and effective family engagement strategies for educators, administrators, and related personnel serving children from preschool through third grade;
- (d) Implementing model systems of collaboration both within and between Early Learning and Development Programs and elementary schools to engage and support families and improve all transitions for children across the birth through third grade continuum;
- (e) Building or enhancing data systems to monitor the status of children's learning and development from preschool through third grade to inform families and support student progress in meeting critical educational benchmarks in the early elementary grades; and
- (f) Other efforts designed to increase the percentage of children who are able to read and do mathematics at grade level by the end of the third grade.

If the State chooses to respond to this competitive preference priority, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring this priority, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the priority is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); and the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Introduction

As demonstrated throughout the application, Georgia views its early childhood system as the foundation for the K-12 education system—and specifically views the birth to third grade continuum as a critical time for supporting children in becoming competent learners and successful students who will become productive employees and citizens. Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge State Plan is focused on increasing school readiness outcomes for all children—especially for children with high needs. The state will achieve this by increasing access to higher quality programs for children with high needs and increasing the quantity and quality of services offered to these populations—children from lower incomes, children identified with disabilities, and English language learners.

Under the leadership of Governor Deal, educational leaders and policymakers in Georgia are acutely focused on the status of children’s reading scores at third grade. As research continues to demonstrate, children who are not reading on grade level by third grade are significantly more likely to require special educational services and less likely to graduate. As discussed in (A)(1) and (A)(2), a cornerstone strategy is to increase the quality of services offered on the “front end.” In other words, improving quality in Georgia’s ELD programs will help “move the needle” in third grade reading.

However, the “needle” will only move so far if the state has not invested in creating mechanisms to sustain the gains made in ELD programs through early elementary grades. Therefore, Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda not only strengthens the strong foundation of high-quality early learning established with Georgia’s Pre-K program, but also targets key linkages between the state’s ELD program and early elementary grades. This includes connections between Pre-K and kindergarten at the community and state level. At the community level, this connection is evidenced through the joint professional development and instructional planning between Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers. At the state level, Georgia has built a strong data system enabling Pre-K child assessment data to be integrated into the K-12 longitudinal data system (see (E)(2)) and at the community level, Pre-K and kindergarten teachers jointly plan together to ensure strong instructional connections. In short, Georgia’s Pre-K Program has created opportunities for concrete connections between ELD providers and elementary schools.

However, to sustain the improved early learning outcomes through the early elementary

grades, it is imperative that these connections begin long before Georgia's Pre-K and continue through third grade. The goal of Georgia's High-Quality Plan is to strengthen connections across the birth to third grade continuum (beginning with early learning and development programs and schools in each E³Z) that will sustain the improved outcomes for children.

To accomplish this work, there are several established initiatives currently in place that will be used to ground Georgia's High-Quality Plan for sustaining outcomes through the early grades. These initiatives include:

- **The Georgia Campaign for Grade-Level Reading:** Georgia is partnering with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to create a statewide campaign focused on all children reading on grade level by 3rd grade. Guided by a high-level statewide steering committee, and subcommittees focused on data and communications, the Georgia Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (Campaign) is a statewide, broad-based coalition of hundreds of public and private stakeholders that share the goal of ensuring that each and every child in Georgia is a proficient reader by the time they leave third grade (Appendix 59). The Campaign is galvanizing state and local agencies and organizations to collectively increase the current percentage of children reading proficiently to 60 percent by 2015 and continue that progress until the state achieves universal third grade reading proficiency. The Campaign's role includes creating platforms designed for maximum stakeholder participation, promoting ongoing advances in practice, and channeling proven practices and research findings to inform policy. The campaign is involved in purposeful activities that will focus on the needs of individual communities and specific groups of children (e.g., English language learners, children with disabilities, and children from lower incomes) (cf. Read, 2012).
- **A Vision for Public Education Project:** In 2010, the Georgia School Boards Association and the Georgia School Superintendents Association have entered into a partnership for the purpose of creating a new vision for public education in the State of Georgia. Local boards of education and superintendents, through this partnership, have created opportunities to engage stakeholders in the important work of creating a vision for the future of public education in Georgia. A major component of the project is Early Learning and Student Success and the recommendations include the adoption of a pre-k

through grade 3 integrated education model for all children ages 4- 8 (see Appendix 60).

- **Frontiers of Innovation (FOI):** In 2013, Georgia was selected to be the second state to participate in the Frontiers of Innovation (FOI) project through the Harvard Center for the Developing Child. The goal of FOI is to bring about substantially greater positive impacts for vulnerable young children whose needs (or the needs of their caregivers) are not being fully met by existing policies and programs. To do that, FOI seeks to spur change in the field by forging cross-sector collaborations that prompt creativity, support experimentation, and foster learning from experience³⁶. In August 2013, the Governor's Office, the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Georgia Department of Public Health, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students and staff from the Harvard Center met to create a charter to guide the initial work of FOI in Georgia (Appendix 61).
- **Georgia's College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI):** Georgia was one of 10 states granted a waiver from the federal No Child Left Behind Act in February 2012. The state created a new accountability system called the College and Career Ready Performance Index, which will be implemented in the spring of 2014. The index will provide parents with more detailed information about how schools in the state are performing. The index gives parents a much more comprehensive overview than the pass/fail system previously in place under Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The CCRPI includes a School Climate Star Rating (Georgia Department of Education, 2013).

The work that the four initiatives are currently undergoing will be used to leverage a statewide focus on sustaining ELD outcomes through early elementary grades. Georgia's High-Quality Plan proposes to develop Birth to Eight teams in the E³Zs. The goal of the teams is to develop strategies to address the birth to continuum that could serve as a model for strengthening coordination between early childhood and early childhood leveraging the state level initiatives mentioned above. Teams will be composed of key stakeholders within the community including pre-kindergarten through third grade teachers; infant, toddler, and preschool teachers, including early intervention and preschool special education teachers; elementary school principals; early

³⁶ http://developingchild.harvard.edu/activities/frontiers_of_innovation/

learning and development program administrators; families; community partners; business representatives; and the local Family Connection Collaboratives. Each E³Z coordinator will be responsible for convening the teams and managing the logistics. Teams will select a chairperson and other key positions. These Birth to Eight teams will be expanded to other areas of the state by 2017.

The following narrative addresses each of the following subsections of this competitive priority. Under each subsection, we will describe the work that is currently being done and detail proposals for strengthening each of the efforts. Much of the work will be completed in the Birth to Eight teams, though there may be some activities done outside of the teams. Georgia's High-Quality Plan at the end of this section summarizes the specific activities.

Priority 4 (a) Enhancing K-3 Standards to Align with the State's ELDS

Georgia has given careful and thorough attention to creating a seamless birth to third grade standards alignment. As discussed in (C)(1), an extensive, research-based, stakeholder-engaged process was utilized to revise the previous standards into a new set of standards. The revised Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) are better aligned for the birth to five population, are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate, and are aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for K-3. The GELDS reflect common learning domains across all ages, birth to five, and are aligned with the Essential Domains of School Readiness.

An independent review of the standards by national experts, Drs. Catherine Scott-Little and Sharon Lynn Kagan (2011), found that the GELDS are appropriately aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for K-3 and are presented in a format that works across all populations of educators and for all populations of children. As described in the research findings in Appendix 28, Kagan and Scott-Little conducted further examination of the alignment of the GELDS for children ages 48-60 months in the areas of communication, language, and literacy and mathematics with the Georgia Performance Standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten.

Kagan and Scott-Little's review found that the GELDS provide appropriate alignment with all matching domains in Georgia's GPS for kindergarten. However, there are two gaps in the domains represented. The K-3 standards lack both a specific social and emotional domain

and a specific approaches to learning domain. These behaviors and learning goals are represented in the K-3 standards, but they are embedded within the other domains and are assessed in the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Skills (GKIDS). Therefore, Georgia will convene a work group to review the two sets of standards. The group will make recommendations for a stronger connection between the GELDS and GPS in these areas. This work will be supported by the Georgia Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, which has a special interest in incorporating social and emotional support in K-3 classroom environments to foster positive classroom environments that strengthen children's reading ability.

Furthermore, the work on the standards will be aligned with the review of the GKIDS domains as part of the creation of the Kindergarten Entry Profile. The development of the Kindergarten Entry Profile is outlined in Section (E)(1).

Priority 4 (b) Preschool through Third Grade Health, Behavioral, and Developmental Needs

Through work associated with the K-12 Race to the Top grant, Georgia is making significant investments in the health, behavioral, and developmental skills of children with high needs. In 2011, Georgia was the first state in the nation to include school climate as an early indicator in its proposed accountability system. The School Climate Star Rating, which can be used as a diagnostic tool, will be officially reported in the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) in December 2013. There are four components used to calculate the School Climate Star Rating: 1) school climate; 2) attendance; 3) student discipline; and 4) safe and substance-free learning environment. The school climate rating awards schools points for implementing key initiatives such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)³⁷, Response to Intervention (RTI), and Evidence-based Programs (EBP) which directly impact children's health, behavioral and developmental needs. These initiatives are implemented with fidelity and approved by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This

³⁷Since 2008, Georgia has been recognized as a PBIS implementing state. The goal of the PBIS Unit at the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is to support high fidelity implementation of positive behavioral interventions and supports across the state for all students. The PBIS unit supports building regional capacity throughout the state by providing technical assistance, training, and coaching to implementing districts. Over the last four years, the GaDOE PBIS unit has trained over 350 school teams representing nearly every region of the state.

means that many of the efforts in high-quality ELD programs will be continued in the K-12 system.

Since 2008, Georgia has been a PBIS implementing state. The premise of PBIS is that continual teaching, combined with acknowledgement or feedback of positive student behavior will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety and learning. PBIS schools apply a multi-tiered approach to prevention, using disciplinary data and principles of behavior analysis to develop school-wide, targeted and individualized interventions and supports to improve school climate for all students³⁸. More than 350 Georgia schools have been trained by the GaDOE PBIS team and over 50% of those are elementary schools. In partnership with GaDOE, DECAL is currently establishing early childhood PBIS teams that will participate in training, technical assistance, and coaching activities to improve classroom climate and decrease discipline issues.

Georgia will identify elementary schools that have implemented the PBIS framework where there are already positive support teams in place and help them link with ELD programs in the area. Those teams will meet regularly to discuss and engage in joint PBIS professional development opportunities. This approach will establish continuity across the learning environments serving children birth to age eight while also supporting families in building positive strategies for supporting their child. Depending on the success, additional opportunities will be offered statewide.

Another key task of the Birth to Eight teams, related to improving climate to stabilize learning environments, will be to identify specific interventions being done at the K-3 level or ELD level and look for alignment and linkage opportunities. This process will begin with an understanding of the school climate measure discussed above and then identification of specific linkages across other key programs. One effort underway is the inclusion of climate as a pillar of the Third Grade Reading Campaign which is promoting statewide implementation of PBIS. As a result of the Campaign, beginning with a pilot in the 2013-14 school year, the Georgia Department of Education is adding a third through fifth grade component to the school-level climate index rating to take effect in 2014-15 and efforts are underway with support from Campaign partners to develop measures appropriate for preschool to third grade.

³⁸ OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports, 2009

Priority 4 (c) Strategies for Preschool through Third Grade Personnel

Georgia already has some strategies for connecting preschool through third grade personnel but will provide additional opportunities to strengthening classroom practices across the spectrum. In many school districts, there are already linkages between Georgia's Pre-K teachers, Head Start teachers and Kindergarten teachers. This includes developing student learning objectives that are part of the state's K-12 teacher accountability system designed under Race to the Top. Additionally, Georgia's Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers have worked together in implementing and selecting the formative assessments used in both Pre-K and Kindergarten. Many school systems also create transition opportunities between their Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start and Kindergarten.

Georgia proposes to utilize the Birth to Eight teams to offer more joint professional development opportunities for Preschool and Third Grade Personnel. Potential opportunities include the CLASS-based training given to Georgia's Pre-K teachers and the family engagement training offered in high-quality ELD programs.

Additionally, the Birth to Eight teams will be charged with creating "teacher colleague" programs in each E³Z. Utilizing the Vision Project discussed above, each Birth to Eight team will create a teacher colleague program where a K-3 teacher is paired with an early childhood educator to strengthen their classroom practices. Groups of teams will meet three times a year and complete activities related to the GELDS, PBIS, and other topics as identified. These teams will also identify professional development opportunities across programs serving children birth to third grade that would increase the knowledge, skills and credentials of the workforce.

Priority 4 (d) Collaboration between ELD Programs and Elementary Schools

Similar to the above subsection, this is another area where there are connections through the Georgia's Pre-K Program and Head Start. Several state initiatives work with both Georgia's Pre-K and elementary schools. These include the Striving Readers Grant and the Governor's Reading Mentor Program. Both initiatives -- the former a federal grant and the latter a state initiative designed to impact third grade reading -- focus on improving literacy and reading ability. They work in Pre-K through 3rd grade classrooms.

The professional development activities discussed above will obviously increase

collaboration, but there are other opportunities for additional linkages. Working with the Grade-Level Reading Campaign and Frontiers of Innovation, the state will create and implement a short Birth to Eight collaboration needs assessment survey. The survey will be designed and implemented in each E³Z. The survey will not be time-consuming, but will assist each E³Z coordinator in working with the team to design specific activities. Furthermore, it will be the catalyst that leads the charge for each Birth to Eight team. Following the survey distribution and completion, the Birth to Eight teams will also be charged with creating opportunities.

Priority 4 (e) Data Systems to Monitor Learning and Development from Preschool through Third Grade

A key strength of Georgia's ELD system is the ability to link data from its early learning programs to the K-12 system. This link is particularly strong between Georgia's Pre-K Program and Kindergarten, where Pre-K assessment data is made available to Kindergarten teachers to help individualize instruction. This data is also available to the child's family through local school systems' web portals. Student demographic and assessment data is included in the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS) where detailed analysis can be performed by the state about child progress into 3rd grade and beyond. The P-20 State Longitudinal Data System makes it possible for the Department of Education to monitor child progress, and for DECAL to determine program effectiveness. The data systems currently in place provide important feedback about children's progress from Pre-K to third grade.

The Birth to Eight teams will use the information from the State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS), System and the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS), which is outlined in (E)(2), to help identify additional opportunities to strengthen connection between ELD programs and K-3.

As discussed above, Georgia is acutely focused on reading on grade level by third grade. This includes a statewide Grade-Level Reading Campaign (sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation) and the new Frontiers of Innovation project that is targeted to identifying key populations and geographic areas where additional activities are needed. These efforts will greatly impact grade-level reading for third grade.

Through the Striving Reader Initiative, Georgia DOE has developed a reading continuum that begins at birth and goes through 12th grade. The reading continuum was developed by The

Georgia Literacy Task Force which consists of university professors, classroom teachers and parents with expertise in early literacy, elementary literacy and adolescent literacy. This group was tasked with developing Georgia's State Literacy Plan as well as the documents supporting the plan's implementation in schools. To provide professional development on the reading continuum, The Comprehensive Reading Solutions online modules were designed for birth-12 educators as a free training resource. The modules are separated into the following groups: birth to five, grades K-5, grades 6-12.

Other potential areas of collaboration include expanding the Striving Readers program to non-Georgia's Pre-K programs and partnering the coaches from the Governor's Reading Mentor Program with the consultants from Georgia's Pre-K and Quality Rated to conduct professional development opportunities around literacy for teams of early childhood educators and K-3 teachers.

High-Quality Plan to Improve the Overall Quality, Alignment, and Continuity of Teaching and Learning

(a) Key Goals

1. Examine the alignment between the GELDS and the GPS/GPS for K-3 and provide recommendations for improvement.
2. Improve early learning outcomes by identifying additional areas of collaboration between ELD programs and K-3.
3. Strengthen existing and create new professional development opportunities for birth through third educators.
4. Promote the use of existing data systems to improve early learning outcomes.

(b) Key Activities, Rationale and, if applicable, Scale-Up Plans

1. Convene a work group to examine the alignment between GELDS and CCGPS/GPS for K-3, specifically looking at social and emotional development and approaches to play and learning.
2. Create the Birth to Eight teams to identify areas that need improvement, develop strategies to sustain connections across the birth to eight continuum, and sustain improved early learning outcomes through the early elementary grades.

3. Identify elementary schools that have implemented the PBIS framework and align with early child PBIS teams. Conduct joint professional development.
4. Identify and develop two professional development opportunities each year for birth through third educators that aim to strengthen the birth to third grade connection and improve early learning outcomes.
5. Use the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) and the state longitudinal data system (GA AWARDS) to monitor and design activities to support a preschool through third grade approach.

Rationale	Where Implemented	Scale-up Plan
Activity 1: Convene a work group to examine the alignment between GELDS and GPS for K-3, specifically looking at social and emotional development and approaches to play and learning. Aligned Goal: 1		
While both the GELDS and KEA cover social and emotional learning as a separate domain, the Kindergarten Georgia Performance Standards (KGPS0 addresses it as individual standards but not as a separate domain. Approaches to learning is covered in the GELDS and KEA but is not addressed in the KGPS. There is a need for better alignment across the standards and KEA.	Statewide	N/A
Activity 2: Create the Birth to Eight Teams to identify areas that need improvement, develop strategies to sustain connections across the birth to eight continuum, and sustain improved early learning outcomes through the early elementary grades. Aligned Goal: 2		
There is the need to establish concrete connections between ELD educators and programs to early elementary educators and elementary schools to sustain increased early learning outcomes into elementary school.	E ³ Zs	Depending on the success of the implementation, these teams will be scaled up to additional communities through the state.
Activity 3: Identify elementary schools that have implemented the PBIS framework and align with early child PBIS teams. Conduct joint professional development. Aligned Goal: 3		
This activity will establish continuity across the learning environments serving children birth to age eight through promotion of and support in implementing PBIS.	Selected Communities	This model will be scaled up through the GaDOE PBIS Network.
Activity 4: Birth to Eight teams will be tasked with identifying and developing two professional development opportunities each year for birth through third educators that aim to strengthen the birth to third grade connection and improve early learning outcomes. Aligned Goal: 3		
There is the need to establish concrete connections between ELD educators and programs to early elementary educators and elementary schools to sustain increased early	E ³ Zs	Depending on the success of the implementation, these opportunities will be scaled up to additional communities through

learning outcomes into elementary school.		the state.
Activity 5: Use the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) and the state longitudinal data system (GA AWARDS) to monitor and design activities to support a preschool through third grade approach.		
Aligned Goal: 4		
The data in CACDS will allow the state to identify specific drivers increasing child outcomes or sustaining child outcomes in elementary school.	Statewide	N/A

(c) Timeline and Milestones for each Key Activity

Activity/Milestone	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec	Jan-June	July-Dec
Activity 1: Work group to examine alignment between GELDS and CCGPS/GPS for K-3.								
Determine which social and emotional skills and approaches to play and learning skills are embedded in the CCGPS/GPS and which are not.		X	X					
Make recommendations to GaDOE on how CCGPS/GPS can better align with the social and emotional domain and the approaches to play in learning domain in the GELDS.				X	X			
Activity 2: Birth to Eight Teams								
Adopt and implement the indicators-based definition of school readiness as outlined by the National School Readiness Indicators Initiative.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Create “teacher colleague” programs in each E ³ Z where a K-3 teacher is paired with an early childhood educator that will meet three times a year and complete activities related to the GELDS, PBIS, and other topics as identified as being needed.			X	X	X	X	X	X
Examine specific interventions being done at the K-3 level or ELD level and look for alignment and linkage opportunities.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 3: PBIS Professional Development								
Identify connections between elementary schools implementing PBIS framework and ELD programs in the same area	X	X						
Provide PBIS professional development opportunities			X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity 4: Professional Development – Birth - 3 Educators								
Identify and develop at least two professional development opportunities each year in the E ³ Zs.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Conduct professional development for birth-3 educators.			X	X	X	X	X	X

(d) Party or Parties Responsible and Key Personnel Assigned

As discussed above, each E³Z coordinator will be responsible for forming and managing the logistics for the Birth to Eight teams. From DECAL, the Assistant Commissioner for Georgia's Pre-K, the Pre-K Quality Improvement director, and a high-level staff person (Associate Superintendent or higher will oversee the teams from the state level). Additional staff working on the project include a representative from the Georgia Department of Education PBIS and DECAL Statewide Inclusion Coordinator and Pre-K Inclusion Coordinator.

(e) Financial Resources

Existing resources from state agencies and local school systems will be used to support the work of Competitive Priority 4. In addition, public private partnerships, including the Annie E. Casey Georgia Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, will be leveraged.

(f) Supporting Evidence

Not applicable

(g) Performance Measures

Not applicable

(h) Addressing the Needs of Different Types of ELD Programs

All ELD programs and early childhood educators, including licensed child care programs, family day care providers, and Head Start and Early Start will be included in the activities as appropriate.

(i) Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs

Goals and activities in the ELC grant are all designed to sustain and extend improved early learning outcomes through the early elementary school years. Specific attention has been paid to ensuring that all activities focus on needs of individual communities and groups of children with high needs. Establishing Birth to Eight Teams in the E³Zs allows Georgia to specifically design strategies to reduce the achievement gap and ensure a smooth transition into early elementary years for children with high needs. Linking early learning data systems with the P-20 data system allows teachers and families access to information to use in monitoring

progress and individualizing instruction for children with high needs. Additionally, the improved classroom climate and the professional development for teachers on PBIS will support the social emotional development of children with high needs.

Priority 5: Competitive Preference Priority -- Addressing the Needs of Children in Rural Areas.
(5 points)

The State will meet this priority based on the extent to which it describes:

(a) How it will implement approaches to address the unique needs (e.g., limited access to resources) of children in rural areas, including rural areas with small populations; and

(b) How these approaches are designed to close educational and opportunity gaps for Children with High Needs, increase the number and percentage of Low-Income children who are enrolled in high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs; and enhance the State's integrated system of high-quality early learning programs and services.

If the State chooses to respond to this competitive preference priority, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring this priority, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the priority is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan; and the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Introduction

Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda comprehensively addresses rural populations, including them not only in the state's projects and activities but also as a key focus of the state's strategy for improving school readiness outcomes and reducing the achievement gap.

Georgia has the fourth largest rural population of children ages birth through five in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates). Out of 159 counties, 108 are considered rural (populations of 35,000 or less) by the State Office of Rural Health. Looking at the community level (not just those counties that are designated as rural); approximately 31.8% (262,486 out of 834,373) of children ages birth through five in the state would be classified as living in rural areas (2010 American Community Survey).

In the report, *Child Care in Rural Areas: Top Challenges* (2010), the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies identifies the following common challenges for child care in rural areas:

- Affordability
- Accessibility and availability
- High-quality ELD programs

While the state recognizes that these are statewide issues, they are more pronounced in many of the rural areas of the state. Therefore, Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda specifically addresses rural needs:

The following comparative statistics frame many of the unique challenges for working in rural areas and with rural populations in Georgia:

1. **Income.** Children in Georgia's rural counties are more likely to live in families with low incomes. For example, 60.9% of children birth through five in Georgia's rural counties are in families with incomes 200% or less of the federal poverty line. This is almost 13 percentage points higher than children in urban counties (48%).

2. **Access.** For families in rural areas, access to high-quality learning environments can pose challenges. While Georgia’s Pre-K is offered in every county, in many rural areas it is only offered in the local school systems. This means that children in these families may not have access to high-quality birth to three services, due to the lack of child care learning centers. In the 108 counties identified as rural, there are only 986 total ELD programs, compared with the 4,885 total ELD programs in the 51 urban counties. The ELD programs in rural counties are more likely to be family day care homes (48%); in counties identified as urban, 44% of the ELD programs are family day care homes.
3. **Quality.** In Georgia, there are 15 rural counties in Georgia with less than five licensed or registered ELD programs. At present, none of these counties have any programs participating in Quality Rated. This trend, while more pronounced in these 15 counties, is similar to other counties identified as rural. The percentages do not vary significantly between counties identified as rural and counties identified as urban in terms of percentage of child care learning centers participating. However, it is different when looking at the family day care homes participating in Quality Rated. Only 6.5% of family day care homes in counties identified as rural are participating, whereas that percentage increases to 11.1% of family day care homes in urban areas.
4. **Additional Pre-K Services.** Children attending Georgia’s Pre-K in a rural area are more likely to be eligible for additional services. Seventy percent of children attending Georgia’s Pre-K in a rural county meet criteria of high needs, compared to 60% of children attending a Georgia’s Pre-K in an urban area. This is especially pronounced when looking at likelihood of having an IEP and being eligible for income-based services. In rural areas, 5.4% of children attending a Georgia’s Pre-K have an IEP and 68% are eligible for income-based services compared with 3.4% and 56% respectively for children in urban areas.

5. **Educational Outcomes.** At first glance there is not a significant difference in third grade reading scores, as measured by the state's Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT), between children in rural and urban areas. The overall percentage of children in rural areas who did not meet third grade reading standards (9.59%) is not significantly different from the percentage of children in urban areas who also did not meet the threshold (9.33%). However, when looking at total percentage in a county that did not meet third grade reading standards, a different picture emerges. Of the 34 counties where 15% or more of students did not meet third grade reading standards, 76% of them (26) were rural counties.

It would be incorrect to assume that children living in rural areas are automatically children with high needs. However, due to these factors listed above, Georgia includes rural areas as a specific focus area for targeting services created for children with high needs. It is important to ensure that Georgia has statewide focus, including rural areas, when implementing projects created to increase school readiness outcomes and reduce the achievement gap.

Priority 5 (a) How the state will implement approaches to address the unique needs of children in rural areas including areas with small populations

Georgia's strategy for addressing the needs of children in rural areas is to ensure that rural areas are targeted in the implementation of ELC activities and, where possible, to ensure that there is flexibility in administering the projects so that the unique needs of rural areas are better addressed. The following describes the activities that include a focus on rural areas in their implementation.

- **Incorporating Rural Counties in the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs).**
Two of the four Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs) are specifically designed to be clusters of rural counties, and a third E³Z will combine rural and non-rural counties. Therefore, there will be 10 to 17 rural counties in the E³Zs. As part of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge agenda, an E³Z is a designated county or group of counties that has been identified for additional services (see (A)(2)(b) for a full description). Each E³Z will have a regional coordinator to ensure an alignment of key services. Services are offered

directly in the rural communities; therefore, educators do not have to travel to receive professional development and technical assistance and families do have to travel to receive services.

- **Services for Rural Counties in the E³Zs.** A key component of the E³Z is infrastructure development. DECAL will facilitate the development of four 3-star (highest level in Georgia's TQRIS) ELD programs in rural counties as part of the development activity for the E³Zs. This will increase access to high-quality programs (both child care learning centers and family day care homes) for families in these areas. Second, we will devote resources to ensure that most, if not all, ELD programs in the E³Zs are rated at the higher tier levels (two or three stars) by 2017. In addition to increasing access to high-quality programs for families in rural areas, we will also enhance home visiting and family engagement activities in the E³Zs (as outlined in (C)(4)).
- **School Readiness Activities.** Within each E³Z, additional school readiness activities are offered. This includes expanding Georgia's Summer Transition Programs for both rising Kindergartners and rising Pre-K students. These research-based programs provide additional services for children with school readiness needs. The rising Kindergartners Summer Transition Program serves students who did not attend a Georgia's Pre-K program or who need additional services before Kindergarten. The Rising Pre-K program is geared toward English language learners before they enter Pre-K. These programs are offered statewide; however, there will be additional Summer Transition Program classes offered in each of the E³Zs funded by ELC funds (budgeted in (B)(4)). Within each E³Z we will also facilitate a Birth to Eight team (described in (A)(2) and Competitive Preference Priority 4) led by the regional coordinator. These teams will focus on specific family and community engagement activities that align with the readiness skills children need for success in Kindergarten and beyond.
- **Scale-Up Activities.** As discussed in (A)(2), Implementation Science Framework will be used to identify successful drivers that demonstrate best scale-up strategies. This will be especially important for the rural communities as scale-up

drivers may be different from urban and suburban areas of the state.

- **Increasing Quality in Rural Counties.** Quality Rated was designed to be a statewide program. Throughout the two-year implementation, supports have been created to encourage all types of providers in all 159 counties to participate. This includes providers in rural areas. These efforts will be expanded with Georgia's ELC agenda. In each E³Z, parent co-pays for CCDF subsidized care will be reduced when choosing Quality Rated 3-star programs (CCDF funds will be utilized to assume the cost differential so that providers do not see reduced revenue). As addressed in (A)(2), Georgia's E³Zs will also include economic strategies to encourage quality ELD programs to offer services within rural areas that may have few quality options for families. Providing tax incentives and other business supports to family day care homes and child care learning centers will be an important strategy for growing quality ELD programs.
- **Enhanced Professional Development Opportunities.** Free professional development activities are currently accessible for each of Georgia's rural counties. Georgia's Professional Development Hierarchy model will be used in the rural E³Zs ensuring that these programs have intensive professional development opportunities. Additionally, subsidy payments will be offered as grants to early childhood programs and increased professional development will be offered directly in these communities.
- **Infant and Toddler Care.** The studies of child care quality in Georgia conducted by the FPG Child Development Institute (Maxwell, et al., 2009a, 2009c, and 2010a; Appendices 9, 10, and 11) found that only one third of infant/toddler care was adequate or better; a startling two thirds of infant/toddler care was minimal or inadequate care. As outlined in selection criterion (C)(4), Georgia's Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GA PITC) will target the E³Z rural areas with intensive professional development including technical assistance, coaching, mentoring, and incentive strategies.

Priority 5 (b) How the approaches are designed to close educational and opportunity gaps for Children with High Needs, increase the number and percentage of low-income children who are enrolled in high-quality ELD programs, and enhance the State's integrated system of high-quality early learning programs and services

As part of Georgia's ELD philosophy, the strongest strategy for closing educational and

opportunity gaps for children in rural areas is to improve ELD quality and increase access to quality for children with high needs. Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, Quality Rated, is the principal driver for doing this. The earlier families have access to high quality, the greater the impact from those services. As a system, education does not do "catch-up" well, and the sooner children have high-quality opportunities, the more likely they will enter Kindergarten ready to excel. Access to high quality for children with high needs will have the greatest impact on the achievement gap.

The activities highlighted above are specifically aimed at improving quality and improving access to high quality, thereby improving school readiness outcomes and reducing the achievement gap. This includes:

- 1) Increasing access to 2- and 3-star programs for all areas of the state, particularly in rural areas where there is a lack of 2- and 3-star ELD programs. The state tracks and sets goals related to the number of counties where there are high or low percentages of programs participating in Quality Rated. The greater the percentage of 2- and 3-star programs, the more access children with high needs have to high quality.
- 2) Facilitating infrastructure development for creating high-quality programs in rural areas. This is important because in many communities there are few ELD opportunities at all, much less high-quality ELD opportunities. Increasing the number of high-quality options will provide children more opportunities for receiving the types of services that impact school readiness and close the achievement gap.
- 3) Targeting initiatives, such as the Summer Transition Program, to areas of children with high needs such as rural areas where there is a lack of summer programs. These programs have been directly shown to impact school readiness outcomes.
- 4) Improving teaching instruction by offering advanced professional development to teachers of all programs. Utilizing the cohort and coaching model will help early childhood educators improve their teaching practice, which will improve school readiness outcomes.
- 5) Focusing on infant/toddler care. Currently, the state offers in-depth professional development directly to infant/toddler caregivers. These efforts are being expanded and

are offered in communities, including rural areas, across the state. Improving the quality of services for infants and toddlers is a great need in the state and will help prepare children for Pre-K and Kindergarten.

The state will continue to employ strong research, evaluation, and data strategies in measuring the impact of Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda. This is most acute in the evaluation strategy for the E³Zs. Implementation Science Framework will identify drivers for scale-up. This is important as the drivers in rural areas may be different than other areas and this will help the state in scaling up many of these opportunities.

In summary, the above strategies will increase access to high-quality ELD programs, which will impact school readiness outcomes and reduce the achievement gap.

Conclusion

As discussed throughout the application, policymakers and early education leaders in Georgia recognize that the best way to prepare the state for a 21st century global economy is to have an educational system that prepares a 21st century workforce. This means not asking children, families, schools, and communities to play “catch-up” in later grades, but to create an Early Learning and Development (ELD) System that prepares each and every child to succeed in school. Since children enter the ELD system at different ages and families have choices in the type of care to select, it is important that the system be strong across all age ranges and across all different types of programs. Georgia’s Early Learning Challenge agenda details Georgia’s successes—past, present, and future—in making that happen.

“Making it happen” is important statewide, but it is vitally important to explicitly target rural areas. In these areas, the poverty rate is higher and children are more likely to have families with low incomes. This may be compounded by a lack of access to high-quality ELD programs. Consequently, conditions are created where school readiness may not be addressed and an achievement gap between children with high needs and their socio-economically advantaged peers continues to persist. Therefore, the state’s strategy is to create initiatives that increase the number of quality ELD programs and increase access to services in rural areas. Only by doing so can the state guarantee an impact on school readiness and a reduction in the achievement gap.

Note about Invitational Priorities: Invitational priorities signal areas the Departments are particularly interested in; however, addressing these priorities will not earn applicants any additional points.

Priority 6: Invitational Priority -- Encouraging Private-Sector Support.

The State will meet this priority based on the extent to which it describes how the private sector will provide financial and other resources to support the State and its Participating State Agencies or Participating Programs in the implementation of the State Plan.

(Enter **narrative** here)

VIII. BUDGET

AWARD INFORMATION

Budget Requirements: To support States in planning their budgets, the Departments have developed the following budget caps for each State. We will not consider for funding an application from a State that proposes a budget that exceeds the applicable cap set for that State. The Departments developed the following categories by ranking every State according to its share of the national population of children ages birth through five-years-old from Low-Income families and identifying the natural breaks in the rank order. Then, based on population, budget caps were developed for each category.³⁹

Category 1--Up to \$75 million-- Florida, New York, Texas.

Category 2--Up to \$52.5 million--Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania.

Category 3--Up to \$45 million--Alabama, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia.

Category 4--Up to \$37.5 million--Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Wyoming.

The State must include in its budget the amount of funds it intends to distribute through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, subgrants, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners.

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.

Grant Period: The grant period for this award is December 31, 2013 through December 31, 2017.

³⁹ Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, 2011. American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data.

BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))

In the following budget section, the State is responding to selection criterion (A)(4)(b). The State should use its budgets and budget narratives to provide a detailed description of how it plans to use Federal RTT-ELC grant funds and funds from other sources (Federal, State, private, and local) to support projects under the State Plan. States' budget tables and narratives, when taken together, should also address the specific elements of selection criterion (A)(4)(b), including by describing how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan and do so in a manner that

- (1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;
- (2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and
- (3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan

The budget narratives should be of sufficient scope and detail for the Departments to determine if the costs are necessary, reasonable, and allowable. For further guidance on Federal cost principles, an applicant may wish to consult OMB Circular A-87. (See www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars).

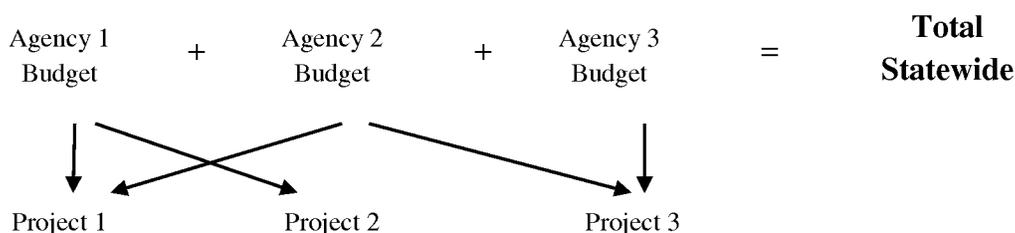
We expect the State to provide a detailed budget by category for each Participating State Agency that rolls up into the total statewide budget. We further expect that the budgets of each Participating State Agency reflect the work associated with fully implementing the High-Quality Plans described under the selection criteria and Competitive Preference Priority 2 and describe each Participating State Agency's budgetary role⁴⁰ in carrying out the State Plan.

For purposes of the budget, we expect that the State will link its proposed High-Quality Plans to "projects" that the State believes are necessary in order to implement its plans. The State might choose to design some projects that address only one criterion's High-Quality Plan, while other projects might address several similarly-focused criteria as one group. For example, the State might choose to have one "management project" focused on criterion (A)(3), organizing and aligning the early learning and development system to achieve success. It might have another "workforce project" that addresses criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) under the Great Early Childhood Education Workforce section.

Some projects may be done entirely by one Participating State Agency, while others may be done by multiple agencies in collaboration with one another. The State, together with its Participating State Agencies, will define the projects required to implement the State Plan and

⁴⁰ Participating State Agency's budgetary roles should be consistent with the scope of work outlined in the Participating State Agency's MOU or other binding agreement.

will determine which Participating State Agencies will be involved in each project, as shown below.



To support the budgeting process, we strongly suggest that applicants use the RTT-ELC budget spreadsheets prepared by the Departments to build their budgets. These spreadsheets must be submitted together with, but in a file separate from, the application.⁴¹ These spreadsheets have formulas built into them that are intended to help States produce the budget tables required within this section.

The following information must be included in the State’s budget:

- I. **Budget Summaries:** In this section, the State provides overall budget summary information by budget category, Participating State Agency, and project.
 - a. **Budget Summary by Budget Category.** This is the cover sheet for the budget. (See Budget Table I-1.) States should complete this table as the final step in their budgeting process, and include this table as the first page of the State’s budget. (Note: Each row in this table is calculated by adding together the corresponding rows in each of the Participating State Agency Budget by Category tables. If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these “roll-up” calculations are done automatically.)
 - b. **Budget Summary by Participating State Agency.** This summary lists the total annual budget for each Participating State Agency. (See Budget Table I-2.) States should complete this table after completing Budget Table II-1 for each Participating State Agency (see Part II: Participating State Agency Budgets). If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these “roll-up” calculations are done automatically for the State.
 - c. **Budget Summary by Project.** This summary lists the total annual budget for each of the projects. (See Budget Table I-3.) States should complete this table after completing Budget Table II-2 for each Participating State Agency (see Part II: Participating State Agency Budgets). If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these “roll-up” calculations are done automatically for the State.

⁴¹ See Application Submission Procedures, section XV. Please note that the RTT-ELC budget spreadsheets will not be used by the reviewers to judge or score the State’s application. However, these spreadsheets do produce tables that States may use in completing the budget tables that the State submits as part of its application. In addition, the budget spreadsheets will be used by the Departments for budget reviews.

- d. Budget Summary Narrative. This budget narrative accompanies the three Budget Summary Tables and provides the rationale for the budget. The narrative should include, for example, an overview of each Participating State Agency's budgetary responsibilities and descriptions of each project that the State has included in its budget.
- II. Budgets for Each Participating State Agency. In this section, the State describes each Participating State Agency's budgetary responsibilities.⁴² The State should replicate this section for each Participating State Agency and for each Participating State Agency complete the following:
- a. Participating State Agency By Budget Category. This is the budget for each Participating State Agency by budget category for each year for which funding is requested. (See Budget Table II-1.)
 - b. Participating State Agency By Project. This table lists the Participating State Agency's proposed budget for each project in which it is involved. (See Budget Table II-2.)
 - c. Participating State Agency Budget Narrative. This budget narrative describes the Participating State Agency's budget category line items and addresses how the Participating State Agency's budget will support the implementation of each project in which it is involved.

The State should replicate Budget Part II for each Participating State Agency as follows:

- For Participating State Agency 1: Budget by Category, Budget by Project, Narrative
- For Participating State Agency 2: Budget by Category, Budget by Project, Narrative

⁴² Participating State Agency's budgetary roles should be consistent with the scope of work outlined in the Participating State Agency's MOU or other binding agreement.

BUDGET PART I: SUMMARY

BUDGET PART I -TABLES

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category--The State must include the budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant. These line items are derived by adding together the corresponding line items from each of the Participating State Agency Budget Tables.

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$1,691,850	\$1,654,578	\$1,581,330	\$1,502,147	\$6,429,905
2. Fringe Benefits	\$828,712	\$862,459	\$851,293	\$810,295	\$3,352,759
3. Travel	\$193,475	\$192,675	\$174,800	\$175,341	\$736,291
4. Equipment	\$54,490	\$750	\$750	\$0	\$55,990
5. Supplies	\$14,782	\$8,915	\$8,665	\$7,575	\$39,937
6. Contractual	\$2,539,307	\$4,490,164	\$3,078,216	\$2,258,501	\$12,366,188
7. Training Stipends	\$737,500	\$737,500	\$737,500	\$737,500	\$2,950,000
8. Other	\$155,178	\$141,158	\$101,402	\$78,967	\$476,705
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$6,215,294	\$8,088,199	\$6,533,956	\$5,570,326	\$26,407,775
10. Indirect Costs*	\$128,132	\$124,099	\$124,099	\$116,759	\$493,089
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$5,547,424	\$6,947,424	\$6,820,384	\$5,883,904	\$25,199,136
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$400,000
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$11,990,850	\$15,259,722	\$13,578,439	\$11,670,989	\$52,500,000
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$12,781,165	\$11,099,514	\$11,156,499	\$11,167,700	\$46,204,878
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$24,772,015	\$26,359,236	\$24,734,938	\$22,838,689	\$98,704,878

<u>Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category</u> (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency--The State must include the budget totals for each Participating State Agency for each year of the grant. These line items should be consistent with the totals of each of the Participating State Agency Budgets provided in Budget Tables II-1.

Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Participating State Agency	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
Department of Early Care and Learning	\$23,262,205	\$21,816,301	\$20,594,856	\$19,512,842	\$85,186,204
Department of Education	\$86,713	\$2,054,220	\$2,054,221	\$2,054,846	\$6,250,000
Department of Human Services	\$70,145	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,145
Department of Public Health	\$37,033	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$57,433
Governor's Office for Children and Families	\$709,381	\$1,309,381	\$1,309,381	\$709,381	\$4,037,524
Governor's Office of Student Achievement	\$71,925	\$69,675	\$0	\$0	\$141,600
Georgia Public Broadcasting	\$228,108	\$187,395	\$34,913	\$0	\$450,416
Department of Community Affairs	\$60,700	\$679,900	\$492,860	\$306,380	\$1,539,840
Professional Standards Commission	\$245,805	\$235,564	\$241,907	\$248,440	\$971,716
Total Statewide Budget	\$24,772,015	\$26,359,236	\$24,734,938	\$22,838,689	\$98,704,878

Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project--The State must include the proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant. These line items are the totals, for each project, across all of the *Participating State Agencies' project* budgets, as provided in Budget Tables II-2.

Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Projects	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$488,243	\$486,068	\$485,568	\$483,318	\$1,943,197
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$766,895	\$1,374,629	\$1,086,839	\$899,984	\$4,128,347
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$13,426,756	\$12,492,589	\$12,557,808	\$12,267,691	\$50,744,844
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$3,059,468	\$4,550,037	\$3,487,518	\$2,987,518	\$14,084,541
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$2,263,774	\$606,923	\$423,441	\$268,441	\$3,562,579
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$47,219	\$47,219	\$31,119	\$28,369	\$153,926
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$289,842	\$266,279	\$326,279	\$326,279	\$1,208,679
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$762,357	\$1,362,357	\$1,362,357	\$762,357	\$4,249,428
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$382,612	\$374,336	\$330,679	\$323,247	\$1,410,874
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$1,652,434	\$1,391,334	\$1,391,334	\$1,391,334	\$5,826,436
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$86,713	\$2,054,220	\$2,054,221	\$2,054,846	\$6,250,000
12. Unified Data System	\$1,545,702	\$1,353,245	\$1,197,775	\$1,045,305	\$5,142,027
Total Statewide Budget	\$24,772,015	\$26,359,236	\$24,734,938	\$22,838,689	\$98,704,878

BUDGET PART I -NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the overall structure of the State's budget for implementing the State Plan, including

- A list of each Participating State Agency, together with a description of its budgetary and project responsibilities;
- A list of projects and a description of how these projects taken together will result in full implementation of the State Plan;
- For each project:
 - The designation of the selection criterion or competitive preference priority the project addresses;
 - An explanation of how the project will be organized and managed in order to ensure the implementation of the High-Quality Plans described in the selection criteria or competitive preference priorities; and
- Any information pertinent to understanding the proposed budget for each project.

Georgia has the advantage of having a department of state government dedicated solely to the ELD needs of children age birth to five, their families, and the ELD professionals who serve them. The governance of Georgia's Early Learning and Development (ELD) system is solidly anchored in Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). This coordinated, centralized structure will result in a more efficient system to manage the RTT-ELC funds and accomplish the goals and projects in the State Plan. The Department of Early Care and Learning is the lead agency for most of the projects and has the budgetary responsibilities.

Georgia is requesting \$52,500,000.00 from the Early Learning Challenge fund to implement the State Plan. Collectively the twelve projects will achieve our ambitious goals outlined in Section A(2) and in the performance measure tables throughout the grant application. Georgia has developed detailed budget tables and budget narratives to explain how RTT-ELC funding will be used effectively and efficiently, as well as other funds, to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan. Detailed descriptions of the projects are included in the relevant narratives of the Selection Criteria A-E. In this section, there is a list of the Participating State Agencies provided and a summary of all proposed projects and the costs of each, along with the corresponding selection criteria, by Participating State Agency.

The chart below lists each project by section and references the selection criterion, identifies the lead state agency with the budgetary responsibility, and lists additional state agencies supporting the project implementation.

State of Georgia: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application

A) Successful State Systems	B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs	C) Promoting Early Learning Outcomes	D) Great Workforce	E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress
<p>Project 1: Grant Management Selection Criterion: A3 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: All required agencies serve on the <i>Children's Cabinet</i></p> <hr/> <p>Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones E³Z Selection Criterion: A2 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Department of Community Affairs* Department of Economic Development</p>	<p>Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability Selection Criterion: B1 – 4 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Department of Education Department of Public Health Georgia Public Broadcasting*</p> <hr/> <p>Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation Selection Criterion: B5 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: <i>Governor's Office of Student Achievement*</i></p>	<p>Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards Selection Criterion: C1 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Department of Education Georgia Public Broadcasting Technical College System of Georgia Board of Regents/ University System of Georgia</p> <hr/> <p>Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System Section Criterion: C2 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Technical College System of Georgia Board of Regents/ University System of Georgia Department of Public Health Department of Education</p> <p>Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants Selection Criterion: C4 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Family Connection Partnership</p> <p>Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care Selection Criteria: C4 Lead Agency: <i>Governor's Office for Children and Families</i> Participating State Agencies: Department of Early Care and Learning*</p>	<p>Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Selection Criterion: D1 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Professional Standards Commission* Georgia Public Broadcasting* Technical College System of Georgia Board of Regents/ University System of Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads</p> <hr/> <p>Project 10: Supporting Early Educators Selection Criterion: D2 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Technical College System of Georgia Board of Regents/ University System of Georgia Professional Standards Commission</p>	<p>Project 11: Kindergarten Entry Assessments Selection Criterion: E1 Lead Agency: Department of Education* Participating State Agencies: Department of Early Care and Learning</p> <hr/> <p>Project 12: Unified Data System Selection Criterion:E2 Lead Agency: Department of Early Care and Learning* Participating State Agencies: Department of Education Department of Human Services* Department of Public Health* <i>Governor's Office for Children and Families</i></p>

*Denotes an agency with ELC budgetary responsibilities

BUDGET BY PARTICIPATING AGENCY

- A list of each Participating State Agency, together with a description of its budgetary and project responsibilities;

Each Participating State Agencies are represented at various levels of the grant governance model described in **Project 1: Grant Management**. Each Participating State Agency will be represented on the ELC Advisory Committee which will advise and support the Grant Management Team. The ELC Subcommittees will also include representatives from the Participating State Agencies (and other ELD stakeholders). Consequently, the Participating State Agencies will be actively involved at various levels in decision making, conflict resolution, and project guidance and support.

Below is a list of each Participating State Agency receiving ELC funds with a narrative description of its budgetary and project responsibilities and with a budget table. The table lists the agency projects with corresponding selection criteria and funding amount. The funding listed is the total amount including ELC funds and other funding sources. More details on the funding is listed in the budget narratives for each agency. The projects include multiple activities. More details on the activities are listed in the agency MOU.

Department of Early Care and Learning:

The responsibility for managing the grant will rest with select ELC staff members housed at DECAL, who will be advised and supported by an ELC Advisory Committee and ELC Subcommittees. DECAL will use grant funding to hire the following staff to manage the implementation of the grant: one ELC Grant Manager; one ELC Research Specialist; and one ELC Grant Liaison.

The ELC Grant Manager will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the grant as outlined in Section (A)(2). The Grant Manager will work with the DECAL Finance Unit to continuously track the grant budget to ensure that vendors/contractors are expending funds in a timely manner and to ensure that there are no cost overruns. The Grant Manager will report directly to the DECAL commissioner or his designee.

In addition to Project 1: Grant Management, DECAL serves as the lead agency for a large

majority of the projects including:

- Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs)
- Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability
- Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation
- Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards
- Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System
- Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants
- Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies
- Project 10: Supporting Early Educators
- Project 12: Unified Data System

DECAL will coordinate the work of these projects ensuring that the budgetary requirements are met. DECAL will work with partners at the participating state agencies, as well as the private sector to implement the projects.

Department of Early Care and Learning \$85,186,204		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 1: Grant Management	A3	\$1,943,197
Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	A2	\$2,588,507
Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	B 1- 4	\$50,702,948
Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	B5	\$13,942,941
Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards	C1	\$3,181,989
Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System	C2	\$153,926
Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants	C4	\$1,208,679
Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care	C4	\$211,904

Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	D1	\$411,228
Project 10: Supporting Early Childhood Educators	D2	\$5,826,436
Project 12: Unified Data System	E1	\$5,014,449

Department of Education (GaDOE)

GaDOE is ELC lead agency for this project and has the budgetary responsibilities for the Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) (Project 11). GaDOE will administer and oversee the development, implementation, professional development and evaluation for the KEA. In addition, GaDOE will provide resources to support ELD programs funded by IDEA, Part B to participate in Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS (Project 3). GaDOE staff will also be integral in the development and alignment of the GELDS, Comprehensive Assessment System and Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (Projects 5, 6 and 9). Additionally, using existing funds, the Department of Education will provide a feed to the Cross Agency Child Data System of IDEA Part B data. GaDOE will also provide resources to participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure (Project 12).

Department of Education \$6,250,000		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 11: Kindergarten Entry Assessment	E1	\$6,250,000

Department of Human Services (DHS)

ELC funds will support DHS to provide a feed to the Cross Agency Child Data System of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) data. DHS will provide resources to participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure (Project 12) and the resources to participate in GELDS training and incorporate the GELDS into DHS services and outreach to families (Project 5). DPH will also serve on the Task Force on the Comprehensive Assessment System and assist in the distribution and use of Developmental Passports through the county health departments (Project 6).

Department of Human Services \$70,145		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 12: Unified Data System	E2	\$70,145

Department of Public Health (DPH)

ELC funding will support DPH to provide feeds to the Cross Agency Child Data System of IDEA, Part C data and birth registration data. DPH will also provide resources to participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure. DPH will provide resources to support the health promotion efforts in Quality Rated through the SHAPE initiative (Project 3). DPH will also serve on the Task Force on Comprehensive Assessment and assist in the distribution of Developmental Passports through IDEA Part C services (Project 6).

Department of Public Health \$57,433		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 12: Unified Data System	E2	\$57,433

Governor’s Office for Children and Families (GOCF)

GOCF is the lead agency for the Center-Based Home Visitation and has the budgetary responsibilities for the project. GOCF will administer and oversee the implementation of the Center-Based Home Visitation sites including evaluation of the effectiveness of this model (Project 8). GOCF will also support home visitation staff attending GELDS training and integrating GELDS into home visitation curricula (Project 5). GOCF will also serve on the Task Force on Comprehensive Assessment and assist in the distribution of Developmental Passports through their statewide home visitation programs (Project 6). Additionally, GOCF will provide home visiting data to the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS). GOCF will also provide resources to and participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure (Project 12).

Governor’s Office for Children and Families \$4,037,524		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care	C4	\$4,037,524

Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA)

The Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) will assist DECAL with the data analysis for these validation activities. GOSA is an independent educational agency in Georgia that serves the state in improving student outcomes by providing transparent and objective analysis and communication of statewide data. ELC funds will assist GOSA in the data analysis and evaluation of the validation of Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS. GOSA will employ a half-time research and evaluation specialist to complete the data analysis that will inform the in-depth study of the cohort model (Project 4).

Governor’s Office for Student Achievement \$141,600		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	B5	\$141,600

Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB)

Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) will provide pre-production, production, and post-production services through its Studio and Field Productions (SFP) division. SFP regularly produces related products and services for the State of Georgia and its agencies. GPB has been a partner with DECAL on the rollout of the Georgia Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). GPB has developed a series of webinars targeted to ELD providers and families on the GELDS and Quality Rated. These webinars have included footage of master teachers in Georgia providing instruction based on the GELDS. Using ELC funding, Georgia Public Broadcasting will develop and produce additional digital resources to support Quality Rated and the GELDS. The overarching mission is increased media awareness of the GELDS and Quality Rated, two lead initiatives of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, (Projects 3 and 5).

Georgia Public Broadcasting \$450,416		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	B1-4	\$41,896
Project 5: Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards	C1	\$380,590
Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	D1	\$27,930

Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

DCA will participate in cooperative work between the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Georgia Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Community Affairs to identify and promote usage of existing economic development incentives and new ones developed for the specific purpose of recruiting high-quality ELD programs in the E³Zs (Project 2). DCA will support the development of new high-quality ELD programs in the E³Zs. ELC funds will provided to DCA will be utilized to hire personnel to manage the incentive packages to ELD programs locating in these areas.

Department of Community Affairs \$1,539,840		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	A2	\$1,539,840

Professional Standards Commission (PSC)

The Professional Standards Commission oversees the Georgia Professional Registry (PDR) and verifies early childhood educator credentials, assigns career levels to our ELD workforce and currently tracks all professional development activities for Georgia’s TQRIS, Quality Rated. The role of the Professional Standards Commission in the RTT-ELC is to verify the credentials of the ELD workforce. ELC funds will be used to augment PSC staff to due Georgia's new requirement for all programs to be participating in QR which requires credential verification (Project 9).

Professional Standards Commission \$971,716		
Project Name	Selection Criteria	Total Funding Amount
Project 10: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	D2	\$971,716

The following Participating State Agencies are supporting the projects in the State Plan and have a MOU; however, the agency is not receiving ELC funds. More details on the activities are listed in the agency MOU.

Department of Economic Development (DEcD)

DEcD will participate in cooperative work between the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Georgia Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Community Affairs to identify and promote usage of existing economic development incentives and new ones developed for the specific purpose of recruiting high-quality ELD programs in the E³Zs (Project 2). The role of the Department of Economic Development in the RTT-ELC is to promote existing incentives for small businesses within the E³Zs.

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)

Although not receiving ELC funds, TCSG will be integral in the development and alignment of the GELDS, Comprehensive Assessment System and Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (Projects 5, 6 and 9). TCSG staff will participate in meetings to review of all post-secondary ELD coursework to ensure alignment to the WKC Framework and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards and to develop or update articulation agreements between regional two-and four-year institutions (Project 9).

Board of Regents/ University System of Georgia (BOR/USG)

Although not receiving ELC funds, BOR/USG will be integral in the development and alignment of the GELDS, Comprehensive Assessment System and Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (Projects 5, 6 and 9). BOR/USG staff will participate in meetings to review of all post-secondary ELD coursework to ensure alignment to the WKC Framework and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards and to develop or update articulation agreements

between regional two-and four-year institutions (Project 9).

Other Partners: DECAL will enter into Memorandums of Understanding with entities other than Participating State Agencies (e.g., the Georgia Family Connection Partnership) to accomplish the work of a particular project.

BUDGET BY PROJECT

- A list of projects and a description of how these projects taken together will result in full implementation of the State Plan;
- For each project:
 - The designation of the selection criterion or competitive preference priority the project addresses;
 - An explanation of how the project will be organized and managed in order to ensure the implementation of the High-Quality Plans described in the selection criteria or competitive preference priorities;

Coordination among Georgia’s state agencies will allow Georgia to align and integrate projects across multiple federal, state, local and private funding streams to build a strong, high-quality early learning and development system and deliver services to families and children with high needs to improve outcomes.

Project 1: Grant Management

Selection Criterion: A3

Project 1 outlines the governance of the ELC grant. The responsibility for managing the grant will rest with select ELC staff members housed at DECAL, who will be advised and supported by an ELC Advisory Committee and ELC Subcommittees. DECAL will use grant funding to hire the following staff to manage the implementation of the grant: 1. ELC Grant Manager; 2. ELC Research Specialist; and 3. ELC Grant Liaison.

Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones E³Z

Selection Criterion: A2

Project 2 targets geographical areas with large numbers of children with high needs (or with a large percentage of children with high needs) to create Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). Georgia will devote substantial ELC resources to developing infrastructure in these zones. E³Zs will be created in areas that currently lack high-quality ELD programs. These zones will be managed by DECAL and activities from different projects will be implemented in

these zones including Center Based Home Visitation and Professional Development co-horts.

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability **Selection Criterion:** B1-4

Project 3 focuses on increasing accessibility and availability of high-quality care to children with high needs through Quality Rated, Georgia's TQRIS. DECAL will be lead the agency for this project and will implement innovative strategies to increase the number of ELD programs participating and to increase the number of Quality Rated programs at a 2- or 3-star level. Strategies include decreasing the family co-pay when families select a 2- or 3-star program, creating a grant program that pays higher subsidy rates to programs offering the highest level of care, and expanding access to a high-quality Summer Transition Program for rising Kindergartners and rising Pre-K students.

Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation **Selection Criterion:** B5

The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) will assist DECAL with the data analysis for these validation of the quality tiers in Quality Rated, Georgia's TQRIS. GOSA will employ a half-time research and evaluation specialist to complete the data analysis that will inform the in-depth study of the cohort model.

Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards **Selection Criterion:** C1

With ELC funds, DECAL will create a comprehensive roll out of the newly launched Georgia Early and Development Standards (GELDS). ELC funds will be used to create additional resources, tools and professional development opportunities for child serving agencies, early childhood educators, and families. In addition, funds will be used to align the GELDS with national standards for English language learners and to create professional development tools for early childhood educators for working with English language learners.

Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System **Selection Criterion:** C2

The Department of Early Care and Learning is the lead agency for this project; however, the Participating State Agencies (PSA) will be represented on the Task Force for Comprehensive Assessment. DECAL will enter into a contract with an institution of higher education to facilitate the work of the Task Force. Building on the assessment systems in Georgia's Pre-K and Quality

Rated, we will undertake an ambitious agenda to incorporate assessment in other ELD programs. This is important for children to have ELD experiences that effectively design instruction to meet their individual needs and to have their learning environments assessed. Furthermore, this gives the state the opportunity to expand screening services in Georgia's Pre-K and other ELD programs.

Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants **Selection Criterion:** C4

DECAL will utilize ELC funds to complete an alignment of the Georgia's Family Engagement Standards with the Program Standards for Quality Rated and to provide professional development on family engagement standards to early childhood educators through Quality Rated. In addition, DECAL will launch a statewide family engagement awareness campaign using the GELDS resources created in Project 5. DECAL will partner with Family Connection Partnership to infuse the campaign into the Family Connection Collaboratives operating all 159 counties in Georgia. ELC funds will also offer grants to support community family engagement plans developed by the local collaboratives.

Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care **Selection Criterion:** C4

The Governor's Office for Children and Families is the lead agency for this project. GOCF will partner with DECAL to identify Quality Rated ELD programs in the empowerment zones for implementation. GOCF will employ supervisors and home visitation staff who work with the DECAL coordinator in each zone to ensure the activities in the High-Quality Plan are completed. In addition, DECAL will distribute ELC funds to support Head Start and Early Head Start programs in supporting Family, Friend and Neighbor providers in professional development on family engagement strategies.

Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies **Selection Criterion:** D1

The Department of Early Care and Learning is the lead agency for this project. Project 9 focuses on the revision of Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the review of all post-secondary ELD coursework to ensure alignment to the WKC Framework and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards. In addition, ELC funds will be used to

develop or update articulation agreements between regional two- and four-year institutions and create a continual monitoring process for all articulation agreements. DECAL is the lead agency for this project and will enter into a contract with an institute of higher education to facilitate the review, alignment and articulation work.

Project 10: Supporting Early Childhood Educators

Selection Criterion: D2

The Department of Early Care and Learning is the lead agency for this project. Project 10 expands DECAL's existing Scholarships and Incentives programs to increase the number of early care and education professionals moving up a knowledge and career pathway. The FIRST and SECOND programs provide incentives for teachers to navigate through and up the career lattice and obtain their first or a higher credential. The expansion of the Scholarships Program supports an increase in critical field credentials. In addition, this project also includes the development and implementation of the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy (GPDH) to provide more in-depth professional development opportunities (cohort and coaching models) to help educators use standards, improve teacher child-interactions, and align instruction with formative assessments.

Project 11: Kindergarten Entry Assessment

Selection Criterion: E1

The Department of Education is the lead agency for this project. Project 11 outlines Georgia's High-Quality Plan to enhance our current kindergarten assessment by implementing a revised assessment that will be administered within the first six weeks of school. Georgia will design and implement a statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment composed of measures that examine children's learning and development from the five domains represented in the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards.

Project 12: Unified Data System

Selection Criterion: E2

This project will build on the existing data systems and expand our data collection capacity. This data collection capacity will continue to inform our research efforts and facilitate stronger evaluation capacity. Activities for this project include expanding the quantity and quality of data collected and creating access points for providers to both enter and extract data for their own use. DECAL is the lead agency for this project. The enhancements to the early

learning data system will be managed by a Project Manager residing at DECAL. This Project Manager will create the project plan and will be responsible for delivery of the project on time and within budget. The Project Manager will work with Participating Agency Data Stewards and representatives on the Data Governance and Research Committees to ensure all tasks in other agencies are completed. Efforts in this area will also be used to facilitate greater family engagement by making data more readily available at the program and child level.

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II - TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$1,281,329	\$1,240,995	\$1,240,995	\$1,167,592	\$4,930,911
2. Fringe Benefits	\$673,513	\$665,566	\$665,566	\$622,214	\$2,626,859
3. Travel	\$168,719	\$168,719	\$168,719	\$168,719	\$674,876
4. Equipment	\$35,340	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$35,340
5. Supplies	\$9,682	\$4,125	\$6,375	\$6,075	\$26,257
6. Contractual	\$2,347,465	\$2,827,549	\$1,499,585	\$697,265	\$7,371,864
7. Training Stipends	\$737,500	\$737,500	\$737,500	\$737,500	\$2,950,000
8. Other	\$85,113	\$87,488	\$58,938	\$42,563	\$274,102
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$5,338,661	\$5,731,942	\$4,377,678	\$3,441,928	\$18,890,209
10. Indirect Costs*	\$128,132	\$124,099	\$124,099	\$116,759	\$493,089
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$5,097,424	\$5,487,424	\$5,547,424	\$5,247,424	\$21,379,696
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$400,000

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$10,664,217	\$11,443,465	\$10,149,201	\$8,906,111	\$41,162,994
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$12,597,988	\$10,372,836	\$10,445,655	\$10,606,731	\$44,023,210
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$23,262,205	\$21,816,301	\$20,594,856	\$19,512,842	\$85,186,204
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$488,243	\$486,068	\$485,568	\$483,318	\$1,943,197
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$706,195	\$694,729	\$593,979	\$593,604	\$2,588,507
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$13,426,756	\$12,471,641	\$12,536,860	\$12,267,691	\$50,702,948
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$2,987,543	\$4,480,362	\$3,487,518	\$2,987,518	\$13,942,941
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$2,035,666	\$454,441	\$423,441	\$268,441	\$3,181,989
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$47,219	\$47,219	\$31,119	\$28,369	\$153,926
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$289,842	\$266,279	\$326,279	\$326,279	\$1,208,679
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$52,976	\$52,976	\$52,976	\$52,976	\$211,904
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$136,807	\$124,807	\$74,807	\$74,807	\$411,228
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$1,652,434	\$1,391,334	\$1,391,334	\$1,391,334	\$5,826,436
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$1,438,524	\$1,346,445	\$1,190,975	\$1,038,505	\$5,014,449
Total Budget	\$23,262,205	\$21,816,301	\$20,594,856	\$19,512,842	\$85,186,204

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Operations

As the Lead Agency for the grant, DECAL will coordinate the work of the State Plan ensuring that the budgetary requirements are met. The responsibility for managing the grant will rest with select ELC staff members housed at DECAL, who will be advised and supported by an ELC Advisory Committee and ELC Subcommittees. DECAL will hire and house the grant management positions of ELC Grant Manager, ELC Research Specialist, and ELC Grant Liaison. DECAL will work with partners at the participating state agencies, as well as the private sector to implement the projects.

Projects

The responsibility for managing the grant will rest with select ELC staff members housed at DECAL, who will be advised and supported by an ELC Advisory Committee and ELC Subcommittees. DECAL will use grant funding to hire the following staff to manage the implementation of the grant: one ELC Grant Manager; one ELC Research Specialist; and one ELC Grant Liaison.

The ELC Grant Manager will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the grant. The Grant Manager will work with the DECAL Finance Unit to continuously track the grant budget to ensure that vendors/contractors are expending funds in a timely manner and to ensure that there are no cost overruns. The Grant Manager will report directly to the DECAL commissioner or his designee.

DECAL is the lead agency for the following projects.

- Project 1: Grant Management
- Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs)
- Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability
- Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation
- Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards
- Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System
- Project 7: Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants
- Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care

- Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies
- Project 10: Supporting Early Educators
- Project 12: Unified Data System

Below is the budget narrative for the individual projects proposed in DECAL's RTT-ELCG application within DECAL's total budget of \$85,186,204. All calculations are based on charges consistent with Georgia state government. For example, personnel related costs such as fringe, travel, mileage, per diem, equipment, and other estimates are based on applicable state policy. All state procurement, accounting, and other administrative rules will be followed.

Also, in all PSA narratives, there may be minor immaterial differences in certain calculations due to rounding. Below, and in other PSA narratives, we have provided another level of detail for explanation purposes. In doing so, rounding may have caused a slight difference. However, the total numbers should reconcile to the official budget in the budget worksheets/tables.

Project 1: Grant Management – Total budget = \$1,943,197

ELC funds requested = \$1,610,715 Support funds from other sources = \$332,480

This project is responsible for managing all of the RTT-ELC projects including overseeing validation of data, financial status, performance measures, federal reporting, and communication between the various governance entities.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$690,312. One full time Grant Manager (PG18 \$65,121.26); one full time Research Specialist (PG16 \$53,728.41); and one Grant Liaison (PG 16 \$53,728.41) will be needed for the full four years of the grant period. Salaries represent the market rate midpoint of the pay grade on Georgia's statewide employee pay scale.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$370,076. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of salary (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line 3 – Travel totals to \$29,284. Travel is calculated using an estimate for statewide travel from the Atlanta headquarters at a frequency of 38 trips per year traveling 6,840 miles (90 miles one way on average) at the current mileage reimbursement rate of \$.565 per mile. Mileage equals \$3,864.60 annually. Overnight stays are expected on 60% of the trips at a rate of \$110.00 per night. Lodging totals \$2,508 annually. Meal reimbursement is estimated at 1.3 times each overnight stay at a blended rate for high and low cost areas of \$32 per day. Total meal cost is \$948.48 annually. The sum of mileage, lodging, and meals equals an annual amount of \$7,321.08. The three staff in this project will be low frequency travelers sharing in the estimated number of annual trips.

Line 4 – Equipment totals to \$3,600. This amount is the sum of three computers for the three staff dedicated to this project. These positions will be located at DECAL’s Atlanta headquarters and provided fixed station computers at an estimate of \$1,200 each. Equipment is a one-time expense in the first year of the grant. Equipment less than \$5,000 is inventoried for insurance coverage purposes and as reasonable for internal control.

Line 5 – Supplies totals to \$1,875. Office supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$175 in the first year plus \$150 each subsequent year for each of the three new staff positions. Estimates were made based on the sum of commonly identified consumable office products.

Line 8 – Other totals to \$46,537. This amount includes the cost for Blackberry service at \$59.24 per month or \$710.88 annually for two positions for each of the four grant years totaling \$5,687. Also included is printing cost for informational handouts estimated to decline annually from \$1,500 in year one, \$1,000 in year two, \$500 in year three, and \$250 in year four totaling \$3,250. Additionally, an amount of \$100 will be paid for each meeting attended as a per diem fee to early childhood educators serving on the ELC Advisory Committee and the four subcommittees. The ELC Advisory Committee will meet a total of 12 times over the life of the grant and is composed of 20 members, half of whom may qualify to receive the per diem payment. The four subcommittees will each meet twice annually for a total of eight meetings with approximately eight members of each committee, 32 total, qualifying for the per diem payment. The total cost included in line eight for per diem payment equals \$37,600.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$1,141,684.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$69,031. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 12 – Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance totals to \$400,000. This amount is reserved for technical assistance purposes as a requirement of the grant.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$1,610,715.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Grant Management project total to \$332,480.

Senior leadership will be heavily involved in the grant management, committee meetings, implementation processes, status, and outcomes of each of the RTT-ELCG projects. A conservative estimate of the time to be attributed to this project includes 5% for each of two Deputy Commissioners, 10% for each of two Assistant Commissioners, 20% for the Research Director and 10% for the Research Administrator. Calculations were made from current salary and benefit amounts totaling \$83,120 in each of the four years of the grant summing to \$332,480. This amount is composed of \$40,583 from state general funds, \$50,705 from state lottery funds, and \$238,192 from Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$1,943,197.

Project 2: Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs) – Total Budget = \$2,588,507.

ELC funds requested = \$2,588,507

Support funds from other sources = \$0*

This project will identify four zones within the state based on key data points that indicate underserved populations of children with high needs. A mix of one metro area zone, one mid-size zone, and two rural area zones will be identified as E³Zs. Four field staff will work within these zones to coordinate the delivery of available state and local services to young children, improve the quality of child care settings, and work with community stakeholders to align with K-3 initiatives and create public awareness of the services.

*Although no traditional budget funds are included, Georgia will have a substantial contribution. One reason the innovative E³Z program will be effective is because of Georgia's existing tax incentives based on job creation. These tax incentives could result in approximately \$2.4M in additional state support through this initiative. For example, under the E³Z program, we anticipate 10 new ELD providers (small businesses) will be created. On average, child care learning centers in Georgia employ 12 staff members. The existing tax credit in most counties under the E³Z program will be \$4,000, per job, per year, for five years. Below is a sample calculation:

10 centers X 12 employees = 120

120 employees X \$4,000 = \$480,000

\$480,000 X five years = \$2,400,000

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$1,311,740. One full time Project Manager (PG17 \$59,293.27), four full time Zone Coordinators (PG16 \$53,728.41), and one Business Operations Specialist (PG16 \$53,728.41) are needed for the full four years of the grant period. The Project Manager will direct and supervise the work of the four Zone Coordinators and communicate the status of work within the zones to Grant Management. The Project Manager position is important to the success of the grant by ensuring that services across the four E³Zs are aligned and are also aligned with other ELD initiatives taking place in these zones and across the state. He/she will also be responsible for working directly with state level Department of Education staff to facilitate a better P-3 alignment. The four zone positions are important to the success of the project. The four Zone Coordinators will recruit local participants, work with local stakeholders, assist with other grant projects occurring within the identified zones, gather data, and facilitate efforts to address the health, safety, care, and education needs of young children. They are crucial in ensuring that all of the services are aligned and that there is public awareness of the different projects. Finally, they will be responsible to monitoring and collecting data that will facilitate the implementation evaluation. The Business Operations Specialist will work with local leaders and businesses to promote economic development and business best practices within the zones. The Business Operations Specialist will work directly with stakeholders, project manager, and zone

coordinators to coordinate the infrastructure development component that is vital to the success of the project. Salaries represent the market rate midpoint of the pay grade on Georgia's statewide employee pay scale.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$703,224. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of salary (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line 3 – Travel totals to \$206,115.

Travel is necessary for the success of the project. First, the Project Manager and Business Operations Specialist will be traveling from Atlanta to the four E³Zs throughout the project to ensure that the project is meeting goals, especially with infrastructure development and increasing the number of high-quality ELD programs. Though the Zone Coordinators are locally based, there will be travel required within the regions (some will be composed of several counties) and trips to Atlanta. Additionally, travel is also budgeted for leaders from various organizations to visit the E³Zs to help build public awareness.

Travel is calculated using an estimate for statewide travel from the Atlanta headquarters at a frequency of 38 trips per year traveling 6,840 miles (90 miles one way on average) at the current mileage reimbursement rate of \$.565 per mile. Mileage equals \$3,864.60 annually. Overnight stays are expected on 60% of the trips at a rate of \$110.00 per night. Lodging totals \$2,508 annually. Meal reimbursement is estimated at 1.3 times each overnight stay at a blended rate for high and low cost areas of \$32 per day. Total meal cost is \$948.48 annually. The sum of mileage, lodging, and meals equals an annual amount of \$7321.08. Zone Coordinators will be home based while the other two positions will be Atlanta based. Five staff are estimated to each travel each year at the annual calculated amount of \$7,321.08 as described above. An additional travel amount of \$14,923.44 is included in the travel calculation for one of the positions based on frequent regional travel of 188 trips per year traveling 11,280 miles (30 miles one way on average) at the current mileage reimbursement rate of \$.565 per mile. Mileage equals \$6,373.20 annually. Overnight stays are expected on 30% of the trips at a rate of \$110.00 per night. Lodging totals \$6,204 annually. Meal reimbursement is estimated at 1.3 times each overnight stay at a blended rate for high and low cost areas of \$32 per day. Total meal cost is \$2,346.24 annually. The sum of mileage, lodging, and meals equals an annual amount of \$14,923.44 for a regional home based frequent traveler. This mix of frequency and proximity to the Empowerment Zones is expected to meet the travel needs of the six positions identified in this project.

Line 4 – Equipment totals to \$9,816. This amount is the sum of two computers for the two staff stationed at DECAL's Atlanta headquarters estimated at \$1,200 each and four mobile worker laptop computers, \$1,699; travel bags, \$63; and multipurpose copiers, \$92, totaling \$1,854 for each Zone Coordinator. Equipment is a onetime expense in year one of the grant. Equipment less than \$5,000 is inventoried for insurance coverage purposes and as reasonable for internal control.

Line 5 – Supplies total to \$3,750. Office supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$175 in the first year plus \$150 each subsequent year for each of the six staff positions. Estimates were made based on the sum of commonly identified consumable office products.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$200,000. DECAL plans to contract for professional services to evaluate the implementation of the empowerment zone project as related to Implementation Science methodology. The contractor will work with each Zone Coordinator to collect data; however, all analysis and writing will be done by the contractor. This service is estimated to cost \$100,000 in each of the first two years of the grant. Estimates were based on recent similar implementation work using this methodology. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procurement procedures under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 8 – Other totals to \$22,686. This amount includes the cost for Blackberry service at \$59.24 per month or \$710.88 annually for six positions for each of the four grant years totaling \$17,061. Also included is printing cost for informational handouts estimated to decline annually from \$3,000 in year one, \$1,500 in year two, \$750 in year three, and \$375 in year four totaling \$5,625. Informational handouts are needed to promote the concept of E³Zs and to create awareness about the different services offered in each E³Z.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$2,457,331.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$131,174. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$2,588,507.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$2,588,507.

Project 3: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access & Availability – Total Budget = \$50,702,948.

ELC funds requested = \$24,927,278 Support funds from other sources = \$25,775,670

Various activities within this project will support: the revision of the Quality Rated criteria and weighting factors to ensure differentiated quality rating levels, professional development on the revised Quality Rated criteria and point structure, and technical assistance to ELD providers focused on meeting revised Quality Rated criteria within public school settings. Additional activities will concentrate on increasing the affordability and availability of quality rated child care focusing particularly within the identified Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). This work will provide incentives to ELD providers to serve more subsidy eligible children and provide incentives to qualifying parents who choose to place their children in Quality Rated child care settings. Activities will also focus on increasing parent awareness of the importance of quality educational experiences for their children at early ages. Other project activities are planned to expand the infant toddler mentor program to support children with high needs statewide and to provide technical assistance and financial support to increase the availability of quality care for children with disabilities.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$1,932,805. One TQRIS Special Education Classroom (619) Coach and one Georgia’s Pre-K School System Coach, both (PG15 \$48,936), will be needed to work statewide with public school systems in an effort to provide technical assistance to become Quality Rated. For three of the four grant years, 50% of one Business Operations Specialist and one System Design Coordinator, both (PG15 \$48,936), will be needed to implement the family CCDF subsidy co-pay activity within the E³Zs. This activity will provide incentives to parents via lowered family co-payments who choose Quality Rated child care. CCDF funds will be utilized to assume the cost differential so the providers won’t see reduced revenue. A Business Operations Specialist (PG16 \$53,728.41) and 50% of a Project Data Coordinator (PG14 \$44,571.27) will be needed to oversee the development and implementation of a subsidy contract initiative for three-star providers throughout the state. Another Business Operations Specialist and one Project Data Coordinator, both (PG15 \$48,948.59), will be needed to coordinate the efforts of existing staff to provide intensive technical assistance statewide to ELD educators to prepare ELD programs to become Quality Rated. One Project Manager (PG16 \$53,728.31) and one Technical Assistant Consultant (PG15 \$48,945.59) will be needed to expand the statewide infant toddler mentor program.

Line – 2 Fringe Benefits totals to \$1,032,196. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of salary (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line – 3 Travel totals to \$402,088. Six positions will be field based working from home locations as mobile workers. Four will work with public schools and other early childhood educators to prepare their programs to become Quality Rated. Two field positions will work to expand the infant toddler mentor program in the E³Zs and increase the availability of high-quality inclusive environments. Travel is estimated to total \$14,923.44 annually for each of these six mobile workers. Travel is calculated based on regional travel frequencies of 188 trips per year traveling 11,280 miles (30 miles one way on average) at the current mileage reimbursement rate of \$.565 per mile. Mileage equals \$6,373.20 annually. Overnight stays are expected on 30% of the trips at a rate of \$110.00 per night. Lodging totals \$6,204 annually. Meal reimbursement is estimated at 1.3 times each overnight stay at a blended rate for high and low cost areas of \$32 per day. Total meal cost is \$2,346.24 annually. In addition, travel from the Atlanta office will be required to train regional partners on the revised TQRIS criteria and weighting changes, and to carry out activities within the E³Zs aimed at providing quality care for children with high needs. Travel is calculated using an estimate for statewide travel from the Atlanta headquarters at a frequency of 57 trips per year traveling 10,260 miles (90 miles one way on average) at the current mileage reimbursement rate of \$.565 per mile. Mileage equals \$5,796.90 annually. Overnight stays are expected on 60% of the trips at a rate of \$110.00 per night. Lodging totals \$3,762 annually. Meal reimbursement is estimated at 1.3 times each overnight stay at a blended rate for high and low cost areas of \$32 per day. Total meal cost is \$1,422.72 annually. The sum of mileage, lodging, and meals equals an annual amount of \$10,981.62 for Atlanta based travelers. Total travel sums to \$100,522 annually for each of the four grant years.

Line 4 – Equipment totals to \$14,724. This amount is the sum of three computers for three staff stationed at DECAL’s Atlanta headquarters estimated at \$1,200 each and six mobile worker laptop computers, \$1699; travel bags, \$63; and multipurpose copiers, \$92, totaling \$1,854 each. Equipment less than \$5,000 is inventoried for insurance coverage purposes and as reasonable for internal control.

Line 5 – Supplies total to \$10,588. Office supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$175 in the first year plus \$150 each subsequent year for each of 9.5 FTEs (8.5 FTEs in year 4) working with this project. Additionally materials for training on the revisions to the TQRIS will be delivered on flash drives. \$2,400 is included for flash drives in years three and four of the grant period. Estimates were made based on the sum of commonly identified consumable office products.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$288,000. DECAL will contract with the child care subsidy data system vendor to modify the subsidy payment system to implement family co-payments on a flat rate basis in the E³Zs. A lowered fixed co-pay amount will provide incentive for parents to place children with high needs in higher quality care settings. Cost is estimated to be \$70,000 in year one of the grant based on recent tiered reimbursement payment system modifications. Additionally, \$100,000 is needed in year one to contract with the vendor of the child care subsidy data system and a second vendor to mirror the Pre-K roster system and to collect child level roster data for contracted slots in accordance with federal requirements. DECAL plans to contract for services to translate Quality Rated materials into multiple languages as defined by a needs survey. \$10,000 is needed in years one and two for this service. To expand the infant toddler mentor program, DECAL will contract with a qualified trainer to provide mentor training focused on participants in the E³Zs. Training sessions will be held twice each month for a total of \$22,000 annually for each year of the grant. The mentor training contract estimate is based on previously incurred mentor training costs. DECAL will also contract for highly qualified subject matter expert services to assess the reliability of the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP). This service is estimated to cost \$10,000 in the first year of the grant. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 8 – Other totals to \$37,904. This amount includes the cost for Blackberry service at \$59.24 per month or \$710.88 annually for seven positions for each of the four grant years totaling \$19,905. Also included are amounts to pay a per diem fee at \$100 per participant to each parent attending the parent awareness training. Two training sessions to be delivered in Spanish are planned for each of the first three years of the grant to increase family awareness of quality and of DECAL’s Quality Rated system. Approximately 25 attendees are expected to attend each session. Per diem fees total \$15,000 for the grant period. An additional \$500 for each of these six training sessions totaling \$3,000 for the grant period is included to cover facility costs and other printed materials related to the parent awareness trainings.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$3,718,305.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$193,280. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 11 – Funds to be Distributed to Other Programs and Partners total to \$21,015,696. DECAL will distribute an additional \$600,000 in combination with child care subsidy payments to ELD programs chosen by families of children with high needs in the E³Zs. This amount will offset the difference in the lowered family co-pay provided as an incentive to parents to place their children in Quality Rated child care settings. A conservative estimate of \$300,000 per year for years two and three of the grant was made based on current and anticipated increases in Quality Rated availability in relation to current and anticipated increases in parent awareness to make informed choices and place their children in higher quality care settings. DECAL plans to distribute \$3,400,000 to 17 three-star Quality Rated programs at \$200,000 each per year to reserve space and serve children with high needs. Each ELD program must agree to serve 20 subsidy eligible children each year. Amounts paid will be prorated based on child eligibility, roster data, and attendance factors. Six CCR&Rs will receive an additional \$193,855 per year totaling \$4,665,696 for the grant period. This amount will fund the addition of two time limited staff to work with early childhood programs throughout the state to increase the availability of high-quality child care settings and increase participation in the Quality Rated system. The amount provided includes salaries and benefits of \$80,000 for each of 12 additional staff, travel, equipment, supplies and other expenses similar to the previously described calculations for a mobile worker. In years two, three, and four of the grant, DECAL plans to distribute 25 \$2,000 mini grants to organizations within the E³Zs to enhance program quality. This totals to \$50,000 in each of the three years summing to \$150,000 for the grant period. Additionally, 100 \$5,000 mini grants will be distributed throughout the state each year to support the inclusion of children with disabilities totaling \$2,000,000 for the grant period.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$24,927,281.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Quality Rated projects total to \$17,775,670. Current. DECAL Quality Initiatives (QI) staff will be heavily involved in all activities of the Quality Rated Access & Availability project. Estimates of staff time expected to support this project include: Quality Initiatives Director 15%; Quality Initiatives Customer Assistance 20%; Quality Initiatives Manager 30% in years one and two plus an additional 15% in years three and four focused on professional development related to the Quality Rated revisions; Assistant Commissioner 15%; Child Care Subsidy Manager 15%; Resource and Referral Manager 25%, Statewide Inclusion Coordinator 15%; Pre-K Inclusion Coordinator 25%. Calculations were made based on actual current salary and benefit amounts totaling \$166,907.50 in the first two grant years and \$182,627.50 in years three and four summing to \$699,071. DECAL estimates that \$2,118,458 will be paid from CCDF funds as tiered reimbursement bonuses over the four year period of the grant.

DECAL has a parent referral desk (1-877-All-GA-Kids) to assist parents seeking child care services. The referral desk's work to support the Quality Rated project is valued at \$660,000 annually totaling \$2,640,000 for the grant period. Funds donated by private partners will also be utilized to support the Quality Rated project. Contributions include \$1,000,000 from Cox Enterprises, \$200,000 from Turner Broadcasting, \$4.2 million from private philanthropy organizations and \$350,000 from the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) organization. Approximately 50% of the targeted Infant and Toddler funds from the CCDF will be used to support the activities of the Quality Rated project. This amount is estimated at \$2,171,056 annually totaling \$8,684,224 for the four year grant period. Twelve inclusion coordinators from each of the CCR&Rs will work with DECAL staff to increase the availability of inclusion classrooms statewide. This amount is calculated to be \$520,978 annually totaling to \$2,083,912.08 for the grant period based on current compensation amounts. Other than the contributions from private partners, the supporting efforts for the Quality Rated project will be funded by CCDF quality dollars.

Also, approximately 28% of the efforts of CCR&Rs operating statewide will assist by providing technical assistance and professional development activities related to this project. This calculates to an estimate of \$2,000,000 annually in funds from the CCDF grant.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$50,702,948.

Project 4: Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation – Total budget = \$13,942,941

ELC funds requested = \$2,222,943

Support funds from other sources = \$11,720,000

This project completes phases three and four of the current validation work Georgia is conducting as part of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. For portions of phase three, the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) will work with the Georgia Office of Student Achievement (GOSA). Phase three is specifically related to assessing the extent that current ratings reflect different levels of quality. Activities for this phase primarily entail analysis of data currently collected as part of the Quality Rated process. GOSA will assist DECAL in conducting the analysis and reporting the results in a context of sustaining gains made in the K-3 system. For portions of Phase Three and all of Phase Four, DECAL will contract with an independent evaluator to conduct classroom quality observations and child assessments. Specifically, this phase looks at the impact of quality ratings on children's growth and development.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$139,613. Allocated time of two positions determined as follows: 50% Project Coordinator and 10% Research Director will be needed to ensure the deliverables for this project are met. Estimates were based on current salary amounts summing to \$34,903.23 for each of the four years of the grant period. These portions of positions are important to coordinate validation activities and maintain alignment with other state plan activities in phases three and four.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$75,900. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of salary for the project manager position (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%). A slight increase in the retirement rate of 3.28% is included in the allocated amount of the Research Director covered by a different retirement rate of 18.46%.

Line 5 – Supplies totals to \$625. Office supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$175 in the first year plus \$150 each subsequent year for this positions. Estimates were made based on the sum of commonly identified consumable office products.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$1,992,844. DECAL will contract with knowledgeable experts to conduct an independent two-year longitudinal study in years two and three of the grant period. This contract is specifically for the fourth phase of the validation. In this phase, independent quality data is collected and correlated with outcomes related to children’s growth and development. The contract is planned to be awarded in late 2014 to begin class observations in 2015. Class observations incorporate both Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS-R and ITERS-R) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Three class observations will be conducted in approximately 150 child care center based programs. Each observation will cover a two-day period totaling 900 days of class observation data collection followed by an additional 900 days for class assessments. The following year observations and assessments will be conducted in approximately 100 family child care settings. Based on similar validation studies conducted in Georgia’s Pre-K classes, this contract is estimated to cost \$1,492,844 in year two and \$500,000 in year three for a total cost of \$1,992,844. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procurement procedures under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$2,208,982.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$13,961. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$2,222,943.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation project total to \$11,720,000. Lottery funds provided for quality longitudinal studies and the implementation of the CLASS system to improve student and teacher interactions will provide existing support to the QRIS validation project. This amount is estimated to be \$2,930,000 annually for a total of \$11,720,000 for the period of the grant.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$13,942,941.

Project 5: Early Learning and Development Standards – Total budget = \$3,181,989

ELC funds requested = \$2,106,989

Support funds from other sources = \$1,075,000

This project is designed to ensure that the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) are used statewide by ELD programs. The GELDS are the result of a comprehensive standards alignment study and revision project that began in 2010. The GELDS will provide Georgia's ELD workforce with access to developmentally appropriate standards and a clear understanding of children's learning and development. The goal for the roll out of the GELDS is to implement a tiered professional development plan for all stakeholders in Georgia. The plan would start with general awareness and knowledge for a broad base of stakeholders. Then, the plan would move certain target groups, such as early childhood educators, from the knowledge phase to the application phase with intensive training and coaching. Funds will be used to produce multiple media and training initiatives that support the professional development plan. The plan includes general awareness, targeted training, supported application, and proficient practice using the GELDS.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$251,000. One full time Project Coordinator (PG17 \$62,750) will be needed to initiate, participate in, and coordinate each of the activities of the GELDS project. This position will be needed for the full four years of the grant. Salary is based on the market midpoint of this pay grade in Georgia's employee statewide compensation plan.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$134,560. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of salary for the project coordinator position (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line 3 – Travel totals to \$29,284. The Project Coordinator will be required to travel statewide during the grant period to engage stakeholders, make presentations, and conduct training to support the tiered professional development plan. Travel is calculated using an estimate for statewide travel from the Atlanta headquarters at a frequency of 38 trips per year traveling 6,840 miles (90 miles one way on average) at the current mileage reimbursement rate of \$.565 per mile. Mileage equals \$3,864.60 annually. Overnight stays are expected on 60% of the trips at a rate of \$110.00 per night. Lodging totals \$2,508 annually. Meal reimbursement is estimated at 1.3 times each overnight stay at a blended rate for high and low cost areas of \$32 per day. Total meal cost is \$948.48 annually. The sum of mileage, lodging, and meals equals an annual amount of \$7321. This amount is estimated for each of the four grant years totaling \$29,284.

Line 4 – Equipment totals to \$1,200. This amount will provide one computer for the position dedicated to this project at DECAL's Atlanta headquarters estimated at \$1,200. Equipment is a one-time expense in the first year of the grant. Equipment less than \$5,000 is inventoried for insurance coverage purposes and as reasonable for internal control.

Line 5 – Supplies totals to \$625. Office supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$175 in the first year plus \$150 each subsequent year for this positions. Estimates were made based on the sum of commonly identified consumable office products.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$1,595,220. DECAL will contract for the design of general awareness materials estimated to cost \$18,000. An estimated \$50,000 will be used to contract for five additional online learning modules to be housed on the department’s website to provide on demand GELDS training. DECAL will contract for the development of a train the trainer course entitled “Intentional Planning with GELDS” at a cost of \$365,000. This contract will include conducting training sessions for regional CCR&R staff preparing them to train other early childhood educators statewide. The cost will be \$275,000 in the first year of the grant and \$30,000 in each subsequent year. The contract will include observations and evaluations of the trainers in years two, three, and four to ensure fidelity in the delivery of the course training. DECAL will also contract at an estimated \$200,000 for the development of a smart phone application making access to the GELDS more readily available. An estimated \$42,000 will be used to contract for the design and development of family guides and family engagement GELDS tool kits. An estimated \$300,000 will be used to contract for the development of a five-day cohort training series to provide professional development on GELDS and other pertinent topics at the third tier level of the Georgia professional development hierarchy model. DECAL will contract with a subject matter expert to work with internal staff and other designated stakeholders to develop GELDS training suitable for early childhood educators. The cost is estimated at \$1,200 per day for 20 days in year one, 10 days in year two, and five days in years three and four totaling \$48,000. DECAL plans to contract at \$200,000 for the development of a coaching model of professional development at the fourth tier level of the professional development hierarchy. Additionally, DECAL plans to contract for an estimated \$289,200 to develop resources for dual language learners. DECAL will also contract to provide training to approximately 1,000 teachers costing approximately \$83,000 based on current Pre-K teacher training rates. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procurement procedures under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 8 – Other totals to \$70,000. This amount includes printing and distribution cost for the family tool kits, teacher training materials, and GELDS awareness materials. Estimated amounts equal \$35,000 in year one, \$30,000 in year two, and \$5,000 in year three.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$2,081,889.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$25,100. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$2,106,989.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the GELDS project total to \$1,075,000. CCDF targeted quality dollars will be used to produce 20,000 of the GELDS teacher tool kits estimated at \$50 each for a total of \$1,000,000. An additional \$70,000 to cover design work of the tool kits will also be provided to support this project. Additionally DECAL will contract with the Parent

to Parent Georgia organization to develop GELDS resources targeting children with disabilities for \$5,000.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$3,181,989.

Project 6: Comprehensive Assessment System– Total budget = \$153,926

ELC funds requested = \$51,450

Support funds from other sources = \$102,476

The purpose of this project is to strengthen Georgia’s comprehensive assessment system. DECAL will contract with experts to facilitate the review and alignment of various child assessment methods with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) and Workforce Competencies. They will also create a Developmental Passport to allow sharing of screening information among families, health care professionals, and ELD programs. A taskforce of approximately 40 participants will be convened to carry out the work of this project. The alignment of assessments will ensure research-based appropriate assessments are used, ensure ECEs have needed skills in choosing and using assessments, and facilitate sharing of assessment results thus improving quality and child outcomes.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$33,600. DECAL will contract with a highly qualified subject matter expert facilitate the alignment of assessments on a deliverable basis. Budget amount includes an estimate of 14 days at a daily rate of \$1,200 totaling \$16,800 in each for the first two years of the grant. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procurement procedures under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 8 – Other totals to \$17,850. It is expected that approximately eight members of the taskforce will be paid a per diem fee of \$100 each to support the cost of their participation in the project. These eight participants will each attend two large group meetings annually and meet with a subgroup quarterly. Budget amount calculates to \$4,800 in each of the first two years. Additional printing cost in years three and four are included to print approximately 10,000 high-quality screening passports to be developed by the taskforce at an estimated cost of \$.55 each and an additional 5,000 screening passports to be printed in year two at the same cost rate.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$51,450.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Comprehensive Assessment System total to \$102,476. Existing staff will dedicate a portion of their time to this project. Ten percent of the CCDF funded Inclusion Manager totaling \$9,281 annually, ten percent of the Head Start Collaboration Office Director totaling \$11,679 annually and five percent of the lottery funded Pre-K director totaling \$4,659 will support this project for an annual total of \$25,619.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$153,926.

Project 7: Family Engagement Community Grants – Total budget = \$1,208,679

ELC funds requested = \$408,677

Support funds from other sources = \$800,000

Activities of this project will provide for the distribution of developmental materials including GELDS family tool kits developed in previous GELDS project. DECAL will work through local Family Connection Partnership and Parent to Parent organizations to design and deliver training on effectively using the GELDS family tool kit and to distribute materials to families in their communities.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$99,627. The Family Engagement Coordinator position will be dedicated to this project for approximately 50% (equal to \$29,646.64) of the time in year one and 25% (equal to \$14,823.32) of the time in each of the following grant years. Estimates are based on the current salary level of this position. An additional amount of \$25,500 is included in year one to pay \$100 stipends to participants to support attendance at the GELDS family training. This estimate is based on training two participants from Family Connection Partnership and Parent to Parent organizations from each of Georgia's 159 counties expecting slightly more than 80% attendance at the training sessions. Note: If needed, the amount for stipends may be transferred later to another line item in accordance with accounting or other administrative requirements.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$39,735. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of the allocated salary for this project (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line 3 – Travel totals to \$8,104. Two staff will make four trips each to provide training to local Family Connection Partnership and Parent to Parent staff. Mileage is estimated at a 90 mile one way distance for a total of 1,440 miles at a rate of \$.565 per mile totaling \$814. Lodging is estimated at \$110 per night for eight nights totaling \$880, and meals are estimated at 1.3 time each overnight stay at the blended daily reimbursement of \$32. Travel totals \$2,026 for each of the four years. Training will be conducted in the first year with follow-up technical assistance visits to each region in subsequent grant years.

Line 8 – Other totals to \$11,250. Included in this amount is \$6,000 in facility costs to provide four regional training sessions statewide at \$1,500 per session. DECAL expects approximately 100 participants to attend each of the four training sessions. Printed materials are estimated at \$5,000 to reproduce a handout booklet provided by the Center for Disease Control and \$250 for other training handout materials.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$158,716.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$9,962. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 11 – Funds to be Distributed total to \$240,000. Beginning in year two of the grant, funds to support four \$5,000 mini grants will be provided to recipients within the E³Zs identified by each of the two partnering organizations to further address high need issues specific to their local area. This calculates to eight total \$5,000 grants equal to \$40,000. Additionally, in years three and four funds to support 20 \$2,500 mini grants will be provided to recipients statewide identified by each of the two partnering organization for the same purpose. This calculates to 40 \$2,500 grants equal to \$100,000 in years three and four.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$408,677.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Family Engagement project total to \$800,000. DECAL will provide \$200,000 in state lottery dollars each year of the grant to Family Connection Partnership to further their work in addressing local community and family needs related to Georgia’s Pre-K.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$1,208,679.

Project 8: Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care – Total budget = \$211,904

ELC funds requested = \$211,904

Support funds from other sources = \$0

The Governor’s Office for Children and Families (GOCF), the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program grantee for Georgia, is the lead agency for this project. DECAL will assist in coordinating this project designed to implement an early childhood systems of care framework in child care centers with home visitation as a major service strategy.

To support access to high-quality professional development for Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers, DECAL will provide small grants to local Head Start and Early Head Start programs to include FFN caregivers in their professional development activities.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$53,728. The Family Engagement Coordinator position will be dedicated to this project for approximately 25% (equal to \$14,823.32) of the time in each year of the grant. Estimates are based on current salary level of this position.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$28,804. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of the allocated salary for this project (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$82,532.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$5,373. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 11 – Funds to be Distributed total to \$124,000. Beginning in year one of the grant, DECAL will provide \$1,000 annually to each of the 31 Head Start agencies in Georgia to include local FFN caregivers in each of their training sessions.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$211,904.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$211,904.

Project 9: Workforce Knowledge and Competencies – Total budget = \$411,228

ELC funds requested = \$112,000

Support funds from other sources = \$299,228

This project will focus on the articulation of higher education credits in early childhood education post-secondary programs. Work will include the design and review of early childhood curricula to incorporate the GELDS in career teaching settings. A taskforce will review and identify gaps in curricula content and develop lesson plans. Goals of this project are to align early childhood education among the various teaching institutions to produce common Workforce Knowledge Competencies in the workforce.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$112,000. DECAL will contract and work with institutions of higher education to study current articulation and transformation agreements. An estimate of \$50,000 is included in years one and two of this grant for this contract service. DECAL will also contract with a highly qualified subject matter expert to facilitate the taskforce meeting at a daily rate of \$1,200. \$12,000 is included in the budget for this service in year one. Estimates are based on similar work previously contracted by DECAL. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procurement procedures under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$112,000.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$112,000.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies project total to \$299,228. Approximately 85% of the Professional Development Manager will be dedicated to this project at an estimated support amount of \$74,807 annually. Estimate is based on the current salary amount of this position. This position is paid by CCDF funds.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$411,228.

Project 10: Supporting Early Educators – Total budget = \$5,826,436

ELC funds requested = \$3,880,238

Support funds from other sources = \$1,946,196

Activities of this project are designed to provide Scholarships and Incentives for early childhood educators who attain higher degrees or eligible credentials in the field of early childhood

education. Additional activities are designed to support the implementation of Georgia's Professional Development Hierarchy.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$237,173. One full time Coaching Supervisor (PG17, \$59,293) will be needed to coordinate the work of field staff who will serve as coaches for “Intentional Planning with the GELDS” trainers. This amount is based on the market midpoint of this pay grade in Georgia's statewide pay scale.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$127,148. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of salary (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line 4 – Equipment totals to \$1,200. This amount will provide one computer for the position dedicated to this project at DECAL's Atlanta headquarters estimated at \$1,200. Equipment is a one-time expense in the first year of the grant. Equipment less than \$5,000 is inventoried for insurance coverage purposes and as needed for reasonable internal control.

Line 5 – Supplies total to \$5,625. Office supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$175 in the first year plus \$150 each subsequent year for each position. DECAL also plans to produce 460 training notebooks for participants of the train the trainer classes at an estimated cost of \$5,000 in the first year of the grant. Estimates were made based on the sum of commonly identified consumable office products.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$475,000. DECAL will contract for the development of the train the trainer course, “Connecting Assessments with Standards and with Curricula” and for the associated course materials. This contract will include 23 five-day training sessions for an estimated class size of 20 participants each. This contract is estimated to cost \$275,000. Additionally, DECAL will contract for the administration, eligibility verification, and payment process for stipends to be paid to early childhood educators obtaining a higher degree or recognized credential level in early childhood education. This amount is estimated at \$50,000 annually for each of the four grant years. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procurement procedures under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 7 – Training Stipends total to \$2,950,000. Funds will be provided to pay stipends for 200 early childhood educators at \$1,200 totaling \$240,000 annually for obtaining a first credential level. Stipends for 165 early childhood educators at \$1,500 each will be paid annually for obtaining a second early childhood credential. Additionally, stipends for 100 early childhood educators at \$2,500 will be paid annually for obtaining a third early childhood credential.

Line 8 – Other totals to \$60,375. Approximately half of the 115 days (23 five-day sessions) of train the trainer trainings will be conducted regionally. This amount estimates the facility costs at approximately \$350 per day for half of the training days. Also, \$40,250 is included to contract with a highly qualified vendor or university for the training.

Line 9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$3,856,521.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$23,717. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$3,880,238.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Early Educators project totals to \$1,946,196. It is estimated that approximately 25% of Pre-K consultants and Infant and Toddler consultants will be devoted to training and coaching for this project. The supported amount budgeted is based on 25% of the sum of salaries for these consultants paid by both lottery and CCDF funds.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$5,826,436.

Project 11: This project supports the implementation of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment in Georgia. The Georgia Department of Education, a participating agency, has budgeted \$6,250,000 for this project. DECAL does not have any budget items for this project.

Project 12: Unified Data System – Total budget = \$5,014,449

ELC funds requested = \$3,042,290 Support funds from other sources = \$1,972,160

Activities of this project involve increasing the amount of Essential Data Elements data that are collected in the Cross Agency Child Data System. This will be done through adding additional data feeds from Participating State Agencies and by expanding operational data systems to more easily collect data. The additional data feeds from Participating State Agencies focus on information about children with high needs currently missing from the Cross Agency Child Data System, such as home visitation data and birth registration data of children with developmental risk factors.

A web portal will be created for the Licensing/TQRIS data system that will allow entry of data by ELD programs and CCR&Rs. This will increase the timeliness and relevance of data available to parents searching for quality ELD programs. It will also streamline many of the ELD program processes reducing processing time for ELD program personnel and state administrative staff.

Finally, the Professional Development Registry will be enhanced to include a training registration module that will simplify the collection of training and demographic data about the ELD workforce.

Critical to this project will be the formation of a data governance structure that will be modeled after the structure already in place for the P-20 State Longitudinal Data System. This group will establish policies related to the access, security, and appropriate use of the Cross Agency Child Data System.

Line 1 – Personnel totals to \$214,914. One full time Data Specialist (PG16, \$53,728.41) will be needed for the full four years of the grant period. This position will regularly review the incoming data feeds for formatting accuracy and anomalies working with participating agencies to resolve and correct identified data issues. Salaries represent the market rate midpoint of the pay grade on Georgia’s statewide employee pay scale.

Line 2 – Fringe Benefits totals to \$115,216. This amount is calculated at 53.611% of salary (FICA 7.65% + Retirement 15.18% + Health Insurance 30.781%).

Line 4 – Equipment totals to \$4,800. This amount is the sum of four computers for the Data Specialist and three additional contracted staff who will be dedicated to this project. Computers are estimated to cost 1,200 each. Equipment less than \$5,000 is inventoried for insurance coverage purposes and for reasonable internal control.

Line 5 – Supplies totals to \$3,169. Office supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$175 in the first year plus \$150 each subsequent year for staff dedicated to this project. Amounts vary each year due to changes in the FTEs needed for this project. Estimates are calculated based on 5.25 FTEs in year one, six FTEs in year two, five FTEs in year three, and four FTEs in year four. Two Data Specialists will be needed in each of the four years to do the build out of all the data feeds and data integrity work. A contracted Project Manager is required for four years to manage all the work associated with these data activities. Two contracted developers are required for the construction of the ELD program/child care resource and referral agency web portal for the first two years, and one contracted developer in the third year. One contracted developer is required for the last three months of the first year and each subsequent year to build out the professional development system to accommodate the training registration functionality. Estimates were made based on the sum of commonly identified consumable office products.

Line 6 – Contractual totals to \$2,675,200. DECAL will contract for the development of a mobile application for easy access to the data system for parents looking for ELD program information. An estimated amount of \$200,000 is included in the budget total based on reliable quotes from other agencies for similar work. Additionally, a Project Manager and three programming staff will be hired through the mandatory statewide contract. Each position is estimated at \$80 per hour for 1,992 annual business hours at 95% attendance equal to \$152,320 each. Amounts vary each year due to changes in the FTEs needed for various activities of the project. Estimates are calculated based on 4.25 FTEs in year one, five FTEs in year two, four FTEs in year three, and three FTEs in year four. DECAL follows state purchasing procedures and procurement procedures under 34 CFR Parts 74.40-74.48 and Part 80.36.

Line 8 - Other totals to \$7,500. Printed and online materials will be needed to instruct users of the Georgia Trains system on how to access the system, register for training sessions, update training schedules, and record course attendance for training participants. An estimated \$4,500 is included in year one plus and additional \$3,000 in year two of the grant for this purpose.

9 – Total Direct Costs totals to \$3,020,798.

Line 10 – Indirect Cost totals to \$21,491. Indirect cost is calculated at 10% of salaries.

Line 13 – Total Grant Funds Requested equals \$3,042,290.

Line 14 – Funds from other sources supporting the Data project total to \$1,972,160. Existing information technology staff will be dedicated to the RTT-ELCG Data project to provide project management services, application management, application interface connectivity integrity, and other assistance. Budgeted amounts are based on allocated portions of time to be dedicated to this project as follows: 20% of the CIO's time, 50% of two existing developers' time, 50% of the Application Manager's time, 50% of a Project Manager's time, and 100% of an existing Data Specialist's time. Budgeted amounts were calculated based on actual current cost of the positions listed totaling \$493,040 annually for each of the four grant years.

Line 15 – Total Project Budget = \$5,014,449.

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Georgia Department of Education

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II - TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the *Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Education					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$41,000	\$82,000	\$82,000	\$82,000	\$287,000
2. Fringe Benefits	\$23,370	\$46,740	\$46,740	\$46,740	\$163,590
3. Travel	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$6,000
4. Equipment	\$3,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,500
5. Supplies	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$2,000
6. Contractual	\$0	\$1,512,636	\$1,512,637	\$1,512,637	\$4,537,910
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$69,370	\$1,643,376	\$1,643,377	\$1,643,877	\$5,000,000
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Education					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$69,370	\$1,643,376	\$1,643,377	\$1,643,877	\$5,000,000
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$17,343	\$410,844	\$410,844	\$410,969	\$1,250,000
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$86,713	\$2,054,220	\$2,054,221	\$2,054,846	\$6,250,000
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Education					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$86,713	\$2,054,220	\$2,054,221	\$2,054,846	\$6,250,000
12. Unified Data System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$86,713	\$2,054,220	\$2,054,221	\$2,054,846	\$6,250,000

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Georgia Department of Education

Operations

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) oversees K-12 public education throughout the state, ensuring that laws and regulations pertaining to education are followed and that state and federal money appropriated for education is properly allocated to local school systems. GaDOE will develop and deploy a new Kindergarten Readiness Indicator within the state's existing Kindergarten assessment instrument, the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS). As a result of the project, kindergarteners will participate in the redesigned portion of the GKIDS instrument early in the school year. Each student will receive a measurement of kindergarten readiness so that each teacher can individualize instruction to meet each child's needs.

Project- Georgia Kindergarten Entry Assessment Total Budget = \$6,250,000

ELC funds requested = **\$5,000,000** Support funds from other sources = \$1,250,000

GaDOE is the lead agency for the Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA), Project 11, and has the budgetary responsibilities for the project. GaDOE will administer and oversee the development, implementation, professional development and evaluation for the KEA (Project 11). \$6,250,000 is requested for personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contracts, and other costs. These budget categories are explained below.

Existing GaDOE and DECAL personnel will oversee the development of the assessment. Funds for the Assessment Specialist dedicated to this initiative are sought. Funds from the RTT-ELC are not being requested to cover the salaries of other key DECAL and GaDOE leadership. After development, the Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be implemented as part of the GaDOE budget.

In addition, GaDOE will provide resources to support ELD programs funded by IDEA, Part B to participate in Quality Rated, Georgia's TQRIS (Project 3). GaDOE staff will also be integral in the alignment of the GELDS, Comprehensive Assessment System and Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (Projects 5, 6 and 9). Additionally, using existing funds, the Department of Education will provide a feed to the Unified Data System of IDEA Part B data. GaDOE will also provide resources to participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure (Project 12).

Line Items

Line 1- Personnel totals to \$287,000.

A full-time Assessment Specialist (\$82,000 annually) at GaDOE will manage all activities and contractor efforts related to the development and deployment of the new Kindergarten Readiness Indicator. First year costs are prorated (\$41,000) to account for the state fiscal year (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014) since the grant will begin in the latter half of the state fiscal year. The Assessment Specialist will be hired the latter half of year needed for the the full four years of the project. The salary amount is commensurate with the amount for the GaDOE position of Assessment Specialist; the salary represents the mid-point of the pay grade on Georgia's statewide employee pay scale. The Assessment Specialist will lead all aspects of the efforts to develop and deploy the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator which is proposed. This will include, but not be limited to, activities such as directing the work of the selected contractor, designing agendas and helping to facilitate meetings of the development committee, and managing and approving all materials and processes related to the development and deployment process. The job description will seek a highly qualified individual with a background in assessment development, preferably in the area of early childhood learning and assessment.

Line 2- Fringe Benefits totals to \$163,590.

Fringe benefit amounts are calculated at 57% of the salary; this includes FICA, retirement, health insurance, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation insurance and a state personnel factor as provided by the GaDOE Division of Finance and Business Operations.

Line 3-Travel totals to \$6,000.

It is anticipated that the Assessment Specialist will travel a minimum of four times during each year of the project to meet with the selected contractor, members of the development committee, observe field test locations, and to perform other functions related to the project. Travel is expected to be heavier in the last year of the grant as GaDOE works to scale the measure across the state. Travel will include trips that could be up to 300 miles one way. Overnight lodging will be necessary. The sum of mileage, lodging and per diem for meals is expected to cost \$6,000 for the contract period. State Travel Regulations will be followed in providing for reimbursement.

The funds in this budget category are for travel reimbursement purposes for the Assessment Specialist related to meetings with the selected contractor, the development committee, observe field test locations, and to perform other functions related to the project.

Line 4- Equipment totals to \$3,500'

Purchases of a laptop, printer, and hardware/software peripherals for the Assessment Specialist are provided for in this budget line. The cost of the laptop is anticipated to be up to \$2,500 with a

printer cost of up to \$1,000 inclusive of peripherals. Equipment purchases will be made from vendors approved by GaDOE; costs will be incurred in year one. The Assessment Specialist will require a laptop, printer, and related hardware/software peripherals to complete the required duties and responsibilities outlined in the project.

Line 5- Supplies total to \$2,000.

GaDOE estimates the materials and supplies needed by the nature of the expense or general category (e.g. instructional materials, office supplies). GaDOE will allot \$500 of the grant funds annually for supplies such as paper, printing supplies, folders, hanging files and other general office supplies to support the work of the Assessment Specialist. These costs are commensurate with expenses incurred in providing supplies to GaDOE staff and projects.

Line 6- Contractual totals to \$4,537,910.

GaDOE will select a contractor with expertise in the area of assessment development and established experience in the area of early childhood assessment specifically. State procurement protocols will be followed. The selected contractor will facilitate the activities of the development committee which will inform, guide, and review the development of the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator and the design of the tasks that will comprise the assessment of selected skills for the indicator. The contractor will provide for meeting arrangements, travel reimbursement for team members (following state travel regulations), and reimbursement for substitute teachers when applicable. Additionally, the contractor will provide the technical expertise and materials necessary for each meeting. The contractor will conduct an extensive review of literature in the area of early childhood assessment and learning. They will also contract with two early childhood experts who will provide guidance regarding this project to the GaDOE Assessment Specialist, the contractor, and the development committee. The contractor will provide for the drafting of, and eventually the final design of, the observational protocols and tasks that will comprise the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator. They will design and conduct informal “try-outs” of those tasks in selected Kindergarten classrooms. In Year Three, the contractor will develop and conduct formal field testing in selected schools statewide. Analysis of field test results will be provided along with any resulting revisions to the tasks deemed necessary based upon field test data. The contractor will complete all tasks necessary to bring the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator to its operational stage in Kindergarten classrooms across Georgia. This will require the completion of all training and administration manuals, technology applications, and scoring and reporting processes for the assessment. The contractor will also conduct a standard setting for the new Kindergarten Readiness Indicator.

The budgeted cost for years one through four for contracted services totals \$4,537,910. The State follows the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36. All state procurement protocols will be followed.

The contracted services that are provided will allow for the development and deployment of the new Kindergarten Readiness Indicator. The contractor selected will conduct activities that will begin with initial research and development work through design, field testing, standard setting, and deployment of the new Kindergarten Readiness Indicator.

Line 9- Total Direct Costs totals to \$5,000,000.

Line 13- Total Grant Funds Requested are \$5,000,000

Line 14- Funds from Other Sources Used to Support the State Plan - \$1,250,000.

NOTE: This is an estimate only to be refined upon grant award. Georgia will contribute commensurate match to be determined. Other contributions are estimated at 25% of grant dollars per year, for each year reaching the above total. Funds will be used for administration, professional development, and/or other purposes. Funds will be provided, as appropriate, from existing state and federal funding streams such as Title I, IDEA, 619 special education pre-school, State general funds, and/or lottery dollars.

Line 15- Total Budget is \$6,250,000.

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Georgia Department of Human Services

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II -TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Human Services					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$62,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$62,600
2. Fringe Benefits	\$4,345	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,345
3. Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Equipment	\$3,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,200
5. Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$70,145	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,145
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Human Services					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$70,145	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,145
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$70,145	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,145
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Human Services					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$70,145	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,145
Total Budget	\$70,145	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,145

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS)

Operations

The Georgia Department of Human Services through its Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) administers both the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs. RTT-ELC funds will support DHS to provide a feed to the Cross Agency Child Data System of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) data for Project 12.

DHS will provide staffing resources to participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure (Project 12) and the resources to participate in GELDS training and incorporate the GELDS into DHS services and outreach to families (Project 5). DHS will also serve on the Task Force on the Comprehensive Assessment System and assist in the distribution and use of Development Passports through the county health departments (Project 6).

Georgia Department of Human Services through its Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) will use its Data Analysis, Research and Evaluation Section to produce the required data files for this project. Management of this request will reside with DFCS. Based on the detailed requirements validation sessions that will be held with DECAL, additional fields, reports, and data feeds will be produced. In such scenarios, extract files may have to be created from the DHS Eligibility system, SUCCESS, by the DHS Office of Information Technology (OIT). Cost to produce such files will be determined once requirements are further identified.

Projects

Total Budget = \$70,145

ELC funds requested = **\$70,145**

Support funds from other sources = \$0

Georgia's Department of Human Services through its Division of Family Services administers both the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs. DFCS maintains data extracts for prior and current years and will be able to meet the SNAP And TANF requirements of the Unified Data System project (Project 12). The budget for this project was determined through a shared cost analysis of files created each month plus the salary for the staff involved in the compilation. Projects involving additional data feeds as required by DECAL would have to be estimated after detailed requirements validation sessions.

Line Items

Line 1- Personnel totals to \$62,600

A portion of staff time for several positions is needed for this project for a limited period of time in year one: 1) Operations Analysts; 2) Business Analysts; 3) Programmer Analyst; and 4) Tester.

1) The Operations Analysts will compile data from extracts received from DHS' Office of Information Technology. Each data request is expected to require 16 hours to fulfill; the frequency of the data requests has not been determined. DHS estimates that a portion of time for two analysts will be required for a one-month period while the requirements and initial scope are determined at a cost of \$7,600. (Salaries for Operations Analysts are \$46,000 annually x 2 staff = \$92,000/12 months = \$7666, not including benefits. Of this \$7,600 is requested from the RTT-ELC grant.) The Operations Analysts are skilled employees who understand the complexities of the raw data extracts and are able to then convert them into a meaningful format for this project.

2) The Business Analysts will work with DECAL, DFCS, and OIT to gather additional requirements to enable the data/information about children and families in the SNAP and TANF programs to be extracted from SUCCESS as needed. Business Analysts would be used for a two-month period in year one. The cost of these positions is \$10,000 per month, including benefits, for a total of \$20,000 for the Business Analysts. Business Analysts are a key component to such initiatives since they have a good knowledge of the business and the underlying technologies. They serve as a bridge between business teams from DECAL and DFCS and the OIT technology team.

3) The Programmer Analyst will work with the Business Analysts and convert the business requirements into design documents and ultimately code the necessary programs to complete the data feed and interfaces. One Programmer Analyst is needed for a two-month period in the first year of the project; the cost of this position is \$10,000 per month, including benefits. Programmers are a vital component of any development team since they work on the design and development of computer programs that enable the interfaces between agencies to work accurately and securely.

4) A Tester will work to test the program(s) completed by the Programmer Analyst and ensure that the code adheres to DHS OIT standards and also functions as designed. One Tester will be needed for 45 days during the first year of the contract; the cost of this position is \$10,000 per month. For a 45-day period, the total cost will be \$15,000, including benefits. Testers form a vital component of any development team since they ensure the quality of the program that is implemented in production. They also ensure that the code works as designed with minimal flaws in its functionality.

Total Staff Costs: \$7,600 for Operations Analysts + \$20,000 for Business Analysts + \$20,000 for Programmer Analyst + \$15,000 = \$62,600.

Line 2- Fringe Benefits total \$4,345

The two Operations Analysts are state employees with benefit rates at 56.65%. Actual costs for the two Operations Analysts is $\$7,666 \times .5665 = \4345 (rounded).

Line 4- Equipment total is \$3,200

Computer charges for four individuals is \$3,200 for the implementation time frame. At this time, there is no anticipation of procuring any additional equipment or software products to accomplish this goal. On completion of the detailed analysis and design, if further procurement of software products or equipment is needed, DHS will work with DECAL to procure the needed products/equipment.

Line 9- Total Direct Costs is \$70,145.

Line 12-Funds set aside for participate in grantee technical assistance

Funds are set aside in DECAL's budget. No funds are requested for DHS.

Line 13-Total Funds Requested is \$70,145

Line 15- Total Budget is **\$70,145**

**BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Georgia Department of Public Health**

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II -TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Public Health					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Contractual	\$37,033	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$57,433
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$37,033	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$57,433
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Public Health					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$37,033	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$57,433
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$37,033	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$57,433
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the *Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Public Health					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$37,033	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$57,433
Total Budget	\$37,033	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$57,433

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH)

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) is the lead agency in preventing disease, injury and disability; promoting health and well-being; and preparing for and responding to disasters from a health perspective. At a state level, DPH functions through numerous divisions, sections, programs and offices. Locally, DPH funds and collaborates with Georgia's 159 county health departments.

Operations

RTT-ELC funding will support the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) to provide feeds of IDEA, Part C data and birth registration data to the Cross Agency Child Data System as part of the Unified Data System project (Project 12). DPH will also provide resources to participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure. DPH will provide resources to support the health promotion efforts in Quality Rated through the SHAPE initiative (Project 3). DPH will also serve on the Task Force on Comprehensive Assessment and assist in the distribution of Developmental Passports through IDEA Part C services (Project 6).

Projects

Total Budget = \$57,433

ELC funds requested = **\$57,433**

Support funds from other sources = \$0

DPH will provide resources to participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure and will provide DECAL with data feeds from IDEA, Part C data and birth registration data to the Cross Agency Child Data System as part of the Unified Data System project (Project 12). The collaboration between DECAL and DPH will ensure that the important data collected for these activities will be included in the State Longitudinal Data System (GA AWARDS) to help inform stakeholders. DPH will also serve on the Task Force on the Comprehensive Assessment System and assist in the distribution and use of Developmental Passports through the 159 county health departments (Project 6).

RTT-ELC grant funds totaling \$57,433 are requested to produce the required data files for this project. DPH will work with DECAL to develop the detailed requirements, identify additional fields, reports, and data feeds from DPH systems to the Cross Agency Child Data System. These costs are explained in detail in following item descriptions.

Line Items

Line 1- Personnel Total: 0

DPH will contribute in-kind the salary and fringe benefits for a Data & Surveillance Manager (10% full-time equivalent) and a Data Analyst (5% full-time equivalent) to the project. The Data & Surveillance Manager will provide oversight for all activities. This position will direct and oversee data and surveillance operation of the project (i.e., Babies Information and Billing System {BIBS} and State Electronic Notifiable Surveillance System {SendSS}). This position is responsible for designing and directing data collection, overseeing the Data Analyst, receiving the data from the SendSS Business Analyst, communicating with vendor about data-related concerns, attending external partner agency, vendor and programmatic meetings. The Data Analyst position will assist in data collection, data verification, deduplication of data, assign a unique identifier to each child within BIBS, and attend external partner, vendor and programmatic meetings.

Line 6- Contractual total is \$57,433.

During the first year, an IT Programmer – Development Programmer for SENDSS will be responsible for providing a secure file to the Data and Surveillance Manager that consists of Children 1st child level data (i.e. 10 to 12 demographic data elements). The work effort will consist of the initial development of producing a file that consists of Children 1st child level data. The IT-Development Programmer for SENDSS will work four week for 40 hours per week (160 hours) @ \$85 per hour for a total of \$13,600.

During the first year, maintenance for SENDSS is required to maintain the initial technical interface design and structure of providing Children 1st child level data (i.e. 10 to 12 demographic data elements) to the Data and Surveillance Manager from the SENDSS web-based data system. This is expected to require 80 hours @ \$85 per hour for a total of \$6,800.

During the first year, an IT Business Analyst will be responsible for facilitating and managing the DECAL interface deliverables to accomplish the set objective of providing a secure file to the Data and Surveillance Manager. The role of the IT Business Analyst will include management of the following deliverables: a) liaison between the business owners, stakeholders, and IT; b) attend external partner agency, vendor and programmatic meetings; c) write the Requirements and Design document. In order to develop the Requirements and Design documents two sessions in year one will be held: Joint Application Requirement (JAR) and Joint Application Design sessions. The IT Business Analyst will work four weeks, full-time on the project (160 hours) @\$75 per hour for a total of \$12,000.

During the all four years of the grant, resources are needed to feed the Children 1st data from SENDSS. This is expected to require 80 hours per year @ \$85 per hour for a total of \$6,800. \$4,633 is included for necessary project management and coordination.

Line 9-Total Direct Costs - \$57,433

Line 12-Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance,

Funds are set aside in DECAL's budget. No funds are requested for DPH.

Line 13- Total Funds Requested

In year one, \$37,033 is requested. In years two through four, \$6,800 is requested for a total for the four-year period of \$57,433.

Line 15- Total Budget is \$57,433

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Governor’s Office for Children and Families

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II -TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency’s budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Governor’s Office for Children and Families</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$150,000
2. Fringe Benefits	\$19,624	\$19,624	\$19,624	\$19,624	\$78,496
3. Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Contractual	\$41,799	\$41,799	\$41,799	\$41,799	\$167,196
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$10,458	\$10,458	\$10,458	\$10,458	\$41,832
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$109,381	\$109,381	\$109,381	\$109,381	\$437,524
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$450,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$450,000	\$2,700,000
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Governor's Office for Children and Families					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$559,381	\$1,009,381	\$1,009,381	\$559,381	\$3,137,524
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$150,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$900,000
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$709,381	\$1,309,381	\$1,309,381	\$709,381	\$4,037,524
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the *Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Governor's Office for Children and Families					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$709,381	\$1,309,381	\$1,309,381	\$709,381	\$4,037,524
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$709,381	\$1,309,381	\$1,309,381	\$709,381	\$4,037,524

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Governor’s Office for Children and Families

The Governor’s Office for Children and Families has adopted an integrated approach to programs and services that promote strong families. GOCF provide community funding, educational opportunities and technical assistance for communities and families that promote independence and productivity.

Operations

Funding from this grant will be used to implement the Great Start Georgia home visiting framework in Early Learning and Development programs, with evidence-based, voluntary home visiting as a service strategy for families and children with high needs. Great Start Georgia currently uses the following home visitation models: Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families, Nurse Family Partnership and Early Head Start Home-Based Option. The existing infrastructure, built through Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting funds, will support training, technical assistance, data collection and program evaluation for this project.

Large, multi-site Quality Rated Early Learning and Development programs that are located in the Early Education Empowerment Zones and that serve a larger percentage of children and families with high needs will be selected. Approximately 400 children will receive Great Start Georgia services in each Early Education Empowerment Zone with approximately 100 children per zone receiving home visiting as an additional strategy. The first year of the initiative will be spent in planning, identifying, and training the sites, with rollout and evaluation in the second year.

The Family Support Grants Specialist at GOCF will provide oversight to all aspects of the initiative, including the development of the center-based home visiting program procedures and the request for application, and management of the training and technical assistance. The Family Supports Grants Specialist reports to the GOCF Executive Director. In addition, the Finance Director will provide budgetary oversight and contracts management. This employee will be supervised and guided in this work by GOCF’s Executive Director.

Projects

Total budget = \$4,037,524

ELC funds requested = **\$3,137,524**

Support funds from other sources = \$900,000

GOCF is the lead agency for the Great Start Georgia home-visiting framework and has the budgetary responsibilities for the project. GOCF will administer and oversee the implementation in the sites including evaluation of the effectiveness of this model (Project 8). GOCF will also support home visitation staff attending GELDS training and integrating GELDS into home visitation curricula (Project 5). GOCF will also serve on the Task Force on Comprehensive

Assessment and assist in the distribution of Developmental Passports through their statewide home visitation programs (Project 6). Additionally, GOCF will provide home visiting data to the Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) as part of the Unified Data System project (Project 12). GOCF will also provide resources to and participate on the Data Management and Research Committees as part of the overall Data Governance Structure (Project 12).

RTT-ELC grant funds totaling \$3,137,524 are requested; activities for the project will be conducted during the four-year grant period. Funding in year one, \$559,381, is less than years two and three, \$1,009,381, reflecting the implementation period. Year four funding, \$559,381, is reduced as programs sustain and maintain the model.

GOCF will leverage funds a total of \$900,000 over the four-year RTT-ELC grant period to support and implement the Center-Based Home Visitation framework in ELD programs in one of the four Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs). The proposed project annual budget was derived based on calculations of existing personnel costs in line with state guidance and as a percentage of the agency's current budget for other items. These costs are explained in detail in following item descriptions.

Line Items

Line 1- Personnel totals to \$150,000

Throughout the grant period, GOCF's existing Family Support Specialist will devote 50% of full-time equivalent to this project at a cost of \$22,500 annually (total of \$90,000) to projects 5, 6, 8, and 12. The Family Support Specialist will provide oversight to all aspects of the initiative and report to the Executive Director. GOCF's existing Finance Director will devote 24% of full time equivalent to these projects at a cost of \$15,000 annually (total of \$60,000) to manage the budget, track expenditures, and oversee the contract with participating programs. These positions are essential to ensure smooth implementation and accountable operations. The Executive Director provide direction, supervision, guidance, and quality control support to the work Family Support Specialist and the Finance Director throughout the life of the project work associated with the grant.

Line 2- Fringe Benefits totals to \$78,496

Fringe benefits were calculated at a rate of 52.33% of the pro-rated portion of the salaries for each position. Fringe benefits include taxes, the state health benefit plan, and state retirement plan.

Line 6-Contractual, \$167,196

GOCF will support several projects with contracts. For Project 12, Unified Data System, funding in the amount of \$2,851 annually (\$11,404 for the four-year grant period) is requested to provide data feeds to the Unified Data System from the Central Intake Data System and the Georgia Home Visiting Information System. For Project 8, \$5,280 annually is requested to include the four Center-Based Home Visiting sites in the Georgia Home Visiting Information System data base; the cost is \$1,320 annually per site x 4 sites = \$5,280. For the four-year grant period, the total cost is \$21,120.

Also for Project 8, \$33,668 is requested annually to fund 50% of the Parents as Teachers State Coordinator's time to train and provide technical assistance to local coordinators and home visitors in the evidence-based Parents as Teachers model. The coordinator will provide materials, resources, technical assistance and guidance/coaching to ELD management in implementing the Great Start Georgia framework. The coordinator will collect and analyze data related to program effectiveness using existing data systems.

The total annual cost for contracted services is \$41,799; for the four-year contract period, the total cost is \$167,196.

Line 8- Other totals to \$41,832

During the four-year grant period, a total of \$10,458 annually is requested to support the project work; 5% of the overall GOCF staff time is used to calculate the requested amounts. The costs are a) time-keeping, courier and payroll services for a total of \$580 annually (\$2,320 for four-year grant period); b) Workers Compensation, State Merit Assessment, Unemployment and Liability Insurance for a total of \$735 annually (\$2,940 for the four-year grant period); c) telecommunications for staff working on these projects at \$2,580 annually (\$10,320 for the four-year grant period); and d) a 5% portion of the annual lease at \$6,563 annually (\$26,252 for the four-year grant period). These costs were calculated based on current agency expenditures for the same items.

Line 9- Total Direct Costs total to \$437,524

Line 11-Funds to be Distributed to Participating Programs \$2,700,000

GOCF will implement the Great Start Georgia framework in ELD programs in three of the four Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs) using the RTT-ELC funds. (As shown in Line 14, other funding will be used for an ELD program within the fourth E³Z). The cost for each E³Z is \$300,000 annually for each ELD program. The first year of the initiative will be spent in planning, identifying, and training the sites, so \$450,000 is requested. In the second and third years, \$900,000 is requested; in the fourth year \$450,000 is requested as program will have built capacity and will be working to maintain services.

Line 12-Funds set aside for participate in grantee technical assistance,

Funds are set aside in DECAL's budget. No funds are requested for GOCF.

Line 13- Total Funds Requested is \$3,137,524

Line 14- Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan \$900,000

GOCF will use leverage funds to support the implementation of Great Start Georgia in the E³Z in one of the four ELD programs. The cost is \$300,000 per year for the program, for a total four-year cost of \$900,000 to be distributed to the Participating Program E³Z. GOCF's Executive Director will provide supervision, guidance, and quality control support to the work of the Family Support Specialist and Finance Director throughout the life of the project work associated with the grant.

Line 15- Total Budget is \$4,037,524

The total budget for GOCF is \$4,037,524; this includes the other funds allocated to the project. In year one, the total amount is \$709,381 (\$559,381 requested from the grant and \$150,000 in other funds). In year two and three, the total amount is \$1,309,381 each year (\$1,009,381 requested from the grant and \$300,000 in other funds). In the fourth year, the total amount is \$709,000 (\$559,381 requested from the grant and \$150,000 in other funds).

**BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Governor’s Office of Student Achievement**

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II -TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency’s budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Governor’s Office of Student Achievement					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$70,000
2. Fringe Benefits	\$13,451	\$13,451	\$0	\$0	\$26,902
3. Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Equipment	\$2,250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,250
5. Supplies	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,000
6. Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$4,390	\$4,390	\$0	\$0	\$8,780
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$56,091	\$53,841	\$0	\$0	\$109,932
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Governor's Office of Student Achievement					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$56,091	\$53,841	\$0	\$0	\$109,932
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$15,834	\$15,834	\$0	\$0	\$31,668
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$71,925	\$69,675	\$0	\$0	\$141,600
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the *Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Governor's Office of Student Achievement					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$71,925	\$69,675	\$0	\$0	\$141,600
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$71,925	\$69,675	\$0	\$0	\$141,600

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Governor’s Office of Student Achievement

The Governor’s Office of Student Achievement is an independent educational agency in Georgia that serves the state in improving student outcomes by providing transparent and objective analysis and communication of statewide data. ELC funds will assist GOSA in the data analysis and evaluation of the validation of Quality Rated, Georgia’s TQRIS. GOSA will employ a half-time research and evaluation specialist to complete the data analysis that will inform the in-depth study of the cohort model (Project 4). The following budget narrative provides details and insight into the budget requests from the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) to support the work in Project 5: TQRIS Validation.

Operations

GOSA will employ a half-time research and evaluation specialist to complete the data analysis that will inform the in-depth study of the cohort model. This employee will be supervised and guided in this work by GOSA’s existing Executive Director and Deputy Director. GOSA’s Executive Director will manage the budget for this project.

Projects

Total budget = \$141,600

ELC funds requested = **\$109,932**

Support funds from other sources = \$31,668

The Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) will assist DECAL with the data analysis for Project 4: TQRIS Validation. GOSA is the agency conducting many of the evaluation activities for Georgia’s K-12 Race to the Top initiative. The agency works closely with the Georgia Department of Education and the Department of Early Care and Learning and is heavily involved in Governor Deal’s Grade-Level Reading Initiative. The collaboration between DECAL and GOSA will ensure that the important data collected for these activities is also used to inform the K-12 system.

RTT-ELC grant funds totaling \$109,932 are requested; activities for the project will be conducted in year one and two of the grant period. Funding is not requested for year three or four of the grant period. The proposed project annual budget was derived based on calculations of personnel costs in line with guidance from Georgia’s Office of Planning and Budget, Human Resources Division, and as a percentage of the agency’s current budget for other items. Additional costs included in calculating the budget are benefits at a rate of 38.431% (30.781% for state health benefit plan and 7.65% for FICA), computer equipment, printer, software license, office supplies, telephone, and office cube rental. These costs are explained in detail in following item descriptions.

Line Items

Line 1- Personnel totals to \$70,000

During year one and two of the RTT-ELC grant, GOSA will employ Research and Evaluation Specialist for 20 hours per week (50% of full-time equivalent) work time at a cost of \$35,000 per year; 100% of the time for this position will be spent on this grant project. This part-time position is essential to create the capacity in GOSA to provide the needed data analysis and reports.

Line 2- Fringe Benefits totals to \$26,902

Fringe benefits were calculated at a rate of 38.431% for an employee working 20 hours per week on a stable schedule (pay group SS2 as per Office of Planning and Budget, Human Resources Department). Fringe benefits include 30.781% for the state health benefit plan and 7.65% for FICA. Fringe benefits were calculated according to guidance from the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget Human Resources Department.

Line 4- Equipment totals to \$2,250

In year one, equipment and software will be procured for the Research and Evaluation Specialist to perform responsibilities for the project: a laptop computer at a cost of \$1,500, a printer at a cost of \$500; and software license at a cost of \$250. The state definition for equipment is: “616000 EQUIPMENT NOT CAPITALIZED: Expenditures/expenses for items of tangible property of a generally nonexpendable nature having an acquisition cost of less than \$5,000 or a useful life of one year or less. Items charged to this account should not be capitalized for GAAP reporting purposes.” The computer, software, and printer will be required for the analyst to complete the data analyses and develop the reports needed in this project.

Line 5- Supplies totals to \$2,000

The budget for office supplies (paper, folders, toner, copier charges, and other miscellaneous) is \$1000 per year for two years for the analysis to complete the project. The cost for these supplies was estimated at approximately 3% of the agency’s annual budget for similar supplies.

Line 8- Other totals to \$8,780

During year one and two of the RTT-ELC grant, the cost of the telephone for the Research and Evaluation Specialist is \$225 per year and the office cubical rent is \$4,165 per year. These costs were calculated based on current agency expenditures for the same items. The expenditures for telephone and cube rent will provide the part-time position with appropriate working space within the agency.

Line 9- Total Direct Costs total to \$109,932.

Line 12-Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance,

Funds are set aside in DECAL's budget. No funds are requested for GOSA.

Line 13- Total Funds Requested is \$109,932.

Line 14- Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan \$31,668.

GOSA will use state funds to support the work of the project and were calculated as 5% of the personnel costs for the two positions that will provide direct supervision and guidance to the research and evaluation specialist. Both GOSA's Executive Director and Deputy Director will take an active role in providing direction, supervision, guidance, and quality control support to the work of the research and evaluation specialist throughout the life of the project work associated with the grant.

Line 15- Total Budget is **\$141,600**

The total budget for GOSA is \$141,602; this includes the state funds allocated to the project. In year one, the total amount is \$71,925 (\$56,091 requested from the grant and \$15,834 in state funds). In year two, the total amount is \$69,675 (\$53,841 requested from the grant and \$15,834 in state funds).

**BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Georgia Public Broadcasting**

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II -TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Public Broadcasting					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$67,921	\$52,183	\$9,918	\$0	\$130,022
2. Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Travel	\$19,756	\$17,916	\$0	\$0	\$37,672
4. Equipment	\$0	\$750	\$750	\$0	\$1,500
5. Supplies	\$2,850	\$2,290	\$790	\$0	\$5,930
6. Contractual	\$113,010	\$101,380	\$17,395	\$0	\$231,785
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$24,571	\$12,876	\$6,060	\$0	\$43,507
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$228,108	\$187,395	\$34,913	\$0	\$450,416
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Public Broadcasting					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$228,108	\$187,395	\$34,913	\$0	\$450,416
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$228,108	\$187,395	\$34,913	\$0	\$450,416
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Public Broadcasting					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$20,948	\$20,948	\$0	\$41,896
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$228,108	\$152,482	\$0	\$0	\$380,590
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$0	\$13,965	\$13,965	\$0	\$27,930
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$228,108	\$187,395	\$34,913	\$0	\$450,416

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Georgia Public Broadcasting

Operations

Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) will provide pre-production, production, and post-production services for the below list of media deliverables through its Studio and Field Productions (SFP) division. SFP regularly produces related products and services for the State of Georgia and its agencies. The production plan provides for completion of all deliverables over a span of three grant years, with Project 5 distributed across grant years one and two, and projects 3 and 9 funded during years two and three. The overarching mission shared by all three projects is increased media awareness of the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) and Quality Rated, two lead initiatives of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

Projects

Total budget = \$450,416

ELC funds requested = **\$450,416**

Support funds from other sources = \$0

Project 5- Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards \$380,590

For Project 5, GPB will produce twelve 15-30 second informative television spots geared toward families and family home providers. To reach these demographics, spots will be scheduled primarily during daytime television, when viewership is highest for these audiences.

GPB will produce a 36-part, 6-7 minute original video-on-demand (VOD) web series filmed on location around Georgia. Content will be creative and instructional in nature, targeting different sectors of the GELDS network: twelve videos will be designed to enhance the current capabilities and augment the available teaching methods of Preschool/Pre-K teachers, with twelve more for Infant/Toddler teachers, and the final twelve intended for the benefit of families.

Project 3- Quality Rated Access and Availability \$41,896

For Project 3, GPB will produce one 30-minute webinar with English and Spanish captions/subtitles on the Quality Rated revisions and new scoring system.

GPB will produce two 30-minute webinars, one in English and one in Spanish on how families can find information on child care licensing and monitoring and Quality Rated status of ELD providers.

Project 9-Workforce Knowledge and Competencies \$27,930

For Project 9, GPB will produce two 30-minute webinars, one in English and one in Spanish on the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Framework.

How the Annual Budget Was Derived

The production budget was derived based on GPB's budget template, which is itself informed by the latest television industry rates for comparable resources. The budget estimates provided also reflect the crew and resource costs of past client projects, similar to this effort in scope and vision, including previously produced products used in the initial rollout of the GELDS. Funds will be administered in accordance with appropriate state and federal guidelines and procurement rules will be followed.

Line Item Budget

Line 1- Personnel totals \$130,022.

The GPB production and support personnel enlisted on these projects are crucial to everyday television operations and required for successful completion of the above deliverables. Such staff positions include producers, photographers, lighting and graphic designers, accounting and finance administrators, and skilled broadcast engineers.

Line 3- Travel totals \$37,672.

Travel expenses, where applicable under state guidelines to support projects within the state plan, cover the costs of lodging, mileage, per diem, location fees, and transportation rental and parking for all crew members and contracted labor over the course of the grant period.

Line 4- Equipment totals \$1,500.

The majority of GPB's equipment complement for any given production is included with the facility and/or crew booking. However, in this case, specialized ad hoc production gear will be required in the amount of \$1,500.00.

Line 5- Supplies totals \$5,930.

All supplies and materials budgeted for within the scope of this project are necessary and essential to the video production objectives outlined herein. Supplies include gels and lamps for lighting, take stock and other digital record solutions, and miscellaneous expendables, such as gaff tape and batteries, required for equipment operability.

Line 6- Contractual \$231,785

Certain services conducted in conjunction with the pre-production, production, and post-production efforts of these projects require fulfillment by contracted production professionals and vendors when these roles cannot be assigned internally. The services and products rendered by contracted entities include writing, hosting, shooting, audio mixing, floor directing, video shading, record management, gripping, logging and ingest, post-production editing, audio sweetening, DVD duplication, captioning, and language translation. (Please consult budget spreadsheet for an annual cost division for contractual support.)

Line 8- Other \$43,507

Resources designated as “other” capture essential monies needed for either purchasing air time on GPB’s main channel, digital video storage fees for asset management during production, or contingency funds, money set aside in the event that unanticipated hard costs arise during the course of production. Contingency Fees represent a percentage of each overall project budget, and are determined based on the amount of variables still undetermined at this stage.

Line 9- Total Direct Costs total to \$450,416

Line 13- Total Funds Requested is \$450,416

Line 15- Total Budget is **\$450,416**

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Georgia Department of Community Affairs

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II -TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Community Affairs					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$36,500	\$73,000	\$73,000	\$73,000	\$255,500
2. Fringe Benefits	\$20,450	\$40,900	\$40,900	\$40,900	\$143,150
3. Travel	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$1,500
4. Equipment	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
5. Supplies	\$250	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$1,750
6. Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$17,500
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$60,700	\$119,900	\$119,900	\$119,900	\$420,400
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$0	\$560,000	\$372,960	\$186,480	\$1,119,440
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Community Affairs					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$60,700	\$679,900	\$492,860	\$306,380	\$1,539,840
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$60,700	\$679,900	\$492,860	\$306,380	\$1,539,840
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Department of Community Affairs					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$60,700	\$679,900	\$492,860	\$306,380	\$1,539,840
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$60,700	\$679,900	\$492,860	\$306,380	\$1,539,840

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Operations

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) operates a host of state and federal grant programs; serves as the state's lead agency in housing finance and development; promulgates building codes to be adopted by local governments; provides comprehensive planning, technical and research assistance to local governments; and offers a variety of economic development incentives and tools designed to help promote growth and job creation throughout the state.

Projects

Total budget = \$1,539,840

ELC funds requested = **\$1,539,840**

Support funds from other sources = \$0

For Project 2, Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs), DCA will participate with the Department of Early Care and Learning by providing expertise in grant management.

RTT-ELC grant funds totaling \$1,539,840 are requested. ELC funds provided to DCA will be used to hire personnel to manage the approved grants over the four year grant period. This service will include the management of funds from the grantee, the receipt and tracking of contracts after negotiation and authorization for disbursement, the disbursement of funds to recipients and all required reporting.

The proposed project annual budget was derived based on calculations of existing personnel costs in line with state guidance and as a percentage of the agency's current budget for other items. These costs are explained in detail in following item descriptions.

Line Items

Line 1- Personnel totals to \$255,500

Throughout the grant period, DCA will employ a Grant Administrator at a paygrade 16 level with an annual salary of \$40,000 and a Disbursement Agent at a paygrade 14 with an annual salary of \$33,000. These staff members will devote 100% of their time to grants management and reporting. The Grants Administrator will be responsible for the review and monitoring of the grants, the review of payment requests to ensure they are complete and that sufficient documentation is provided, and serving as a resource to recipients on the proper documentation and submission of financial information for reimbursement. The Disbursement Agent will be responsible for disbursement of funds, recording grant transactions, and regular financial reporting, including disbursements made to date and available grant balances.

Line 2- Fringe Benefits totals to \$143,150

Fringe benefits were calculated at a rate of 56% and rounded up to nearest dollar for the four year period, the current rate for state agencies. Fringe benefits include taxes, the state health benefit plan, and state retirement plan.

Line 3- Travel totals \$1,500

Staff will be regionally located; \$500 is requested in years two-four of the grant to travel to attend meetings related to this project. All estimates are based on prevailing state mileage reimbursement rates.

Line 4- Equipment totals \$1,000

In year one, computers will be procured for two staff members at a cost of \$1,000. No additional equipment purchases are anticipated for years two-four. The computers are needed for communication, access to the disbursement system and are necessary for the staff to perform their duties.

Line 5- Supplies total \$1,750

Supplies include toner, copier paper, and general office supplies. This estimate is based on prior year expenses.

Line 8- Other totals to \$17,500

During the four-year grant period, funds are requested for rent and telecommunications. In year one, \$2,500 is requested (\$1,288 is for a pro-rated share of the annual lease at \$2,575 annually, and \$1,212 is for a pro-rated share of the \$2,425 annual telecommunications for staff working on these projects. In years two-four, \$5,000 is requested annually (\$2,575 for the pro-rated share of the annual rent of \$2,425). The sum of \$2,500 in year one, and \$5,000 for three years = \$17,500.

Line 9- Total Direct Costs total to \$420,400

Line 11-Funds to be Distributed to Participating Programs \$1,119,440

An incentive package structure will be created that builds on those offered in Quality Rated, promotes the use of existing economic development incentives, and augments those incentives with new ones with the goal of facilitating the development of new high-quality programs. The incentive package structure will include existing low-interest loans for capital spending, tax credits for new jobs created, and assistance from the economic development director in maximizing available benefits. To augment existing tax incentives, a comparable compensation program has been developed to encourage high-quality ELD programs to locate in the E³Zs. The incentive is based on the size of the program and a tax credit amount. High-quality ELD programs, 10 statewide, will be eligible to receive these incentives in grant years two, three and

four. The packages are designed to be more robust in year two and reduced in years three and four to promote sustainability.

Small ELD programs are those learning centers with less than 10 employees; larger ELD programs are those with 10 or more employees. Small high-quality ELD programs locating in the E³Zs will be eligible for \$35,000; larger high-quality ELD programs located in the E³Zs will be eligible for \$70,000 in year two of the grant period. The incentive amount is comparable to a \$3,500 tax credit, per new hire, that is provided to employers who qualify. It is anticipated that a total of ten new high-quality ELD programs will locate within one of the four E³Zs; of the ten, four are expected to be in small zones and six are expected to be in larger zones.

In years three and four of the grant period, these ELD programs are eligible to receive incentives; in year three, the incentive is 66% of the initial award (\$23,310 for small ELD programs and \$46,620 for larger programs). In year four, the incentive 33% of the initial award (\$11,655 for small programs and \$23,310 for larger programs). In the fifth year, the ELD programs will be stable and able to maintain high quality and retain staff.

Grant Year	# ELD Programs	Incentive Amount	Funding	Annual total
2	4 small	\$35,000	\$140,000	\$560,000
	6 larger	\$70,000	\$420,000	
3	4 small	\$23,310	\$93,240	\$372,960
	6 larger	\$46,620	\$279,720	
4	4 small	\$11,655	\$46,620	\$186,480
	6 larger	\$23,310	\$139,860	
			Total	\$1,119,440

Line 13- Total Funds Requested is \$1,539,840

Line 14 – Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan - \$0

Although no traditional budget funds are included, Georgia will have a substantial contribution. One reason the innovative E³Z program will be effective is because of Georgia’s existing tax incentives based on job creation. These tax incentives could result in approximately \$2.4M in additional state support through this initiative. For example, under the E³Z program, we

anticipate 10 new ELD providers (small businesses) will be created. On average, child care learning centers in Georgia employ 12 staff members. The existing tax credit in most counties under the E³Z program will be \$4,000, per job, per year, for five years. Below is a sample calculation:

10 centers X 12 employees = 120

120 employees X \$4,000 = \$480,000

\$480,000 X five years = \$2,400,000

Line 15- Total Budget is \$1,539,840

The total budget for DCA is \$1,539,840. In year one, the total amount is \$60,700. In year two, the total amount is \$679,900. In year three, the total amount is \$492,860. In year four, the total amount is \$306,380.

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
Georgia Professional Standards Commission

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.
- Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.

BUDGET PART II -TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Professional Standards Commission					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	\$130,000	\$133,900	\$137,917	\$142,055	\$543,872
2. Fringe Benefits	\$73,959	\$76,178	\$78,463	\$80,817	\$309,417
3. Travel	\$4,000	\$4,040	\$4,081	\$4,122	\$16,243
4. Equipment	\$9,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,200
5. Supplies	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$2,000
6. Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other	\$28,146	\$20,946	\$20,946	\$20,946	\$90,984
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	\$245,805	\$235,564	\$241,907	\$248,440	\$971,716
10. Indirect Costs*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

<u>Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency</u> (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Professional Standards Commission					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	\$245,805	\$235,564	\$241,907	\$248,440	\$971,716
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	\$245,805	\$235,564	\$241,907	\$248,440	\$971,716
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested 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 evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the *Participating State Agency's proposed* budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Georgia Professional Standards Commission					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Grant Management	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Early Education Empowerment Zones (E ³ Zs)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Access and Availability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Quality Rated (TQRIS) Validation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Early Learning and Development Standards	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Comprehensive Assessment System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Statewide Family Engagement Community Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Supporting Families through Center-based Home Visitation and in Family, Friend, & Neighbor Care	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Workforce Knowledge and Competencies	\$245,805	\$235,564	\$241,907	\$248,440	\$971,716
10. Supporting Early Childhood Educators	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Kindergarten Entry Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12. Unified Data System	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$245,805	\$235,564	\$241,907	\$248,440	\$971,716

BUDGET PART II -NARRATIVE

Georgia Professional Standards Commission

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) sets and applies guidelines for the preparation, certification, and continued licensing of public educators.

Operations

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission is an independent body established to certify and classify all public school personnel in Georgia. Under the terms of the agreement between the Commission and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, the Commission will evaluate and verify credentials and training for Georgia's early care workforce. The Commission will designate staff to support the Professional Development Registry designed to serve this population. The Registry is a resource for early childhood educators that captures and tracks education, training, experience and tenure. These elements are combined by the system to assign a career level following the evaluation and review of credentials by trained, experienced Commission staff. Registrants receive portable products from the web-based system that include a report of their training history and a 1 professional résumé. The Professional Development Registry is an integral part of Georgia's Early Care and Education Professional Development System.

Projects

Total Budget = \$971,716

ELC funds requested = **\$971,716**

Support funds from other sources = \$0

With funding from the RTT-ELC grant, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission will support Project 10 – Supporting Early Educators. The Commission has demonstrated the capacity and a history of providing the needed services. They have supported the more than 28,000 registrants currently active in the Professional Development Registry during state fiscal year 2013. Under the terms of the agreement, the grant will fund two Evaluators and two Customer Service Representatives to perform the following tasks as described in the MOU between the two entities. The Evaluators will review and evaluate documentation submitted by applicants after initial entry in the Registry; evaluate transcripts; provide technical support to system users; and conduct outreach to increase awareness of the Registry and increase access to the technology required to register. The Customer Service Representatives respond to phone and email inquiries; receive electronic and mailed documentation and establish electronic files; and copy documents to files.

The Commission will track expenses through its internal accounting system and present a reimbursement request which will include supporting documentation, a productivity report and a

programmatic report identifying trends and system anomalies. PSC will ensure the integrity of all reports.

Line Items

Line 1- Personnel totals to \$543,872.

Four positions will be funded in support of the goals of the project for the four-year period. Two Evaluator positions and two Customer Service Representatives will be added to the current Professional Standards Commission personnel providing services under this partnership.

For the two Evaluator positions, 100% of the time in these positions will be devoted to activities related to the grant (increases are projected to compete with comparable state positions with comparable responsibilities). The total annual cost for both of these positions is:

- Year 1 - \$70,000
- Year 2 - \$72,100
- Year 3 - \$74,263
- Year 4 - \$76,490

For the two Customer Service Representative positions, 100% of the time in these positions will be devoted to activities related to the grant (increases are projected to compete with comparable state positions with comparable responsibilities). The total annual cost for both of these positions is:

- Year 1 - \$60,000
- Year 2 - \$61,800
- Year 3 - \$63,654
- Year 4 - \$65,564

The Evaluator positions ensure that documents are reviewed consistent with the Graphical User Interface designed by DECAL. Credentials are verified by the Evaluators to determine validity and transcripts must be confirmed as having been issued by an accredited institution.

The Customer Service Representative is the first-responder to inquiries and touches all documents prior to their reaching the Evaluator, logging each item and creating an electronic file. The current staff of four process more than 8,000 documents each month. Project 10 is expected to increase Registry activity requiring additional staff to maintain the desired standard of promptness in response and processing time.

Line 2- Fringe Benefits total \$309,417

All fringe benefits are calculated at the rate of .56891 and rounded up to nearest dollar for the four year period, the current rate for state agencies. Based on personnel costs, the fringe benefits are: \$73,959 in year one; \$76,178 in year two; \$78,463 in year three; and \$80,817 in year four.

Line 3- Travel totals \$16,243

Staff will conduct eight to ten outreach activities each year for the four-year grant period. Outreach activities include meetings and conference presentations and on-site technical support to ELD programs. Staff provide this on-site technical support to programs in Quality Rated and in the Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care. Travel and subsistence (for travel more than 60 miles from a personal residence) is estimated at \$180 per trip. Staff may be required to travel to a national conference to support a DECAL presentation. All estimates are based on prior year costs and prevailing state mileage reimbursement rates. Outreach has proven an effective recruitment tool in raising awareness of the Registry. The face- to-face contact humanizes a system that is web-based and provides an opportunity to provide one-on-one personal guidance to potential registrants. This recruitment strategy increases Registry participation.

Line 4- Equipment totals \$9,200

In year one, equipment and software will be procured for each new Evaluator and Customer Service Representative. The standard equipment includes a laptop computer, docking station, monitor, keyboard, mouse, laptop bag, and software. The costs will be incurred in the first year of the project. Costs to purchase the equipment is $\$2300 \times 4 = \$9,200$. The Professional Development Registry is web-based requiring computers and periphery equipment for efficient expeditious processing. The equipment is required for the staff to perform their jobs.

Line 5- Supplies total \$2,000

Supplies include toner, copier paper, and general office supplies which will not exceed \$500 annually the four staff members ($\$500 \times 4 \text{ years} = \$2,000$). This estimate based on prior year expenses for 4 staff.

Line 8- Other total is \$90,984

The cost of rent for each employee's cubical is \$2,844 annually. Four staff $\times \$2,844 = \$11,736$ annually. The sum for the four year period is \$46,944.

Human Resources costs are \$1,300 per year; the sum for the four-year period is \$5,200. Payroll services are \$302 annually; the sum for the four-year period is \$1,208. The State Merit System Assessment for State Employment Service is \$292 annually; the sum for the four-year period is \$1,168. Unemployment insurance is \$468 annually; the sum for the four-year period is \$1,872. Worker's Compensation insurance is \$156 per year; the sum for the four-year period is \$624.

First year costs for the call center seats with phone lines is \$14,256; ongoing costs for years two-four of the grant period is \$7,056 ($\$1,440 \text{ per seat} \times 4 = \$5,760 + \$324 \text{ per line} \times 4 = \$1,296$). Total cost for four-year period for telephone services is \$35,424. These costs are based on the current amounts for staff.

Line 9- Total Direct Costs total is \$971,716.

Line 12-Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance.

Funds are set aside in DECAL's budget. No funds are requested for PSC.

Line 13- Total Funds Requested is \$971,716

Year 1 - \$245,805

Year 2 - \$235,564

Year 3 - \$241,907

Year 4 - \$248,440

Line 15-Total Budget Requested is **\$971,716**

Year 1 - \$245,805

Year 2 - \$235,564

Year 3 - \$241,907

Year 4-\$248,440

IX. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(a) The State's application must be signed by the Governor or an authorized representative; an authorized representative from the Lead Agency; and an authorized representative from each Participating State Agency.

(b) The State must submit a certification from the State Attorney General or an authorized representative that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions in its application concerning, State law, statute, and regulation are complete and accurate and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation.

(c) The State must complete the budget spreadsheets that are provided in the application package and submit the completed spreadsheet as part of its application. These spreadsheets should be included on the CD or DVD that the State submits as its application.

(d) The State must submit preliminary scopes of work for each Participating State Agency as part of the executed memorandum of understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement. Each preliminary scope of work must describe the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement. If a State is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, the State will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work for each Participating State Agency.

(e) The State must include a budget that details how it will use grant funds awarded under this competition, and funds from other Federal, State, private, and local sources to achieve the outcomes of the State Plan (as described in selection criterion (A)(4)(a)), and how the State will use funds awarded under this program to--

(1) Achieve its ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs that are participating in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criterion (B)(2)(c)); and

(2) Achieve its ambitious yet achievable targets for 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 State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criterion (B)(4)(c)).

(f) The State must provide an overall summary for the State Plan and a rationale for why it has chosen to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area, including--

- How the State's choices build on its progress to date in each Focused Investment Area (as outlined in Tables (A)(1)6-13 and the narrative under (A)(1)); and
- Why these selected criteria will best achieve the State's ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for

Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the educational gaps between Children with High Needs and their peers.

(g) The State, within each Focused Investment Area, must select and address—

- Two or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and
- One or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Areas (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.

(h) Where the State is submitting a High-Quality Plan, the State must include in its application a detailed plan that is feasible and includes, but need not be limited to--

(1) The key goals;

(2) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up over time to eventually achieve statewide implementation;

(3) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;

(4) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;

(5) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;

(6) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;

(7) The information requested or required in the performance measures, where applicable;

(8) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and

(9) How the State will meet the unique needs of Children with High Needs.

X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Any State that applies for a grant under this competition must ensure that it has in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should it receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if the State has an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

A State receiving funds under an RTT-ELC grant must submit an annual report that must include, in addition to the standard elements, a description of the State's progress to date on its goals, timelines, and budgets, as well as actual performance compared to the annual targets the State established in its application with respect to each performance measure. Further, a State receiving funds under this program is accountable for meeting the goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets established in the application; adhering to an annual fund drawdown schedule that is tied to meeting these goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets; and fulfilling and maintaining all other conditions for the conduct of the project. The Departments will monitor a State's progress in meeting the State's goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets and in fulfilling other applicable requirements. In addition, we may collect additional data as part of a State's annual reporting requirements.

To support a collaborative process with the State, we may require that applicants who are selected to receive an award enter into a written performance or cooperative agreement. If we determine that a State is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, we will take appropriate action, which could include establishing a collaborative process or taking enforcement measures with respect to this grant, such as placing the State in high-risk status, putting the State on reimbursement payment status, or delaying or withholding funds.

XI. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A State that receives a grant must meet the following requirements:

(a) The State must have an operational State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care that meets the requirements described in section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837(b)). In addition, the State Advisory Council on Early childhood Education and Care must include the State's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrator, State agency coordinators from both Part B section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and State agency representatives responsible for health and mental health.

(b) The State must continue to participate in the programs authorized under section 619 of Part B of IDEA and Part C of IDEA and in the CCDF program.

(c) States must continue to have an active Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program (pursuant to section 511 of Title V of the Social Security Act, as added by section 2951 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Public Law. 111-148)) for the duration of the grant, whether operated by the State or by an eligible non-profit organization.

(d) The State is prohibited from spending funds from the grant on the direct delivery of health services.

(e) The State must participate in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS, individually or in collaboration with other State grantees in order to share effective program practices and solutions and collaboratively solve problems, and must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for this purpose.

(f) The State must--

(1) Comply with the requirements of any evaluation sponsored by ED or HHS of any of the State's activities carried out with the grant;

(2) Comply with the requirements of any cross-State evaluation--as part of a consortium of States--of any of the State's proposed reforms, if that evaluation is coordinated or funded by ED or HHS, including by using common measures and data collection instruments and collecting data necessary to the evaluation;

(3) Together with its independent evaluator, if any, cooperate with any technical assistance regarding evaluations provided by ED or HHS. The purpose of this technical assistance will be to ensure that the validation of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and any other evaluations conducted by States or their independent evaluators, if any, are of the highest quality and to encourage commonality in approaches where such commonality is feasible and useful;

(4) Submit to ED and HHS for review and comment its design for the validation of its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criterion (B)(5)) and any other evaluations of activities included in the State

Plan, including any activities that are part of the State's Focused Investment Areas, as applicable; and

(5) Make widely available through formal (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) or informal (e.g., newsletters) mechanisms, and in print or electronically, the results of any evaluations it conducts of its funded activities.

(g) The State must have a longitudinal data system that includes the 12 elements described in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act by the date required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) grant and in accordance with Indicator (b)(1) of its approved SFSF plan.

(h) The State must comply with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, including the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act, and the privacy requirements in IDEA, and their applicable regulations.

(i) The State must ensure that the grant activities are implemented in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws.

(j) The State must provide researchers with access, consistent with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, to data from its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the State's coordinated early learning data system (if applicable) so that they can analyze the State's quality improvement efforts and answer key policy and practice questions.

(k) Unless otherwise protected as proprietary information by Federal or State law or a specific written agreement, the State must make any work (e.g., materials, tools, processes, systems) developed under its grant freely available to the public, including by posting the work on a Web site identified or sponsored by ED or HHS. Any Web sites developed under this grant must meet government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility (www.section508.gov/).

(l) Funds made available under an RTT-ELC grant must be used to supplement, not supplant, any Federal, State, or local funds that, in the absence of the funds awarded under this grant, would be available for increasing access to and improving the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs.

(m) For a State that is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, the State will have up to 90 days from the grant award notification date to complete final scopes of work for each Participating State Agency. These final scopes of work must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with their corresponding preliminary scopes of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures for the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement.

XII. CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES

Generally, all procurement transactions by State or local educational agencies made with RTT-ELC grant funds must be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition, consistent with the standards in section 80.36 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). This section requires that grantees use their own procurement procedures (which reflect State and local laws and regulations) to select contractors, provided that those procedures meet certain standards described in EDGAR.

Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

XIII. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MODEL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

(Appendix C of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Notice Inviting Applications)

Background for Memorandum of Understanding

Each Participating State Agency identified in a State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) State Plan is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement with the State's Lead Agency that specifies the scope of the work that will be implemented by the Participating State Agency. The purpose of the MOU or other binding agreement is to define a relationship between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency that is specific to the RTT-ELC competition; the MOU or other binding agreement is not meant to detail all typical aspects of grant coordination or administration.

To support States in working efficiently with their Participating State Agencies to affirm each Participating State Agency's participation in the State Plan, ED and HHS have produced a model MOU, which is attached. This model MOU may serve as a template for States; however, States are not required to use it. States may use a document other than the model MOU, as long as it includes the key features noted below and in the model MOU. States should consult with their State attorneys on what is most appropriate. States may allow multiple Participating State Agencies to sign a single MOU or other binding agreement, with customized exhibits for each Participating State Agency, if the State so chooses.

At a minimum, an RTT-ELC MOU or other binding agreement should include the following key features, each of which is described in detail below and exemplified in the attached model MOU: (i) terms and conditions; (ii) a scope of work; and, (iii) authorized signatures.

(i) Terms and conditions: Each Participating State Agency must sign a standard set of terms and conditions that includes, at a minimum, key roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency; State recourse for non-performance by the Participating State Agency; and assurances that make clear what the Participating State Agency is agreeing to do.

(ii) Scope of work: RTT-ELC MOUs or other binding agreements must include a preliminary scope of work (included in the model RTT-ELC MOU as Exhibit I) that is completed by each Participating State Agency. The scope of work must be signed and dated by an authorized Participating State Agency official and an authorized Lead Agency official. In the interest of time and in consideration of the effort it will take for the Lead Agency and Participating State Agencies to develop detailed work plans for RTT-ELC, the scope of work submitted by Participating State Agencies and Lead Agencies as part of a State's application may be preliminary. Preliminary scopes of work must, at a minimum, identify all applicable

portions of the State Plan that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement and include the required assurances. (Note that in order for a State to be eligible for the RTT-ELC competition, the Lead Agency must have executed with each Participating State Agency an MOU or other binding agreement, which the State must attach to its application and which must describe the Participating State Agency's level of participation in the grant and must include the required assurances.)

If a State is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, Participating State Agencies will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work, which must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with each Participating State Agency's preliminary scope of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the Participating State Agencies' specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel.

(iii) Authorized Signatures: The signatures on the MOU or other binding agreement demonstrate an acknowledgement of the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency. With respect to the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency, the Lead Agency's counter-signature on the MOU or other binding agreement indicates that the Participating State Agency's commitment is consistent with the requirement that a Participating State Agency implement all applicable portions of the State Plan.

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between _____ (“Lead Agency”) and _____ (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency’s Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY’S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Title _____

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Title _____

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State’s application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
Example Row — shows an example of criterion (B)(1) for the State agency that oversees state-funded preschool, IDEA, and Head Start Collab Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-funded preschool • IDEA preschool special ed • Head Start Collab Office 	Representatives from each program are sitting on the state committee to define statewide QRIS program standards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start Collab Office 	Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)		
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

XIV. SCORING RUBRIC

I. Introduction

To help ensure inter-reviewer reliability and transparency for the RTT-ELC applicants, ED and HHS have created and are publishing a rubric for scoring State applications. The pages that follow detail the rubric and allocation of point values that reviewers will be using. The rubric will be used by reviewers to ensure consistency across and within review panels.

The rubric allocates points to each selection criterion. In all, the RTT-ELC scoring rubric includes 17 selection criteria and four competitive preference priorities. These collectively add up to 315 points. The selection criteria are divided into two sections: Core Areas and Focused Investment Areas.

- Applicants must respond to all of the selection criteria within each of the two Core Areas: (A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs.
- Applicants have more flexibility within each of the Focused Investment Areas: (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress. In these sections, applicants may select which selection criteria to address; focusing on those that the State believes will have the most impact on school readiness for its Children with High Needs, given that State's context and the current status of its early learning and development activities. The Focused Investment Areas must be addressed as follows.

Focused Investment Areas

- The applicant must select and address--
 - At least two selection criteria from Focused Investment Area (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and
 - At least one selection criterion from each of Focused Investment Areas (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.
- Each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E) is worth a specific number of points; these points will be evenly divided across the selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that section.

Priorities

Applicants must address the absolute priority throughout their applications; they do not write separately to this priority. The absolute priority must be met in order for an applicant to receive funding.

Applications that choose to address a competitive preference priority will earn extra points under that priority if the reviewers determine that the response is of high quality. Applicants may choose to write to the invitational priority to extend the scope of the application; applicants are invited to address this and may apply funds from this grant to implement activities under it, but do not earn additional points for doing so.

Reviewers will be required to make thoughtful judgments about the quality of the State’s application and will be assessing, based on the criteria, the comprehensiveness, feasibility, and likely impact of the State’s application. Reviewers will also be asked to evaluate, for example, the extent to which the State has set ambitious but achievable annual targets in its application. Reviewers will also need to make informed judgments about the State’s goals, the rationales for the Focused Investment Areas, the activities the State has chosen to undertake, and the timelines and credibility of the State’s plans.

This appendix includes information about the point values for each criterion and priority, guidance on scoring, and the rubric that we will provide to reviewers.

II. Points Overview

The chart below shows the maximum number of points that are assigned to each criterion.

	Points Available	Percent
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Points Overview		
A. Successful State Systems		
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development.	20	
(A)(2) Articulating the State’s rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating work across the State	10	
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work	15	
Core Area A Subtotal	65	23
B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs		
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs	20	
(B)(5) Validating the State’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	
Core Area B Subtotal	75	27
C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children		
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards	60 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems		
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing health, behavioral, and developmental needs		
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families		

	Points Available	Percent
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Points Overview		
Focused Investment Area C Subtotal	60	21
D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce		
(D)(1) Developing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials	40 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators		
Focused Investment Area D Subtotal	40	14
E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress		
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children at kindergarten entry	40 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system		
Focused Investment Area E Subtotal	40	14
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	
Competitive Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS	10	
Competitive Priority 3: Understanding Status of Children’s Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	10	
Competitive Priority 4: Creating Preschool through Third Grade Approaches to Sustain Improved Early Learning Outcomes through the Early Elementary Grades	10	
Competitive Priority 5: Addressing the Needs of Children in Rural Areas	5	
Grand Total	315	

III. About Scoring

General Notes about Scoring

There are two terms that we use repeatedly in the notice: High-Quality Plan and “ambitious yet achievable” goals or targets. These are anchor terms for both applicants to understand and reviewers to use in guiding their scoring. We discuss each below.

- A High-Quality Plan. In determining the quality of a State’s plan for a given selection criterion or competitive preference priority, reviewers will assess the extent to which the plan meets the definition (as provided in the notice) of a High-Quality Plan, including whether it is feasible and has a high probability of successful implementation and contains the following components--
 - (a) The key goals;

- (b) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up to achieve statewide implementation;
- (c) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;
- (d) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;
- (e) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;
- (f) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;
- (g) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable;
- (h) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and
- (i) How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs, as well as the unique needs of special populations of Children with High Needs.

Using the information provided to them in the application, reviewers will assess the extent to which the proposed plan in a specific selection criterion is a High-Quality Plan that is credible, feasible to implement, and likely to result in the outcomes the State has put forward.

- **Ambitious yet achievable.** In determining whether a State has ambitious yet achievable goals or targets for a given selection criterion, reviewers will examine the State's goals or targets in the context of the State's plan and the evidence submitted (if any) in support of the plan. Reviewers will not be looking for any specific targets nor will they necessarily reward higher targets above lower ones with higher scores. Rather, reviewers will reward States for developing goals and targets that, in light of each State's plan and the current context and status of the work in that State, are shown to be "ambitious yet achievable."

About Assigning Points

Reviewers will assign points to an application for each selection criterion in Core Areas (A) and (B) and for each selection criterion that the State has chosen to address within Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E).

Quality Rubric

The following scoring rubric will be used to guide the reviewers in scoring selection criteria and priorities. (See “General Notes about Scoring” for more information about how reviewers will assess High-Quality Plans and “ambitious yet achievable” targets and goals.)

	Percentage of Available Points Awarded
High-quality response	80-100%
Medium/high-quality response	50-80%
Medium/low-quality response	20-50%
Low-quality response	0-20%

About Priorities

There are three types of priorities in the RTT-ELC competition.

- Applicants should address the absolute priority across the entire application and should not address it separately. It will be assessed by reviewers after they have fully reviewed and evaluated the entire application, to ensure that the application has met the priority. If an application has not met the priority, it will be eliminated from the competition. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority.
- Applicants earn points under the competitive preference priorities in a manner similar to how they earn points under the selection criteria.
 - Priority 2 is worth up to 10 points.
 - Priority 3 is worth 10 points; all 10 points are earned if the competitive preference priority is met. A State will earn competitive preference priority points if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the competitive preference priority. No points are earned if a majority of reviewers determine that the applicant has not met the competitive preference priority. A State meets the competitive preference priority by addressing selection criterion (E)(1) and earning a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.
 - Priority 4 is worth up to 10 points.
 - Priority 5 is worth up to 5 points.
- The invitational priority is addressed in its own separate section. While applicants are invited to write to the invitational priority, they will not earn points under the invitational priority.

In the Event of a Tie

If two or more applications have the same score and there is not sufficient funding to support all of the tied applicants, the applicants' overall scores on Core Area (B) will be used to break the tie.

XV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Please note that you must follow the Application Procedures as described in the Federal Register notice announcing the grant competition.

Submission Information and Deadline.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted by mail or hand delivery. The Departments strongly recommends the use of overnight mail. Applications postmarked on the deadline date but arriving late will not be read.

The deadline for submission of applications is October 16, 2013.

Application Submission Format.

The Secretaries strongly request the applicant to limit the application text narrative to no more than 150 pages and limit appendices to no more than 150 pages. A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. Line spacing for the narratives is set to 1.5 spacing, and the font used is 12 point Times New Roman. Each page in the application should have a page number. The Secretaries strongly request that applicants follow the recommended page limits, although the Secretaries will consider applications of greater length.

Applicants for a grant under this competition must submit: (1) an electronic copy of the application; and (2) signed originals of certain sections of the application. Applicants must submit their application in electronic format on a CD or DVD, with CD-ROM or DVD-ROM preferred.

We strongly recommend that the applicant submit three CDs or DVDs. Each of these three CDs or DVDs should include the following four files:

1. A single file that contains the body of the application, including required budget tables, that has been converted into a .PDF (Portable Document) format so that the .PDF is searchable. Note that a .PDF created from a scanned document will not be searchable.
2. A single file in a .PDF format that contains all application appendices.
3. A single file in a .PDF format that contains all of the required signature pages. The signature pages may be scanned and turned into a PDF. Applicants should also include all signed MOUs or other binding agreements for each Participating State Agency in the application; and
4. A single, separate file of the completed electronic budget spreadsheets (e.g., .XLS or .XLSX formats) that includes the required budget tables and budget justifications (the spreadsheets will not be reviewed by peer reviewers but will be used by the Departments for budget reviews).

Each of these items must be clearly labeled with the State's name, city, state, and any other relevant identifying information. States must not password-protect these files. Additionally, please ensure that: (1) all three CDs or DVDs contain the same four files; (2) the files are not corrupted; and (3) all files print correctly. The Departments are not responsible for reviewing any information that is not able to be opened or printed from your application package.

In addition to the electronic files, applicants must submit a signed original of section IV of the application and one copy of that signed original. Section IV of the application includes the Application Assurances and Certifications. The Departments will not review any paper submissions of the application narrative and appendices. All applications must be submitted by mail or hand delivery. Whether you submit an application by mail or hand delivery, you must indicate on the envelope the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application.

We must receive all grant applications by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on October 16, 2013. **We will not accept an application for this competition after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.** Therefore, we strongly recommend that applicants arrange for mailing or hand delivery of their application in advance of the application deadline date.

Submission of Applications by Mail.

States choosing to submit their application (i.e., the three CDs or DVDs containing the four application files, the signed paper original of section IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by mail (either through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) should use the following mailing address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

We must receive applications on or before the application deadline date. Therefore, to avoid delays, we strongly recommend sending applications via overnight delivery. **If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.**

Submission of Applications by Hand Delivery.

States choosing to submit their application (i.e., the three CDs or DVDs containing the four application files, the signed paper original of section IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by hand delivery (including via a courier service) should use the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
550 12th Street, SW.

Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.

Envelope Requirements and Receipt.

When an applicant submits its application, whether by mail or hand delivery--

(1) It must indicate on the envelope that the CFDA number of the competition under which it is submitting its application is 84.412A; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to the applicant a notification of receipt of the grant application. If the applicant does not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, it should call the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

In accordance with 34 CFR 75.216(b) and (c), an application will not be evaluated for funding if the applicant does not comply with all of the procedural rules that govern the submission of the application or the application does not contain the information required under the program.

XVI. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Please use the following checklist to ensure that your application is complete:

Formatting Recommendations (page 11)

- Are all the pages 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides?
- Are all pages numbered?
- Is the line spacing for the narratives set to 1.5 spacing, and the font to 12 point Times New Roman?

Application Assurances and Certifications (page 21)

- Is all of the requested information included on the Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge Application Assurances and Certifications page?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or his/her authorized representative signed and dated the Application Assurances and Certifications?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has an authorized representative from the Lead Agency signed the Application Assurances and Certifications?
SIGNATURE REQUIRED -- Has an authorized representative from each Participating State Agency signed the Application Assurances and Certifications? (Note: all Participating State Agencies must sign the application. See definition of Participating State Agency, page 18)

State Attorney General Certification (page 23)

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the State Attorney General or his/her authorized representative signed the Certifications?

Accountability, Transparency, Reporting, and Other Assurances and Certifications (page 24)

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or his/her authorized representative signed the other Assurances and Certifications?

Eligibility Requirements (page 25)

- Has the State Provided a list of the Participating State Agencies?
- Has the State completed an MOU with each Participating State Agency?
- Does each MOU include the necessary assurances?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has every Participating State Agency signed an MOU that includes a preliminary Scope of Work, using Exhibit I or an equivalent model?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Lead Agency counter-signed every MOU and preliminary Scope of Work?
- Has the State certified that it is participating in the home visiting program, consistent with the requirement on page 25?

Selection Criteria

Core Areas (page 27)

(A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs

- Has the State responded to each of the selection criteria in Core Areas (A) and (B)?

Focused Investment Areas

(C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children (page 60)

- Has the State responded to at least two of the selection criteria in section (C)?

(D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce (page 69)

- Has the State responded to at least one of the selection criteria in (D)?

(E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress (page 74)

- Has the State responded to at least one of the selection criteria in (E)?

OPTIONAL: Competition Priorities (page 77)

- Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.
- Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry (if the State has chosen to write to (E)(1)).
- Competitive Preference Priority 4: Creating Preschool through Third Grade Approaches to Sustain Improved Early Learning Outcomes through the Early Elementary Grades.
- Competitive Preference Priority 5: Addressing the Needs of Children in Rural Areas.
- Invitational Priority 6: Encouraging Private-Sector Support.

Budget (page 82)

- Has the State completed the following elements of the Budget?
 - Budget Part I: Summary Tables and Narratives
 - Budget Part II: Participating State Agency Budget Tables and Narratives, for each Participating State Agency
 - Indirect Costs form
- Has the State created its budget spreadsheets?

Appendix (page 123)

- Has the State created a table of contents for its appendix?
- Has the State included all required documents per the instructions in the application?
- OPTIONAL: Has the State included supporting information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers?

Application Requirements (page 99)

- Has the State fulfilled all of the application requirements?

Application Submission Procedures (page 117)

- Has the State complied with the submission format requirements, including the application deadline for submission?
- Does the State's submission include three CDs or DVDs, each containing the following four separate files?
 - Body of the application narrative, including budget tables, that has been converted into a searchable .PDF document. Note that a .PDF created from a scanned document will not be searchable.
 - Single file in a .PDF format that contains all application appendices
 - Single file in a .PDF format that contains all required signature pages
 - Completed electronic budget spreadsheets
- Has the State submitted originals of all the required Signature pages?

